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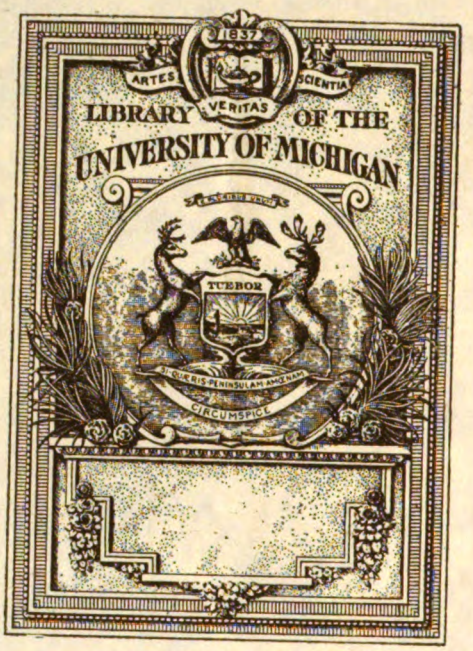
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INDEX.

TALES AND STORIES.

PAGE

AIRY PRINCE, THE. By Arthur Beverley Baxter 545, 572, 590, 612
Allegory of the Alligator, The. By Headon Hill 61
Attempt on Lone Pine Ranch, The. By E. R. Punshon 477
Awkward Predicament, An. By S. W. King . 254
Baptism of Fire. By R. P. Hughes 43
Baptism of Fire, A 350
Before the Battle. By F. O. O. 203
BLACKLISTED. By W. Victor Cook . 7, 26, 45
Blonde Gentleman, The. By Frederick Tilsley 714
BLOWER OF BUBBLES, THE. By Arthur Beverley Baxter . . . 193, 218, 231, 249, 264
BRASSFACE AND SILVERTONGUE. By Ignotus 785, 809
BROWN NABOB'S MONEY, THE. By J. S. Fletcher 753, 772, 791, 804, 820
CHRISTINE LONAVET. A Story of the Franco-Prussian War. By Andrew W. Arnold 337, 363, 376, 391
City of Dreadful Silence, The. By Frederick Tilsley 632
'Coast' Way, The. By Frank H. Shaw . . 637
Courting of Suzette, The. By Ashmore Russan 491
Dark Patch, The. By Bart Kennedy . . 461
Episode of Ravensheugh Toll, The. By Sir James Balfour Paul, C.V.O., LL.D . . 615
Fallacy in Tactics, A. By R. P. Hughes. . 433
'Fashioner of the Gods, The.' By S. H. Reason 329
FORTUNATE MISFORTUNE, A. By Mrs Herbert Martin. 65, 86
Good Luck at 'Poker' 745
His Own Language. By Frederick Tilsley . 108
Jagtap's Finesse. By Arbory Glyndon . . 190
Jock's Terms. A Tale of the Malta Hospitals. By Albert G. Mackinnon 684
JOHN BROWN. Confessions of a New Army Cadet. By R. W. Campbell.
I. The Cadet School 1
II. The Sergeant-Major from the Guards . 3
III. Customs of the Service 20
IV. What We Talked About 41
V. A Canadian Newspaper 56
VI. The Modern Girl 78
VII. Psychology 92
VIII. The Value of Sport 111
IX. John Brown's Letters 139
X. Making up with Adela 156
XI. Blase-Bones from Sandwurse . . 175
XII. The Noise of War 207
XIII. Our Dear Old Commandant . . . 221
XIV. Not Understood 253
XV. Mother Comes to School. . . . 284
XVI. The New Army Officer 312
XVII. Steady Old Adela 346

PAGE

XVIII. General Pom-Pom 378
XIX. 'The Boys' 395
XX. A Jolly Rag 424
XXI. History and *Esprit de Corps* . . 471
XXII. The Spirit of God 507
XXIII. We Discuss the School . . . 522
XXIV. The Commandant's Farewell . . 537
KAVANAGH'S LUCKY BEAN. By Mary Stuart Boyd 689, 707, 725, 741
LADY HELEN'S NEURALGIA. By Rosaline Masson 129, 152, 172
Link, The. A Tale of Aden. By R. A. Adair 593
Long Trail, The. By L. B. Thoburn Clarke . 409
Lovers' Luck. A Story of the Malta Hospitals. By Albert G. Mackinnon 161
Man 'John Smith,' The. By Frederick Sleath 513
MAN WHO LOVED LONDON, THE. By J. S. Fletcher 481, 505
Mersey Terriers. By Oswald Wildridge . . 767
Miniature, The. By Mary F. Raphael . . 677
Miss Bullen's Lace. By Headon Hill . . 558
MR SWEETBREAD'S SURPLICE. By Pat Sunday 97, 120
One Day. By Innes Logan 29
Pageant of a Private on Guard, The. By C. A. Malcolm, M.A. 225
PEPITA. A Daughter of the Pampas. By H. Hunter 798, 814
PETITE SIMUNDE. By Arthur Beverley Baxter 417, 442, 454
Private Eliot. By Innes Logan 140
Rats of St L——, The. By W. Coats-Bush . 527
Recalcitrant Chief, A. By C. G. Nurse . . 369
Red Seal, The 318
SEARCHERS, THE. By John Foster 33, 53, 70, 83, 104, 117, 135, 149, 168, 181, 198, 213, 227, 245, 261, 279, 292, 309, 325, 343, 359, 372, 387, 405, 421, 436, 452, 469, 487, 500, 519, 533, 553, 566, 579, 596
S.O.S. By F. O. O. 299
STOLEN GUESTS. By Albert G. Mackinnon 561, 586, 599
Story of Lochan-na-Cheaird, The. By C. C. Maconochie 781
Tank B2411. By Jack Spur 157
That Blessed Fog. By John S. Margerison . 397
Twins of Bryan Broadwater, The. By Mrs W. F. Irvine Bell 428
'VERY CHRISTIAN SEÑOR, THE.' By G. Trevor Roller 650, 665
Wanted—A Prisoner 669
WAY HOME, THE. By Patrick Macgill . 353, 380
WINGS OF THE MORNING, THE. By John A. Steuart 273, 296
WITHIN TOUCH. A Story of Cromwellian Times. By G. Appleby Terrill . 625, 644, 660

389592

ARTICLES OF INSTRUCTION AND ENTERTAINMENT.

PAGE

Acoustic Echoes of the Great War . . . 539
Adventures in Turkestan, An English Girl's. By Florence Fuller-Neary . . . 449, 555
Air, The Last Three Months of War in the. By Captain D. R. Maclaren, D.S.O., M.C. and Bar, D.F.C. 305, 327
Antarctic Exploration, The Renewal of. By R. C. Mossman, F.R.S.E. 517
Archæological Researches in Italy, Recent Excavations and. By Ivan Lavretsky . . 170
Argentina, Scotland Comes to. By John Aulay Steele 14
Art, Nature and. 248
Ascension Natural History Notes . . . 110
Ashanti in the Twentieth Century. By David Boyle 525
Asia's Most Famous Treasure-Hoard . . 155
'Balance of Nature,' and the New Entomology, The. By C. A. Ealand, M.A. . . . 549
Baptism of Fire. By R. P. Hughes. . . . 43
Baptism of Fire, A 350
Bartholomew, St—A Little-Known French Possession. By the Rev. Montague L. Foyle. 90
Battle, Before the. By F. O. O. 203
Battle of 1666, The Four Days'. By H. W. Household, M.A. 241
Bee and a Beetle, A 453
Beyonds. By Bart Kennedy 565
Bird-Life in the Canadian Bush and Something of Hunting. By Herbert T. Grant . . 635
Blinded Soldier, St Dunstan's and the. By an Officer-Pupil 182
'Bloody Fall' Murder, The. By George C. Wells 286
Borneo, A Fortnight in 701
Brazil, Diamonds and Carbonado in. By Ashmore Russan 311
Buddhist Monasteries. By David Boyle . . 85
Calcutta or Cape Town, Charing Cross to . 423
Cambridge, The New Teaching at . . . 646
Canadian Bush, Bird-Life in the, and Something of Hunting. By Herbert T. Grant . 635
Cannel Coal 389
Cape Town or Calcutta, Charing Cross to . 423
Carbonado and Diamonds in Brazil. By Ashmore Russan 311
Chapter from a Journalist's Diary. By Sir Henry Lucy. 628
Charing Cross to Calcutta or Cape Town . . 423
Chinese Crew, Doctoring a 76
Closing of Our Hospital, The. By 'Staff Nurse' 335
Coal, Cannel 389
Cocaine Habit in India, The 106
Coincidences, Striking: The War and the Planets. By John J. Ross, M.A., B.A. . 289
Coins, My Old Greek. By Edwin Wooton . 426
Commercial Traveller in War-Time, The. By Peter Rintoul 201
Concrete. By Thomas Potter 235
Congress of Vienna, 1814–1815, The. By Sir Richard Lodge, LL.D. . . . 17, 87

PAGE

Consciousness. By Bart Kennedy 733
Consular Service, Humours of the. By a Retired Consul 730
Cotton-Seed, The Industrial Value of 'Residual Fibres' on 654
Crumpled Rose-Leaves. By Lady Skerrington 705
Curative Agents, Vegetables as 668
Curiosities of the Peerage. By Charles G. Harper 694
Curlews, The Coming of the. By H. Mortimer Batten 734
Customs and Superstitions, Some Rumanian. By R. Carnegie 812
Diamonds and Carbonado in Brazil. By Ashmore Russan 311
Diary, A Chapter from a Journalist's. By Sir Henry Lucy 628
Doctoring a Chinese Crew 76
Drugs, Indian Hemp 718
East Africa, A Holiday in 165
Entomology, The New, and the 'Balance of Nature.' By C. A. Ealand, M.A. . . . 549
Ex Aqua Omnia. By C. E. Benson 132
Fairy-Tales of South Africa. By E. L. M'Pherson 756
Fallacy in Tactics, A. By R. P. Hughes . 433
Far North, On a River of the. By G. Lindesay 484
Fife, Some Curious Corners of the 'Kingdom' of. By W. T. Linskill 494
Fig, The Romance of the Smyrna. By Charles Ray 577
First Leave 64
Fish and Fisheries, The Future of. By W. V. Roberts 277
Fishing with Water-Bombs. By Æsculapius . 470
Four Days' Battle of 1666, The. By H. W. Household, M.A.. 241
Fruit-Growing in Britain and America, Scientific. By Charles Ray 11
Germans and Natives in New Guinea. By Thomas J. M'Mahon 73
German Trade with Latin-America. By M. C. Beverley 724
Gold. By R. Mordaunt 151
Gold, More about the Magic of. By James Beattie 489
Greek Coins, My Old. By Edwin Wooton . 426
Greenland, In North 341
Heart of Things, The. By Henry Leach 49, 113, 177, 257, 321, 401, 465, 529, 609, 673, 737, 817
Heirs, Romances of Missing. By John G. Rowe 366
Hemp Drugs, Indian 718
Honey-Bees Depose Royalty, How. By Canning Williams 502
Hospital, The Closing of Our. By 'Staff Nurse' 335
How the War Came Home. By Lauchlan MacLean Watt 81
Immortal Vagabond, An. By Arthur L. Hayward 825
Indian Hemp Drugs 718

PAGE

Inherited Habit a Factor in Plant-Life . . 345
Internment, Social, Mental, and Moral Effects of. By Tom Govett 457
Italy, Recent Excavations and Archæological Researches in. By Ivan Lavretsky . . 170
Jewel-House, The Keeper of the. By Major-General Sir George Younghusband, K.C.M.G. 657
'Jollies,' The—A Reunited and Happy Family. By Lord Teignmouth 763
Journalist's Diary, A Chapter from a. By Sir Henry Lucy 628
Kassa-Wa-Wa, The Songster. By H. Mortimer Batten 641
Keeper of the Jewel-House, The. By Major-General Sir George Younghusband, K.C.M.G. 657
Laconics. By George F. M. Cocks . . . 589
Ladies' Gallery, The. By W. H. Moyes . . 197
Land of Curious Smells, The 349
Last Trail, The. By F. St Mars . . 209, 238
Latin-America, German Trade with. By M. C. Beverley 724
Lawyer's Papers, More Dust from an English. By G. H. Browning 775
Leave, First 64
Leeches. By Mrs F. A. Douglas . . . 294
Literary Metamorphoses. By Sir George Douglas, Bart. 357
London, Some Odd Things about. By C. G. Harper
I.—The City 807
II.—The West End 823
Magic of Gold, More about the. By James Beattie 489
Maigre, Un Jour—Wireless Messages. By Mrs W. F. Irvine Bell 509
Marché, Un Jour de—Wireless Messages. By Mrs W. F. Irvine Bell 315
Mecca the Mysterious. By Ernest Phillips . 216
Mersey Terriers. By Oswald Wildridge . . 767
Metamorphoses, Literary. By Sir George Douglas, Bart. 357
Missing Heirs, Romances of. By John G. Rowe 366
Monasteries, Buddhist. By David Boyle . 85
Moon, Round about the 521
More about the Magic of Gold. By James Beattie 489
Mosul-Nineveh. By Louise Peralta . . 23
Murder, The 'Bloody Fall.' By George C. Wells 286
Natal, Sugar-Cane Growing in. By James Paterson 459
Natural History Notes, Ascension . . . 110
Nature and Art 248
'Nature, The Balance of,' and the New Entomology. By C. A. Ealand, M.A. . . . 549
Nettles, Nourishment from. By I. I. Brants . 298
New Guinea, Germans and Natives in. By Thomas J. M'Mahon 73
New Teaching at Cambridge, The . . . 646
Nourishment from Nettles. By I. I. Brants . 298
Origins. By Charles G. Harper . . . 5
'Pacific, The Pearl of the.' By W. Scott Lorrie 597

PAGE

Pastoral Reminiscences. By Sir George Douglas, Bart. 764
'Pearl of the Pacific, The.' By W. Scott Lorrie 597
Peat-Moss as an Agricultural Asset . . . 267
Peerage, Curiosities of the. By Charles G. Harper 694
Perse School, The—The New Teaching at Cambridge 646
Planets, The War and the: Striking Coincidences. By John J. Ross, M.A., B.A. 289
Plant-Life, Inherited Habit a Factor in . . 345
Platinum Substitute, A New. By G. Basil Barham, C.E. 595
Princes Street, Edinburgh, Some Memories, Chiefly Literary, of 711
Proverbs of Scottish History, The. By Charles Menmuir, M.A. 497
Quinine Habit, The. 444
Railway Robbers, Modern Methods of. By S. T. James 794
Ravensheugh Toll, The Episode of. By Sir James Balfour Paul, C.V.O., LL.D. . . 615
Recalcitrant Chief, A. By C. G. Nurse . . 369
Redrib. By H. Mortimer Batten . . . 759
Reminiscences, Pastoral. By Sir George Douglas, Bart. 764
'Residual Fibres', on Cotton-Seed, The Industrial Value of 654
Rhodes, Cecil. Some Personal Reminiscences. By Sir Henry Lucy 145
River of the Far North, On a. By G. Lindesay 484
R. L. S. as Playmate. By 'Lantern-Bearer' . 583
Robbers, Railway, Modern Methods of. By S. T. James. 794
Rose-Garden, The World's Biggest . . . 780
Rubbish. By Doxa Foy 118
Rumanian Customs and Superstitions, Some. By R. Carnegie 812
Russian Revolution, A Sidelight on the. By Vladimir Poliakoff 361
Samarkand—An English Girl's Adventures in Turkestan. By Florence Fuller-Neary . 555
Scotland comes to Argentina. By John Aulay Steele 14
Scottish History, The Proverbs of. By Charles Menmuir, M.A. 497
Scottish Street Names, More. By G. M. Fraser 438
Shale-Oil Industry, The 534
Shikari, The Killing of a. By F. C. C. . . 777
Silver. By R. Mordaunt 569
Singapore Mutiny and Other War Experiences, The. By E. D. Ward 801
Smells, The Land of Curious 349
Smyrna Fig, The Romance of the. By Charles Ray 577
Snake-Poison, Spitting-Snakes and. By H. A. Bryden 663
Soho Square, Old. By Francis Steuart . . 374
S.O.S. By F. O. O. 299
South Africa, Fairy-Tales of. By E. L. M'Pherson 756

PAGE

Spitting-Snakes and Snake-Poison. By H. A. Bryden 663
Sports. A Story of the Wild. By F. St Mars 697
St Dunstan's and the Blinded Soldier. By an Officer-Pupil 182
St James's Park. By E. Beresford Chancellor, M.A., F.R.Hist.S. 601
St Martin and St Eustatius—Off the Beaten Track in the West Indies. By the Rev. Montague L. Foyle 281
State Trials, Concerning 789
Street Names, More Scottish. By G. M. Fraser 438
Sugar-Cane Growing in Natal. By James Paterson 459
Superstitions and Customs, Some Rumanian. By R. Carnegie 812
Tactics, A Fallacy in. By R. P. Hughes. . 433
Tana, The—On a River of the Far North. By G. Lindesay 484
Tashkent during Ramazan—An English Girl's Adventures in Turkestan. By Florence Fuller-Neary 449
Teaching, A Scientific Method of. By J. Strachan, M.D. 385, 407
Tiahuanaco Mystery, The. By John Sharp . 302
Titicaca, Lake 138
Togoland, Hitting the Beach at. By Captain Monahan 721, 743
Trade with Latin-America, German. By M. C. Beverley 724
Trafalgar, After. By H. W. Household, M.A. 769
Travel in War and Peace. By A. Russell Walker 68
Treasure-Hoard, Asia's Most Famous . . 155
Trials, Concerning State 789
Trout, The Growth of. By A. T. Johnson . 420

PAGE

Turkestan, An English Girl's Adventures in. By Florence Fuller-Neary.
I.—Tashkent during Ramazan . . 449
II.—Samarkand 555
Two Starts: What they have Taught Me. By a Demobilised Officer 747
United States, The War and the. By Captain H. W. Yoxall 160
Vagabond, An Immortal. By Arthur L. Hayward 825
Vegetables as Curative Agents 665
Vienna, The Congress of, 1814–1815. By Sir Richard Lodge, LL.D. . . . 17, 37
Wanted—A Prisoner 669
War, Acoustic Echoes of the Great . . . 539
War and the Planets, The: Striking Coincidences. By John J. Ross, M.A., B.A. . 287
War and the United States, The. By Captain H. W. Yoxall 100
War-Ball, The. By Bart Kennedy . . . 263
War Came Home, How the. By Lauchlan MacLean Watt 81
War in the Air, The Last Three Months of the. By Captain D. R. Maclaren, D.S.O., M.C. and Bar, D.F.C. 305, 327
War-Time, The Commercial Traveller in. By Peter Rintoul 201
Water-Bombs, Fishing with. By Æsculapius 470
Weeds, Back to the—Nourishment from Nettles. By I. I. Brants 298
West Indies, Off the Beaten Track in the. By the Rev. Montague L. Foyle . . . 281
Wireless Messages. By Mrs W. F. Irvine Bell.
II.—Un Jour de Marché 315
III.—Un Jour Maigre 509
'Yellow Jack.' By John D. Leckie. . . 230

POETRY.

Aftermath, The. By J. M. 768
'Also Rans.' By V. H. F. 144
Apocalypse. By M. Hedderwick Browne . 672
Australia—The Spirit of the Bush . . . 448
'Backsheesh, Sa'b.' By W. J. Harris . . 624
Bogles. By Maria Steuart 800
Dreamer, The. By M. M. Haldane . . . 704
Dusk, At. By Nita H. Padwick . . . 560
Forest Thought, A. By Constance Farmar . 256
Foxglove, To the. By Haslehurst Greaves . 176
Gift, The. By A. T. Corke 544
Gipsy Love. By J. M. Stuart-Young . . 112
'Good-Night.' By Helen Wilkie . . . 224
Hearts Courageous. By Gilbert Rae . . 720
Highland Night: 1715—1815—1915. By Isabel Wescott Harper 16
If Lilac always Lasted. By Pauline W. Roose 240
Lads that Were, The. By Hilda Skae . . 288
Lines Written for a Mother's War Album. By a South African 64
Lines Written in the Indian Ocean. By F. O. B. 432
Love-Light. By Fred. W. Bayliss . . . 48
Martha. By R. B. 416
Message, The. By J. M. Stuart-Young . . 480
Moonlight. By Dora Nicol 272
Nightingale, The 496
Old Church and the New, The. By J. M. H. . 320
Old Yew-Tree, The. By N. L. Wallace . . 128
Orkney, To. By G. W. 384
Parting. By Agnes L. Hillman . . . 304
Red-House Garden, The. By Robert R. Thompson 688
Rondeau. By F. C. L. S. 400
Shadows. By Allan Sanderson . . . 80
Shadows. By A. Milne 784
South-West Breeze in London, A. By Inger A. MacLeod 816
Summer. By Lilian Holmes 368
Tantallon. By W. Roberts 608
Threepenny-Bit, The. By J. K. Turton . . 352
Two Railway Stations By William T. Ellis . 571
Village War-Memorial, The. By James T. Johnston 656
Voyage, The. By Lilian Holmes . . . 528
Waltz of the Leaves, The. By Lorna Keeling Collard 736
Wayfarer, The. By Hilda Skae . . . 512
Western Men, The. By G. E. Merrick . . 640
Youth. By J. D. Hessey 96
Youth and Age. By B. Dunbar Dey . . 160

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

	PAGE
Aeroplanes' Performance Predicted by Models	267
Aeroplane, The Largest in the World	541
Aeroplane, Versatility of the	58
Afforestation	190
Agricultural Railways	188
Airships, Non-Inflammable Gas for	333
Alloy, New Heat-Resisting	414
Arched Houses without Roofs	830
Automatic Guide-Book, An	750
Bath from the Copper, A Hot	331
Beech-Nuts as a Source of Food	189
Bicycles, Unpuncturable Tires for	58
Blockhouses for Banks	832
Book-keeping by Correspondence, Instruction in Farm	61
Bread, Stale, caused by Cold	749
Briquette-Maker for the Home, A	334
Buckled Ship, Straightening a	749
Buildings Removed Intact, Large	416
Butterfly's Strange Protective Devices	188
Canal, Mediterranean to Persian Gulf by	333
Canal, The Grand, of China, to be put in Order	189
Carburetter for Motor-Cars, New Paraffin	750
Carnauba Tree of Brazil, The	271
Carpet-Sweeper and Vacuum Cleaner, Combined	623
Channel-Ferry Scheme, Huge	332
Charge-Bags for Heavy Guns, Cotton	58
China, The Grand Canal of, to be put in Order	189
Cinema-Film Factory, A Large	620
Circulars, An Improved Machine for Producing Typewritten	476
Clothes from Peat	270
Coal and Iron in Spitsbergen	125
Coal-Handling Plant, Enormous	476
Coal-Saver for Open Fires, Ingenious	124
Cold Causes Bread to become Stale	749
Concrete for Railway Trucks	683
Concrete Houses, Cheap	681
Concrete Piles, Water-Jets Sink	830
Conscious Insensibility	414
Cooker, A Gas-Saving	269
Cooker, An Easily Made Fireless	126
Cooker, An Electric-Lamp	123
Cooker, Another Fireless	413
Cooking and Heating, Exhaust Gases from Motors for	59
Cooler, Home-Made Food	751
Copper, A Hot Bath from the	331
Cotton Charge-Bags for Heavy Guns	58
Cotton, Machine for Picking	124
Cross-Channel Train-Ferries, The	268
Dew, Water-Supplies from	268
Diary, A Gas-Consumption Recording	60
Diving-Bell for Salvaging, A New	751
Door, A New Form of	57
Double Saucepan, A Novel Form of	477
Dried Meat	542
Dried Vegetables for the United States Army	125
Dust-Bins, Huge Vacuum Cleaner for Emptying	621
Earth to the Moon, From the	189
Economiser, Gas-Ring	624
Electric Currents, Fish Stopped by	188
Electric-Lamp Cooker, An	123
Erosion, Felled Trees Stop River	832
Exhaust Gases from Motors for Cooking and Heating	59
Factory, Eliminating Fatigue in the	541
Farm Book-keeping by Correspondence, Instruction in	61
Farm without Horses, Huge	752
Fatigue in the Factory, Eliminating	541
Ferro-Concrete Flagstaff	830
Ferro-Concrete Shipbuilding	57
Fertiliser, A New—Tetraphosphate	58
Fibre Gramophone-Needles in the Making	683
Film Factory, A Large Cinema	620
Fireless Cooker, An Easily Made	126
Fireless Cooker, Another	413
Fish Stopped by Electric Currents	188
Fish to Exterminate Mosquitoes, Breeding	413
Flagstaff, Ferro-Concrete	830
Flying 'Stunts' on the Ground	543
Food-Cooler, Home-Made	751
Gas-Consumption Recording Diary, A	60
Gases from Motors for Cooking and Heating, Exhaust	59
Gas for Airships, Non-Inflammable	333
Gas-Range, A New	682
Gas Ring Economiser	624
Gas-Saving Cooker, A	269
Germ of Yellow-Fever, The	415
Gramophone, A New Type of	474
Gramophone-Needles in the Making, Fibre	683
Grand Canal of China to be put in Order, The	189
Guide-Book, An Automatic	750
Gun Range of One Hundred and Twenty-one Miles, A	474
Guns, Cotton Charge-Bags for Heavy	58
'Hay-Box' de Luxe, A	269
Heat-Resisting Alloy, New	414
Horses, Huge Farm without	752
Hot Bath from the Copper, A	331
Houses, Cheap Concrete	681
Houses without Roofs, Arched	830
India, Water-Power in	126
Insensibility, Conscious	414
Iron and Coal in Spitsbergen	125
Kitchen-Range, Oil-Fuel for the	125
Knife-Sharpener, A New	413
Liquid Air and the War	270
Locomotives, Gigantic American	59
Log Raft, The World's Biggest	332
Lottery Bond Numbers, Drawing	682
Meat, Dried	542
Mediterranean to Persian Gulf by Canal	333
Microbes Killed by Pressure	622
Micro-Telescope, The	474
Milk Saucepan, A New	414
Mine-Sweeper for every Ship, A	334
Moon, From the Earth to the	189
Mosquitoes, Breeding Fish to Exterminate	413
Motor, A New Push-Bike	830

	PAGE
Motor-Cars, New Paraffin Carburetter for	750
Motor-Cycles, A Pillion-Saddle for	621
Motor-Spirit from Peat	415
Mount Morgan Mine, The Famous	544
Nets for Workmen, Safety	58
Night-Light, A Cheap Paraffin	541
Oil-Fuel for the Kitchen-Range	125
Oil in Sweden, New Source of	60
Oil-Stove, A Clean, Silent, and Efficient	831
Operations without Unconsciousness, Painless	682
Ore-Loading Plant, Huge	830
Paraffin Carburetter for Motor-Cars, New	750
Paraffin Night-Light, A Cheap	541
Peat, Clothes from	270
Peat, Motor-Spirit from	415
Persian Gulf by Canal, Mediterranean to	333
Petrol Storage-Tank, A Safe	622
Piles, Water-Jets Sink Concrete	830
Pillion-Saddle for Motor-Cycles, A	621
Plugs for Plaster Walls, Screw	412
Pressure, Microbes Killed by	622
Protection from Rust, Increased	475
Protective Devices, Butterfly's Strange	188
Push-Bike Motor, A New	830
Raft, The World's Biggest Log	332
Railways, Agricultural	188
Railway Trucks, Concrete for	683
Railway Wheels, Rolling Steel	621
River Erosion, Felled Trees Stop	832
Riveted Joints for Ships, Welded instead of	60
Rust, Increased Protection from	475
Safety-Nets for Workmen	58
Salvaging, A New Diving-Bell for	751
Salved Parts Make One Whole Ship	413
Salving Devices, Novel Ship	831
Saucepan, A New Milk	414
Saucepan, A Novel Form of Double	477
Science in the Great War	750
Screw Plugs for Plaster Walls	412
Shipbuilding, Ferro-Concrete	57
Ship-Salving Devices, Novel	831
Ship, Straightening a Buckled	749
Soap Substitutes in Germany	475
Soil Sterilised with the Aid of Steam	681
Spitsbergen, Coal and Iron in	125
Stale, Cold causes Bread to become	749
Steel Soldiers for Front-Line Trenches	187
Step-Ladder, Safety	60
Sterilising the Soil with the Aid of Steam	681
Stove, A Clean, Silent, Efficient Oil	831
Stretcher, A New Form of	332
Sunlight, Telephoning by	622
Sweden, New Source of Oil in	60
Tank, A Safe Petrol Storage	622
Tank, The 'Baby'	187
Telephoning by Sunlight	622
Tetraphosphate—A New Fertiliser	58
Tin Cans, Utilisation of Old	624
Tires for Bicycles, Unpuncturable	58
Train-Ferries, The Cross-Channel	268
Tree, A Wonderful—The Carnauba Tree of Brazil	271
Trees, Felled, Stop River Erosion	832
Trucks, Concrete for Railway	683
Twenty-six-Thousand-Mile Run without Moving, The Equivalent of a	415
Typewritten Circulars, An Improved Machine for Producing	476
Unconsciousness, Painless Operations without	682
Vacuum Cleaner, A New Hand	623
Vacuum Cleaner, Combined Carpet-Sweeper and	623
Vacuum Cleaner for Emptying Dust-Bins, Huge	621
Vegetables, Dried, for the United States Army	125
Warships, The World's Longest	542
Washing-Machine for the Home, New	680
Water-Jets Sink Concrete Piles	830
Water-Pipes, A New Appliance for Scraping	544
Water-Pipes that do not Freeze	543
Water-Power in India	126
Water-Supplies from Dew	268
Welded instead of Riveted Joints for Ships	60
Wheels, Rolling Steel Railway	621
White-Painted Tanks Economise Petrol	189
Yellow-Fever, The Germ of	415

EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER CONTENTS.

MERRIE GENTLEMEN	By Arthur Beverley Baxter	1
'IMPHM!' SAID MRS KNOX	By Mary Stuart Boyd	23
THE KHAMSIN	By J. A. Nimmo	36
THE FALL TRIUMPHANT	By C. L. M. Brown	37

Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

JOHN BROWN.

CONFESSIONS OF A NEW ARMY CADET.

By R. W. CAMPBELL, Author of *Private Spud Tamson; Dorothy, V.A.D., and the Doctor;* &c

CHAPTER I.—THE CADET SCHOOL.

NO doubt you have seen, in the highways and byways, a lot of youths in khaki with white bands round their caps. These 'boys' are called cadets, and are usually men home from the front to train for commissions. In Sandhurst they are officially styled gentlemen cadets; but apparently we are not supposed to be gentlemen—we 're just cadets. Funny, isn't it? But that 's the way of the army.

Well, my name is John Brown—a very ordinary name—and I 'm one of those fellows. Before the war I evaded toil by becoming a student, and spent a lot of time on 'ologies and 'osophies. Now I 'm learning to be a *pukka* officer, and the leader of sixty men to the cannon's mouth.

When I left my battalion for the cadet school I shed no tears. We were in the trenches, or, rather, in the mud. And it cost a pair of brand-new boots to get on to the road. However, I survived, and in due time landed at Windmoor. This is a 'blasted heath,' swept by the winds, and isolated from picture-shows, barmaids, and revues; not a petticoat in sight, and at every corner a notice which amounts to: 'England expects that every cadet this day will do his duty.'

'This is no Utopia,' I muttered, falling into the first hut by the way. Ye gods! There was an old colonel, with eyes like a hawk and cheeks like dumplings, and what do you think he was doing? *Cutting his corns.*

'What the—why the—who the devil *are* you, sah?'

'John Brown, sir,' I said meekly, for never in my life had I seen such a perfect relic of the Napoleonic wars.

'Get to blazes out of this, John Brown!' he roared, putting his fat feet on the floor and banging the door. I was again alone—on the blasted heath. The old gent inside was Colonel *Eat-All*, the commandant. Rumour says he devoured two dervishes at Omdurman. I stumbled on once more, and found the orderly-room.

'This way,' said Sergeant-Major Kneesup, introducing me to the adjutant. I clicked my heels in the style of a Guardsman, and saluted like a railway signal.

'Well?' said a blasé-looking gent with three pips, looking up at me from his papers.

'John Brown, sir.'

'Who sent you here?'

'The War Office.'

'Umph! I know nothing about you. You had better go back to your regiment for your papers.'

'But I can't go all the way to France, sir.'

'Well, no—perhaps not. Wait a minute,' he said, ringing a bell. A clerk answered.

'Have you any papers dealing with Cadet John Brown?'

'Yes, sir. Came a fortnight ago.'

'Thank you. That 's all.' The clerk went out.

'Oh, it 's all right, Brown. Just go over to No. 1 Company. You 'll see Sergeant-Major Smartem there. He 'll fix you up. Good luck!' he concluded with a genial smile. I saluted and went out, marvelling at the *methods* of the British Army.

I dug out the sergeant-major and again announced that I was John Brown.

'That 's a fine name to go to bed with.'

'It 's the one my mother gave me.'

'Oh, well, you can't help it. Here 's your blankets; there 's your bed. You 'll get your equipment to-morrow. Shove this white band on your cap. Tea 's at five o'clock. The lavatory 's down there. That 's the canteen over yonder. And when you want writing-paper, hymns, or free salvation, there 's a Y.M.C.A. down the road. Now, push off—*John Brown.*'

I was extremely grateful for all this information in tabloid form, but I had a lurking suspicion that my name was going to be a subject of rude jest. However, I am an optimist. I pitched my bag into a corner of the hut, pulled out a little book called *The Pleasures of Hope*, and commenced to read till tea-time. But I was disturbed. Cadet after cadet came filing in. They were all new and rather green, except one man, called Beefy Jones.

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'What a ruddy place for a cadet school!' he roared.

'My dear chap, it is designed to protect our morality,' muttered a spectacled youth, who looked like an ex-parson.

'Morality! After a year at the front! What a jest!' exclaimed Beefy, banging his kit down.

In half-an-hour we were all good pals. Beefy confided to me that he had a ripping girl five miles away, and she had a jolly sister. If I wanted an intro. it was all right. He would fix it up. While the ex-parson—Billy Greens by name—suggested that I might help him to hand out the hymn-books at Sunday services. I promised to do so. (My father was in the Diplomatic Service.) And so twenty of us settled down to life in our hut at Windmoor Cadet School.

Tea-time proved that the rations were good, and when Lieutenant Blessem (our platoon officer) came round for complaints, we shouted, 'None, sir.'

'That 's a good start,' he said with a smile. 'I want you boys to be happy here. If you 're in trouble, or want to know anything, come down to my hut, and I 'll help you. But remember this, boys'——

'What, sir?' said Beefy.

'This platoon has got to be top-hole at everything.'

'Hear, hear, sir!' we roared, rattling our plates as he went out. Blessem was a sport. After tea we got piles of books thrown at us, as well as the standing orders of the school—a moral code akin to the Koran, insisting on sobriety, sincerity, and big salaams. These orders confirmed that ancient theory that women and wine are the root of all evil.

Beefy grinned, then shoved me on the back of his motor-bike and whirled me over to Sweetville, where I was introduced to Adela, a peach of a girl, who had never been kissed. What luck!

It was 7 P.M. when I met Adela. I kissed her at 9; promised to marry her at 9.15; and at 9.30 (to the minute) Beefy and I were answering roll-call at the camp five miles away. Some hustle—eh, what?

We made our beds down and got in between the blankets. About 'lights out' there was an infernal din outside the hut. Somebody was running round shouting, 'John Brown! Where the 'ell 's John Brown?' Then some fifty huts started a chorus of—

'John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave, As we go marching along,' &c., &c.

Beefy led the chorus in our own hut—much to my annoyance. At last the door opened, and the sergeant-major bawled, 'Silence!' They shut up. He next inquired if John Brown lived there.

'Yes, sergeant-major. Here I am.'

'Telegram for you.'

'Oh, thanks,' I muttered, thinking it was some wonderful effusion from Adela. On opening the brown envelope I read: 'Sending you cough-drops, Keating's powder, and body-belt.—MOTHER.'

As the lights went down I thought of the dear, good soul who was so careful of my welfare. Mothers may be silly, but *they always love their boys.*

. . . . . .

Next morning we were routed out at reveille and hunted off to tub ourselves in an open-air wash-house. One fellow, 'Ginger Thomson,' objected. We carried him out and flung him into the bath—clothes and all. There was no early parade that day, so we got ready for the commandant's inspection at 10 A.M. This was a real good show. We were formed up in close column of platoons. At 10 A.M. (to the minute) Colonel Eat-All came bouncing on to the parade-ground—like a great Rugby football—dressed in khaki and splashed with ribbons. He had every decoration from the Order of the Blue Nile to a Companionship of Serajobitch (with swords). My word, he looked his part! I trembled.

'Well, gentlemen,' he said, 'I 'm glad to meet you. I hope we 'll get on together, but I 'll have no nonsense, no slacking, and no back-answers. I 've trained lions, burglars, and Gurkhas, and have commanded everything from mule transport to camel corps. You 're here to work—*work*. And when I 've finished with you, you 'll be fit to scale the Alps, and eat Germans or smelling Bulgars. You won't get strategy out of the *Bystander* or tactics from the *Pink-Un*. The infantry drill book is better than Nat Gould, and *Needham's Tactics* more important than the sexual stuff of Oscar Wilde. Keep out in the open air, and don't hug the stove and the tea-pot. Get your tummies hard, so that you can live on boot-leather, horse-flesh, and cinders. War is to the strong, and you 've got to be super-men—and gentlemen. We produce no jelly-fish in this emporium. We want "white men" and leaders. We 're up against the Hun. He isn't a d—— fool! Get that out of your headpieces. If you are going to beat him, you have got to know the tricks of Boney, the science of Maude, and the dare-devil tactics of Allenby. You can get all this *here*, if you pay attention and carry out your job. Good-luck to you!' And off he stamped, to the amusement of all. As he passed my platoon he caught sight of me. My mouth was open.

'What 's your name, my lad?'

'John Brown, sir.'

'Well, if you keep your mouth open like that in Mesopotamia, you 'll catch everything from black cholera to cerebro-spinal meningitis. Keep your mouth shut—John Brown!'

From that day every cadet in the battalion took up the gag of, '*Keep your mouth shut—John Brown!*'

CHAPTER II.—THE SERGEANT-MAJOR FROM THE GUARDS.

CADET schools are not perfect military academies; nevertheless, they are interesting resorts. This school is not only a fount of learning, but a school for manners and—in a way—a minor university. Although, as I have said, I was a student of 'osophies and 'ologies before the war, the discovery that my knowledge was limited soon came to me. This is a happy condition, and the only basis whereon to achieve future success. For all that, I am no groveller at the feet of lecturers. An officer must form his own opinions, and if I am going to be of any use in this military business, I must riddle the wheat from the chaff, and gather the harvest into my store. To be independent in thought is not uppish. It is personality! Personality is the whole thing in war, but never despise—*the other fellow.*

Now I have to make a confession. Before the war, when I was blundering around with golf-clubs and feminine charmers, the Brigade of Guards often passed my way. This seemed a wonderful machine, officered by men whom I imagined to be Beau Brummels and Byrons. Well-drilled automatons was all I thought of them. To me they were just fancy soldiers and ornaments of the Court. But who would say that now? Think of Ypres! And remember Cambrai! When the line was broken and the brigade I was in was 'bu'st,' they came up like Trojans. They crossed the lines of trenches almost dressing by the right. Their faces were set, their bayonets shone, and they dived into hell and destruction with a valour that was amazing. They saved the British Army—and fifty men on the General Staff their jobs.

Salute the Guards!

Now, at this school to which I, John Brown, was sent to learn the arts of war, our sergeant-major was from the Scots Guards. He was a wonderful man! When he drilled us I hated him like the Kaiser, but when he had finished with us I felt a smarter man. Beefy Jones and I agreed that Sergeant-Major Kneesup was much too German, and yet, somehow, we wouldn't have given him to the Germans for quids. Oh, he was a big fish on parade. In appearance he was like a well-cut statue. His eyes were of the X-ray kind. He could tell when there was a hole in your socks, or cotton-wool (instead of a heavy greatcoat) in your pack. When he shouted he was like a fog-horn, and every command was finished with a *click* that gave you the jumps. Before we went on parade we cursed him, and vowed we would see him far enough before we jumped about like automatic toys; but when we got there he simply threw us about like kids. *The man was a marvel.*

That first parade! Oh, what a nightmare! Some of us were a bit late, for in the army you've got to be standing on parade five minutes before the hour allotted. The S.M. said nothing, but when the hour struck he bellowed 'Shun!' in a way that made half of us drop our rifles with fright.

'Pick 'em up! Pick 'em up! Look sharp!' he shouted.

I gripped my gun with a shiver, and knew the squad were about to enter Dante's Inferno.

'Squad! . . . Shun! . . . As you were!' he roared. 'When I say "*Shun!*" come up to it. . . . There's cobwebs in your brains, and wax in your ears. . . . Stand still, that man with the egg on his mouth, and hair like Caruso. . . . I can see *all* of you. . . . I am a blankety octopus, I am.'

'Squad! . . . Shun! . . . Still! . . . Not a move! . . . There's a long-nosed gentleman twiddling his little fingers as if he's got St Vitus Dance. . . . This isn't a home for epileptics or a sanatorium for delirium tremens. . . . It's an officers' school, and I belong to the Brigade of Guards. . . . Twenty-five years' service, five medals, and the D.C.M. . . . I've drilled kings, princes, field-marshals, yokels, and hobos; and, by Gawd! I'll drill you off the face of the earth. . . . By the right—quick march!' And off we stepped.

'He's a bit thick,' mumbled Beefy to me.

Now, Beefy had hardly worked his lips when he made the remark, but the eagle eye of that S.M. had caught the culprit.

'Squad—halt!'

We stopped in terror, and poor old Beefy began to perspire with fright.

'Now, I'll have no talking on the march, and no back-answers. . . . Discipline is discipline! If you can't keep your mouth shut on the square, you'll jabber on a night attack. . . . I'm the gramophone in this business. . . . I can read your thoughts and see your brains. . . . To me you're all as plain as a pikestaff. . . . I've only seen you ten minutes, but I've ticked off the lame, the lazy, the insubordinate, and the mad. . . . I'm Sherlock Holmes, I am. By the right—quick march! . . . A full step now! Shoulders square. . . . Heads erect. . . . March like the Guards. . . . Left—right—left . . . left . . . left—right—left. . . . Right—form! . . . Slowly now—slowly! . . . Swing round like a gate! Get back, that man with the nicotine on his fingers, and the brilliantine running down his neck. . . . Forward—by the right!

'Keep your dressing, there. By Gawd! I could get the Chinese Militia or the Boys' Brigade to beat you at this game. Heads up,

or you'll drop your eyeballs. . . . Straighten your legs like sticks, and don't double your backs like bloods in Bond Street. About—turn! . . . By the left. . . . Keep your hands down. . . . Never mind the sweat on the brow. . . . Let the flies lick it off. . . . Keep up. Keep up. . . . You'd never make a show at Buckingham Palace or Hyde Park. . . . If you can't drill, you can't beat the Germans. . . . Keep your dressing, there! . . . When the Brigade of Guards went into action at Ypres, they marched by the right and filled the gaps of the dead to keep a straight line. . . . When I fought at Belmont and Graspan, my company marched into action with whiskers, eyeballs, and tummies all in line. . . . That's the thing to put the fear of God into the enemy. Squad—halt! . . . Not a move! . . . Order—arms! . . . Stand at—ease! As you were! Who said "easy"? . . . None of your infantry dodges here. That's all right for an armed mob—not for me. Squad—stand—easy!'

'He's the ruddy limit,' said Beefy.

'Yes. This isn't a school—it's a bally penitentiary,' I said, wiping the perspiration off my brow. My shirt was sticking to my back, and I felt beastly uncomfortable. At the moment I hated Sergeant-Major Knees-up, but yet in my real heart I admired him. He was a man's man, hard as nails, merciless to the inefficient, but the A and the Z of that wonderful system which has made the Brigade of Guards a terror to every despot in Germany. As we looked at him walking up and down the square he resembled a true-born aristocrat, and yet he was once a ploughman. A wonderful product of a hard, yet marvellous, system.

'Squad—shun! . . . Stand—easy! Now, come round here, boys. I'm going to talk with you.'

The term 'boys' melted our fears, and we gathered about him.

'It's like this! A lot of you imagine when you get knocked about that it's a sort of punishment, for I know your thoughts. I've been through all this. When I joined the Guards we did the old-fashioned slope. They used to stick you close to a wall, and if you were not smart the wall tore all the skin off your fingers when you chucked the rifle up. That has been done away with, but the old-fashioned discipline remains. Some of you may think it brutal, but, believe me, it gets results. It makes men smart. It makes them obey. It turns them into gentlemen. I used to be a ploughman—now I've got a pension, a little pub, and a farm. I wouldn't call the Kaiser my cousin, and I learned *everything* in the Guards.'

'But don't you think we need more intelligence and less of this Peninsular stuff, sergeant-major?'

'Not a bit less. Men are still the same—very human. Let drill, discipline, and orders slide, and your men will get panicky for the want of it. Now take my tip; all of you boys are going to be officers, so model your drill on mine. Your men will hate you at first, just as you hate me when I'm knocking you about, but when your colonel turns round and says, "Lieutenant John Brown has the smartest-drilled platoon in this battalion," the men will lick your boots for you. Tommy's a funny fellow. He doesn't really admire a slack officer. He likes the officer who knows his job. If you want to get them up to the scratch, drill like the Brigade of Guards.'

'But look here, sergeant-major, aren't other corps as good as the Guards?' I inquired.

'Certainly, my boy. But still I must tell you this, that the Guards are nearly always kept in reserve, not because they are pets, but to save awkward situations. It's not we that should be saying it, but you'll admit that at Cambrai we managed to keep things right, eh?'

'By Jove, you did!' exclaimed a few of the cadets who had been there.

'Whatever regiment you join, you've got to feel and believe that your regiment is *It*. Every regiment has different traditions. There's the Old Devons, Wilts, Surreys, and all the Highland corps. They're wonderful stuff. And if I dared to talk to them about the Guards they'd bash my head in. And quite right, too! That's *esprit de corps*. But at the moment you are all cadets. You belong to no regiment, and if I can hand on any of the good ideas I've got from other good men, you will profit by it.'

'But it's ruddy hard to learn from you, sergeant-major,' piped Beefy, who was still steaming with perspiration.

'My dear boy, I'm mild compared to some. When I was a "rookie" I used to come in with my feet bleeding, my heart pumping like an engine, and limbs like lead. You don't really know what drill is. I'm mild—real mild. And when you've finished here we'll all part good friends. Don't worry! A number nine pill will help you through all right. You're too fat. Now, fall in!'

For the next half-hour he knocked us about like ninepins. Every nerve, every muscle, was on the jump. He knew every trick of drill, and turned us inside-out. To an observer it must have been a treat to watch him. But to us it was more or less hell. Yet he quickened our wits and roused our ardour so that every man Jack said, 'Well, it's up to us to knock spots off the Guards.' And that was his real and only aim, for he was a true soldier. He dismissed us with a smile, and said we weren't really a bad lot. We rejoiced.

I was so delighted after the 'Dismiss' that

I commenced to throw my rifle up in the air, and catch it.

'Hi, there!' shouted the S.M.

'Yes, sir.'

'What's your name?'

'John Brown, sir.'

'Carry your arms properly—*John Brown.*'

(*Continued on page 20.*)

ORIGINS.

By CHARLES G. HARPER.

THE origins of things is a subject which affords quaint and curious employment for the speculative mind, whether those things are phrases or material objects; for just as there is a reason for everything, so also those reasons, often very obscure, generally prove to be exceedingly interesting and instructive. It was only the other day, for example, that some correspondent of a daily paper was permitted to accuse the dignified upper ranks of the clergy of ostentation in their dress because archbishops, bishops, and archdeacons wear gaiters and aprons, and have strings to their hats. Had he known better, had he possessed any historical knowledge of the development of dress, this correspondent could not have fallen into such an error, and must have been reduced to criticising the hierarchy of the Church of England on some other and more legitimate ground. For why do those clerics wear gaiters and aprons? Because in the old days it was part of their duty to ride on horseback on their visitations in rural districts. Gaiters were necessary for horsemen; and the clerical cassock, an impossible garment on such occasions, was curtailed into the merest remnant of that ecclesiastical garb, and became the 'apron' of to-day, the survival of an era forgotten by most people. To the same cause must be referred the hat-strings, which were originally devised to tie back the broad hat-brims of those days, which in rain and wind would have greatly inconvenienced a horseman. That ecclesiastical personages should still wear these articles is merely one instance of many in all classes in which evolution and that essential conservatism which distinguishes the British character are seen side by side. As well might we criticise the soldier's full-dress uniform, as seen in the red tunics of pre-war days, and declare the scarlet to be ostentatious. It was originally selected because it was the colour of the royal livery; and it is not to be forgotten that the army was (whatever the position may really be now) 'His Majesty's.' In like manner, the buttons on sleeve-cuffs and on the back of the tunic, which became mere ornamental adjuncts, were originally intended to button back the cuffs and to support the waist-belt.

A comprehensive survey of dress, uniforms, and robes would reveal many curious and forgotten things, and would open up a very large field of inquiry. Let us take one point—that of the ermine worn on occasions of ceremony by sovereigns, by peers and peeresses, and always on the Bench by the Lord Chief-Justice and by some others of the judges. Ermine is the fur of the brown stoat in its winter dress, a kindly provision of nature which helps to preserve that animal from utter extinction by its enemies. In the snows of winter the stoat—on the well-known principle of 'protective colouration'—becomes a white-furred creature, and thus is scarcely to be distinguished from its surroundings. This winter change escaped the notice of our ancestors, who, in their simplicity, did not know the brown stoat in its winter habit, and considered it to be another creature—the 'ermine,' as they called it. And they imagined that the ermine was so cleanly a creature that it would sooner die than stain its white raiment. From this supposition to elevating the animal, and later its fur, into the symbol of purity, spiritual as well as physical, was an easy step; and thus ermine became an essential adjunct to the robes of kings, queens, the peerage, and the justiciary. It was a fine thought; and if some who have worn the ermine were not worthy of it, that does not by any means detract from a splendid and beautiful ideal.

To come from high moral principles deep down at one plunge into mere charlatanry is a descent we must make if we would seek the origin of that children's toy, 'Jack-in-the-box,' which originated in the thirteenth century in the trickery of the rector of North Marston, Buckinghamshire, combined with the credulity of his bucolic parishioners. John Schorne, the rector, for the proper keeping of himself in awe and admiration, devised a mechanical imp, working on a spring, which he fixed in the bottom of a long boot. He carried this about with him, and, pretending that he had got the Devil imprisoned in the boot, would exhibit him to the affrighted rustics by the mere pressure of the spring. This released the figure, which would jump up as though attempting to escape. Schorne was in his day, and for at least two centuries later, greatly reverenced. According to the then current rhyme:

> Master John Schorne,
> Gentleman born,
> Conjured Sathanas into a boot.

Pictured representations of him on the rood-screens of various country churches in England still exist, showing this arch-humbug holding a

long boot, with a little, horned, impish figure peeping over the top of it. There are, in all, seven of these pictures, each giving him, his imp, and his boot a very different aspect. They are at Alphington, Portlemouth, and Wolborough, in Devon; at Cawston, Gateley, and Suffield, Norfolk; and at Sudbury, Suffolk.

Coming now to objects and phrases in every-day use, we find some speculative interest in that sportsman's makeshift meal, the sandwich. It was the fourth Earl of Sandwich, John Montagu, who invented and gave a name to the sandwich. He was so keen a gambler that he was known to sit twenty-four hours at the card-table; and for one of those playing-bouts he conceived the idea of a slice of cold beef between two pieces of toast, at which he could take an occasional bite without interruption of the game. Such was the form of the first sandwich, a device which proved so excellent that, varied according to individual taste, it has remained popular since the time when 'Jemmy Twitcher' — as his contemporaries knew him—introduced it over a hundred and fifty years ago.

Some things have retained their name, while entirely losing that peculiar character which conferred it. Thus the glass vessel called a 'tumbler' no longer tumbles, unless, indeed, some exceptionally clumsy person overturns it. But the original tumbler was made expressly for the purpose of standing upright in every circumstance, whatever the provocation, and when it 'tumbled,' it did so after the manner in which a professional acrobat or gymnast tumbles. This characteristic is displayed by the silver tumblers belonging to All Souls College, Oxford. These are still occasionally in use on guest-nights, and are small round bowls about the size of a large orange. Placed when empty upon the table, mouth downwards, they refuse to remain in that position, and so perfect is their balance that they fly back to the upright, no matter how they are treated, as though asking to be filled again. But there was another kind of 'tumbler,' made with perhaps an even more hospitable intent. This was the vessel that would not by any chance or provocation stand upright, and it was so fashioned in order that shy drinkers should not shirk their drink, and should finish even the 'heeltaps.'

Of course, the seeker after the origins of expressions may very well, in his enthusiasm, go to absurd extremes, or be led into them by unscrupulous wags, like the literary critic, George Steevens (1736–1800), who delighted in the invention of false origins, to the shame and the annoyance of serious persons who were sometimes led to adopt them. Some of these were extremely ingenious, such as his two variants of the Shakespearian 'When the hurly-burly's done,' which at different times he declared (with his tongue in his cheek) to have been originally 'When the Earl of Burleigh's done,' or 'When the early purl is done.' In similar fashion some still maintain that the expression 'saunterer' etymologically denotes a person or a pilgrim who has journeyed in *La Sainte Terre*—the Holy Land. A measure of doubt is likewise advisable in the case of the derivation offered for the warning, 'Mind your p's and q's'—not often heard nowadays, by the way. It is said to have been the caution given by French dancing-masters in the times of long pigtails and formal bows, '*Gardez-vous pour les pieds et queues.*' But since it seems that in former times cakes and pastries sold in Edinburgh (long under a certain French influence) were actually known as 'petticoat-tails,' a very free rendering of *petits gâteaux* or *gastels*, we had perhaps better keep an open mind even in the case of apparently improbable derivations.

There is, however, no doubt about the origin of the proverbial expression, 'Hobson's choice,' which is, in fact, no choice at all. It is well documented, and arose from the firm dealing of Thomas Hobson (†1544–1631), the Cambridge carrier and livery-stable keeper, with the gay and irresponsible undergraduates of his day. He would allow no picking and choosing from among the horses in his stable when the students and others sought to hire. 'That horse, or none,' was his invariable edict, which became so well known that it grew proverbial.

Many are the men whose names have become so familiar through their inventions, or their deeds, or the things done to them that we forget they are proper names. Comparatively few people stop to consider, when they hear of a guillotine, that the adoption of this grim instrument was due to Joseph Ignace Guillotin (1738–1814), a French physician, who advocated its use as a speedy and humane method of inflicting the death penalty.

The 'mackintosh,' that useful protection against wet weather, of course originates from a personal name, Charles Macintosh (1766–1843) having in 1823 patented the principle of cementing fabrics with india-rubber.

In the same manner, the once-popular art of cutting 'silhouette' portraits out of black paper took its origin from a personal name. M. Etienne de Silhouette was an eighteenth-century French Minister of Finance, once noted for his petty economies; but although now forgotten as a statesman, he was the founder or populariser of an art which has perpetuated his name. M. de Silhouette solaced his leisure hours with tracing on the walls of his château shadow profile portraits of his friends, and is the solitary old master of the art, which rapidly spread from his example until the making of silhouette portraits became the rage. It did not die out until about 1850; and, in common with many other things, it has since had something of a revival.

To 'pay on the nail'—that is a familiar expression, and has been for centuries. It is almost equivalent to the entirely modern commercial phrase 'spot cash,' and indicates a cash-with-order settlement. It originated among merchants on 'Change, and may have been no mere figurative speech, but in the first instance have referred to payment on a 'nail,' a name given to a small stone or metal pay-table which appears to have been one of the customary furnishings of a Bourse or Exchange. Four examples of 'nails' remain outside the Exchange at Bristol. They are of brass, and were removed from the old Tolsey, or Market House, in 1771. The oldest dates back to 1549, and bears the inscription: 'This post is the gift of Master Robert Kitchen, merchant, sometime Maior and Alderman of this city, who dec. 5 Septemb. 1549.' Another is without inscription. The third is inscribed: 'Thomas Hobson of Bristol made me, anno 1625. Nicholas Crisp of London gave me to this honorable citty in remembrance of God's mercy in Anno Domini 1625. N.C. Prais the Lord O my soule, and forget not all his benefits. He saved my life from destruction and . . . to his mercy and loving kindness Prais.' . . . The inscription is worn and incomplete. It alludes to the staying of the plague in Bristol in 1625. The fourth 'nail' is inscribed: 'A.D. 1631, this is the gift of Mr George White of Bristol, merchaunt, brother unto Dr Thomas White, a famous benefactor to this citie.' Six lines of verse following are indecipherable. The inscription ends with, 'The Church of the livinge God is the pillar and ground of the trueth. So was the worke of the pillars finished.' Other 'nails' are at Barnstaple in Devonshire, at Axbridge in Somerset, and at Limerick.

When Artemisia, widow of Mausolus, King of Caria, who died B.C. 353, raised over him so unprecedentedly magnificent a monument, she erected something far more enduring than stone or marble tomb, for the fame of it created the word 'mausoleum.'

Among the select company of men who have given their names to useful inventions is John Loudon Macadam (1756–1836), a native of Ayr, to whose enlightened method of road-making with broken granite or other road-metal we owe the verb 'to macadamise.' We cannot extend to the author of 'grangerism' the same admiration, for the Rev. James Granger, who in the eighteenth century established the custom of 'extra-illustrating' selected works, caused the destruction of many books by the practice of taking out their plates for the enlargement of other works. Nor can Bowdler, who 'bowdlerised' the classics for the supposed benefit of the modest, be regarded as a benefactor. Wellington and Blücher were the unconsulted godfathers of two kinds of boots; the Prince Consort had the undesired honour of a kind of watch-chain—the 'Albert'—being named after him; and Mr Gladstone did not invent the 'Gladstone' bag.

'Shrapnel' shell is too familiar nowadays. The name can but rarely carry any personal meaning, but this type of shell was the invention of Lieutenant-General Henry Shrapnel (1761–1842), a native of Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire. Briefly, it meant the replacing of the old solid round-shot by an explosive canister containing a number of bullets. There are many millions to-day, unfortunately, who want no explanation of what 'shrapnel' is. Models of the original shrapnel shells—round, instead of the present elongated and pointed shape—to this day surmount the piers of the entrance-gates to Midway Manor, the inventor's residence in Wiltshire.

A conclusion may well be made with the origin of the verb 'to boycott'—which may be either active or passive, according to the temper of the persons who adopt that form of what Mr Gladstone mildly termed 'exclusive dealing.' Captain Charles Cunningham Boycott was a land-agent in Ireland from 1873 to 1886, and resided at Lough Mask House. Those were troublous times, when the Land Leaguers were active, and Captain Boycott, who was courageous enough to see the trouble through, was long under police protection. It was not, however, the violence threatened against him that has made his name a household word, but the refusal on the part of the people to work for him, or to buy of, or sell to, him, which originated the practice and the name of 'boycotting.' Captain Boycott died in retirement, in Suffolk, in June 1897.

BLACKLISTED.

By W. Victor Cook, Author of *Anton of the Alps*, *A Wilderness Wooing*, &c.

PART I.

I.

THE east-bound train from Badajoz had completed about an hour of its journey towards the distant capital, and was pursuing its leisurely way across the low, sun-baked slopes of Estremadura. Passengers from the Portuguese frontier had glanced through their newspapers and were getting drowsy, when the guard, scrambling along the foot-boards in that casual way they have in the South, stuck a perspiring face into the window of the compartment, and held up a yellow envelope.

'Is any *caballero* here called Donald Bruce?'

The passengers looked up from their interrupted doze, and a sunburnt young man in the corner by the window got out his passport. 'That is my name,' said he, showing his papers.

'A telegram for you, señor. See, it is addressed to the train at Badajoz: "Midday train for Madrid, station of Badajoz." It is a full train to-day, señor, or I should have found you earlier. Have the kindness to give me a receipt.'

The passenger did so, accompanying the receipt with a silver piece and a courteous expression of thanks.

It is not often in the pleasant land of Spain that people are chased by telegrams on a railway journey; and while the young man, himself surprised at the circumstance, opened the despatch, his fellow-travellers regarded him with a certain respectful curiosity. Having read the message, he passed it to a long-limbed, hawk-faced old man who sat opposite to him.

The message in the telegram was: 'See the gardener, Prætor's Palace, Mérida, mentioning M'Ilroy, M'Ilroy, M'Allister.' Handed in at Barcelona, it was written in Spanish. The two men looked at each other, and the elder shrugged his shoulders with an air of resignation. 'Mérida is the next station,' said he.

'There is no need for you to delay your journey, Pablo,' said the younger. 'Your wife and family, after all this time'——

'*Basta!*' The keen, bony face of the other leaned a little forward. 'I know what you would say, my friend. But we set out together, and together, *plegue á Dios*, we will return. See, here is Mérida.'

The train ran under the broken arch of a crumbling Roman aqueduct—whose gaunt, ruinous columns could be seen straggling away across the land like remnants of some race of fabled giants—and came to a standstill in the station. The two men picked up their slight baggage and got out.

Neither had ever been in Mérida before, and on the dusty platform they stood to take counsel while the train rumbled on its way.

'This is a queer business, Little Bird,' said the Scot. 'I know no more than Adam what this message means, yet it must be urgent. My firm must have sent it on the mere chance of its catching me. Three days ago, as soon as we had obtained our papers after landing, I wrote them of my intention to leave for Madrid and Barcelona by this train to-day, and they cannot long have had my letter. What do you make of it?'

Pablo Pajarillo—he was nicknamed the 'Little Bird' by his seafaring acquaintance on the coast of Cataluña—shrugged his broad shoulders again. 'I confess I can see no meaning in it except what it says. What is a prætor, Señor Bruce?'

'A prætor, *amigo mio*, is—or, rather, was—a Roman governor.'

'In that case,' the Catalan replied ingenuously, 'he must have been dead some time. We are to visit the gardener of a ghost.' He crossed himself soberly. 'The sooner we begin the better.'

They went out of the station on to a dusty *plaza*, leaving their baggage at the office.

II.

The name of Mérida is not to be found on the programme of the cheap and educative Spanish tour, and yet few cities of Europe have held their heads so high. Here was a capital city of Spain when Spain was giving emperors and generals, poets and philosophers, to swell the might and fame of Rome. The circuit of her great walls was six leagues, and her garrison of eighty thousand infantry and ten thousand horse made her one of the great strongholds of the Roman world. To-day Mérida is a crumbling, mouldy sepulchre, a cemetery filled with memorials of her mighty past.

The companions crossed the *plaza* in the glaring sunshine, and stood to gaze at a little flower-grown enclosure, in the midst of which, raised on an ancient column, was a white modern statue of a young girl.

'*Madre de Dios*, what a heat!' muttered Pajarillo.

It was, indeed, insufferably hot. But the Scot, with the energy of the North in his blood, and the educated man's feeling for the past stirring within him, found the aspect of this place appealing.

'Little Bird,' said he, 'a glass of cool wine would be good for you. There is a *posada* of a sort yonder. As for me, I will join you later. But this place interests me, and I must explore it while the feeling is fresh. Our man will be at his siesta for the present. By-and-by we will go and find him.'

'As you will, Señor Bruce. I admit that a glass of wine appeals more to me than walking in the sun about this city of once-upon-a-time.'

He made for the *posada;* and Bruce, left to himself, sat down on a wooden bench beneath a tree facing the Roman column, and began to roll a cigarette. There was another man sitting on the seat, a stoutish, middle-aged man wearing sun-glasses and a broad straw hat, engaged in sketching the monument on an artist's block.

He glanced up as the Scot sat down. '*Buenos dias, señor*,' said he, civilly raising his hat. 'You are interested in antiquities?'

Bruce raised his hat in acknowledgment. 'I am a man of my century, señor. But an occasional contemplation of the monuments of past ages leads us, I think, to view our own with a better sense of proportion.'

'Very true.' The stranger added a touch to his sketch. 'This monument, now, is a curious mixture of the present and the past.'

'I confess I do not know whom it represents,'

said Bruce. 'I am a stranger, brought hither by the accidental demands of business.'

'Ah!' The artist gave the young man a keen sidelong glance under his sun-glasses, and went on with his work. Bruce did not take to him.

'The statue is to Saint Eulalia, patroness of this old city, one of the first female martyrs of Spain, according to tradition. They say that as a child she suffered by being baked in an oven, towards the end of the third century. Miracles have since been recorded of her, "worthy of a great saint," the ecclesiastical historians say. Her shrine over yonder is a still more curious composition of antiquity and modernity. If your business allows you a day or two in Mérida, you will find the city repay examination.' He pointed with his pencil to a church not far away, in front of which was a massive ancient portico, surmounted by a new cupola in white marble.

Bruce had an uneasy sensation that he was being minutely taken stock of by the learned artist. 'With permission,' said he politely, 'I will stroll across and examine it. A thousand thanks, señor.'

He approached the quaint shrine of the oven-baked Eulalia. Side by side with the modern dedication to the Christian maiden, he deciphered in the old stone portico the worn, deep lettering of the Roman mason, dedicating the building to Mars, the war-god.

Bruce wandered up a hill to a sunlit group of whitewashed buildings, huddled together in a mere corner of the vast site of the ancient capital. He picked his way amid the fly-blown squalor of its mean and ill-kept streets, and suddenly a massive arch, rearing itself high above the houses, shut off the arrowy sunbeams—a triumphal arch to the Emperor Trajan, built of great stones without cement, each stone crossing its entire width. On all sides of him the voices of long dead ages whispered to his imagination from crumbling stone and broken column. Bruce wandered on, and presently came to the Guadiana, sluggish now, and streaked with shoals in the hot September sun. But over its dawdling, murky waters a great Roman bridge, half a mile long, with scores of heavy arches, witnessed to the fury and the extent of the river in the flood. Upon inquiry he learned—as he had guessed—that the massive wall fronting the hither end of the great bridge contained the ruins of the Roman prætor's palace. He found also that visitors were admitted to inspect the place, and was shown the entrance. For an hour he sat in a shady spot beside the river, and indulged his fancy in dreams of the past. Then, recalling himself to the present and its quest, he set off to return to his companion.

He found that philosopher engaged in a friendly game of cards with the landlord of the *posada*, and ordered refreshment for himself till the game should be played out. Then Bruce and Pajarillo took their way together to the prætor's palace. The artist with the sun-glasses was by this time gone from the statue of Eulalia, but it appeared that he had paid a visit to the *posada*.

'An inquisitive fellow,' said Pajarillo. 'One must humour such. He gave me a good *puro*, and in exchange I fibbed to him that you were a commercial traveller from Zaragoza, and that I was your servant. When he had gone, the landlord told me about him. It seems he is a rich merchant from Madrid, who has retired here to lead a quiet life. He has hired one of the largest houses in the town, and spends his time making pictures of old buildings and entertaining his friends. An open-handed fellow, the landlord says. Nevertheless, I do not like him.'

'Nor I, Pablo. Is he a Spaniard?'

The hawk-faced old man gave his friend a quick glance. '*Dios lo sabe!*' he shrugged. 'He speaks the Castilian, and I am a Catalan. His name is Marinero, but I never heard of mariners in Madrid.'

'Well, the man is no concern of ours, Pablo *mio*. This is the way.'

III.

Bruce turned into a cobbled side-street, and they came to a wrought-iron gateway in an old wall beneath orange-trees. To the woman who answered the bell he explained that they sought permission to inspect the Roman ruin.

The woman led them down a pleasant pathway, arched with trailing roses. Half-way down it a similar path running off at right angles gave access to a rambling stone building, in appearance half-ecclesiastical, half-domestic. Stopping at the angle, she pointed on to where the first path entered an extensive garden.

'The house is occupied, *caballeros*,' said she. 'It is the old walls of the garden which the learned, who sometimes come here, always wish to examine, though what Christians find to interest them in these old stones of the heathen I confess I do not know. Be good enough to summon me when you return.'

Emerging from the trailing roses, the two companions found themselves in a place fit to charm the soul of an artist or a poet. A fragrant garden, rich with all that the Southern sun could ripen, filled a great quadrangle enclosed by the street wall and the house on one side, and on the other three by the vast, crumbling walls of the Roman age. Here a grove of gnarled gray olives, here figs and oranges, citrons and pomegranates, and many fruits and flowers strange to Northern eyes, throve in the fertile soil. They slowly crossed the garden to the massive walls on the farther side. There, in an angle of the Roman wall, where a bastion looked far out over the river and the undulating landscape, a mule harnessed at the end of a long wooden bar was plodding slowly round and round, drawing up water from a subterranean cistern by means of a

chain of little vessels, on the prehistoric principle still followed in the East. In the hot sunshine the musical plash of the water falling from the revolving vessels into the receiving-tank had a tantalising sound. Under a fig-tree hard by, an aged gardener, with a hat of monstrous brim, sat smoking the eternal cigarette, uttering an occasional '*Arré!*' to remind the leisurely mule that it was supposed to be working, and then relapsing into meditation.

At the approach of strangers the old man rose courteously. 'You would see the ruins, *caballeros?*' He led them to the top of the time-worn battlements, from which they looked out upon the sun-baked slopes beyond the modern city. As they picked their way along he pointed out the most prominent objects around: the long Roman bridge, the arch of Trajan, the broken ruin of a vast amphitheatre—'the Seven Seats,' the old man called it—which rose against the sky, and the tottering arches of mighty aqueducts that once brought drinking-water from many miles away. Descending again into the garden, he led his charges under an arched stone entrance-way, and so back to his cistern by an underground passage, walled and roofed with stone, and concealing in its gloom, as the old man showed them with a candle, marble pillars admirably carved, of differing styles and epochs. They all sat down again under the fig-tree, and the old guide accepted a proffered cigar with a courtly air.

IV.

'Many a man,' said Bruce sententiously, 'weary of the bustling life of cities, would think himself in Eden to have the charge of a garden such as this.'

The old fellow nodded. 'I have dwelt here thirty years, señor. And yet even in Eden there was the serpent.'

'Very true,' the Scot agreed. 'Let us hope you have none here, señor gardener.'

'*Quien sabe?* The serpent is a wily beast, señor.'

Bruce felt that he was approaching his affair. 'This Mérida of yours is an interesting city,' he said carelessly. 'I should be sorry to have missed the opportunity of seeing it. A friend of many years, a Señor M'Allister, gave me the good advice to come.' He saw the old gardener start.

'You are from Barcelona?' came the question in a lowered voice.

'Both of us,' Bruce replied. 'Is it possible that you are acquainted with Señor M'Allister, of the firm of M'Ilroy, M'Ilroy, & M'Allister?'

'Señor M'Allister has been a kind benefactor to me,' the old man answered simply. 'It was he who obtained me my post here with the count, to whom the place belongs. And years afterwards he took my son into his employ, and my son has made good progress with that excellent firm.'

'I should know your son. What is his name?'

'Arleto is my name, señor.'

'Enrique Arleto is, then, your son?' Bruce smiled. 'Enrique is one of our most trusted clerks.'

The old man rose and bowed his pleasure at the compliment. 'If I might know, señor, to whom have I the honour to speak?'

'I am Donald Bruce, confidential secretary to Señor M'Allister.'

Arleto raised his great hat, turned a moment to stimulate the flagging energies of the mule with a sharp '*Arré!*' and looked cautiously round the garden. 'A few days ago,' said he, 'I sent a letter to my son, Enrique.'

Pablo Pajarillo, who had sat quietly smoking thus far, had followed the gardener's glance. He broke in harshly, 'Señor Arleto, with permission, my friend and I would like to inspect once more those marble pillars in the subway.'

The gardener showed surprise at the sudden request, but led the way down again without a word.

'My apologies for interrupting,' said the Catalan calmly. 'Pray proceed with your conversation, gentlemen.'

Old Arleto looked earnestly at Bruce. 'Since you are in the confidence of my benefactor, I will say that in my letter to Enrique I hinted at a possible danger to Señor M'Allister.'

'Of what nature, my friend?'

'I cannot tell, señor. Three months ago the count let this place to a certain Marinero.'

'Who has just entered the garden from the house,' observed the Little Bird.

'*Dios!* I did not see him!' The gardener's uneasiness was obvious. 'Is he coming this way?'

'He is not,' said Pajarillo. 'But it occurred to me that he might. He is sitting under a cypress-tree with a newspaper. To tell you the truth, he is too inquisitive a gentleman for my taste, Señor Arleto.'

'I am afraid of him!' the old man blurted out. 'I must be quick with what I have to say.'

'Calm yourself,' said Bruce. 'Señor Marinero knows nothing of us.'

'*Quien sabe?* He knows more than people think. These are dangerous times, and he is a dangerous man. I am placing my safety, perhaps, in your hands, *caballeros*, but I owe a duty to my kind benefactor. Here is the reason for the letter which I wrote to my son.' He drew from his pocket a sheet of paper, and spread it out in the ray of the candle, which he had relit.

Down the left-hand margin of the paper, in bold writing, were set out half-a-dozen names which the Scot instantly recognised as those of some of the most prominent British agents and business houses in the Peninsula. In the space against each was a brief report in German script.

The first three names were struck through in red ink, and against each were set the initials 'F.v.F.' The fourth name on the list was that of M'Ilroy, M'Ilroy, & M'Allister. Bruce knew sufficient German to make out the notes written against the name, in a different hand, but with no attempt at disguise. 'Details most difficult,' they ran, 'but all information indicates dangerous activity. Loss of several successful U. confidently believed traceable to secret action on part of this concern. Suppression urgently necessary. Recommend great caution.' The notes appended to the other names on the list ran on similar lines.

'Where did you obtain this paper, my friend?' asked Bruce.

'On the day I wrote to my son, señor, I was picking figs from the tree yonder under the wall. Señor Marinero was writing in the arbour near by, when a message was brought him from the house, and he left suddenly, thrusting his papers in his pocket. I noticed one of the papers slip to the ground, but he was in a hurry, and did not observe it. When I had filled my basket I came down and picked up the paper, intending to give it to him. But as I picked it up I noticed the name of my benefactor, and then I looked and saw these other names. As for the writing between, I could make nothing of it. But I saw some names were struck out, and I read the newspapers, señor. There is the name of Señor Robertson, of Madrid. The papers said that he was killed in a climbing accident in the Pyrenees. There was the mining firm of Belper. Their works were wrecked by a great explosion a month ago, and Señor Belper was among the dead. And there was the consul, Thomas, who disappeared so strangely only a fortnight since.'

'What kind of persons are in the habit of visiting Señor Marinero here?' Bruce inquired.

'Some Spaniards, some foreigners. Usually they arrive in the night.'

'What else do you know of this Marinero?'

'Nothing, *caballeros*, except that he paints many pictures, and sometimes he is absent for days at a time from the town. He pays well, and therefore is well spoken of.'

'An easy road to good repute,' commented Bruce. 'Well, señor gardener, it grows towards evening, and we have to find an inn. It is fortunate that you and we have met, and maybe we shall meet again. Meantime, I rely on your discretion.'

'To see, to hear, and to be silent are three rooms in wisdom's house,' said the old gardener as they emerged again from the subway.

(*Continued on page 26.*)

SCIENTIFIC FRUIT-GROWING IN BRITAIN AND AMERICA.

By Charles Ray.

FRUIT-GROWING as a science is in Great Britain still in its infancy. Of course, much has been done of recent years in the way of producing new varieties, in fighting insect pests, and so on; but when all is said and done, we have really advanced very little, and it is an open question whether much of the supposed progress has really been in the right direction. Very little time has been given to the serious practical study of the subject, and while in some ways we have been far too slow, in others we have been too rapid; that is, we have jumped to conclusions before we had thoroughly sifted the facts.

Take, for example, the subject of pollination and fertilisation. We know, of course, that bees and other insects act as agents in fertilisation by carrying pollen from one flower to another; and we suppose that the wind also acts as an agent in this way, although recent investigations in fruit-growing districts show that this is not proven. But beyond these things we know practically nothing of the subject; and although it is of great importance to the nation, yet we are so little interested that we do not make it worth anybody's while to investigate systematically.

A concrete example will show how very elementary our knowledge of the science of fruit-growing is, and at the same time will serve to illustrate the pitfalls that lie in the path of the scientific investigator. Years ago in a certain district of England, when the orchards were not laid out carefully and geometrically as they are to-day, greengage-trees were mixed up with gisborne plums in a very unscientific manner. Good crops of gages were obtained with fair regularity; but, acting on the advice of scientific experts, the growers rooted up the old gisborne-trees of little value, and planted a large acreage with greengages only, in regular rows. For some cause or other, crops have never since been a success. There is always plenty of blossom, but for some unknown reason fertilisation does not take place, and only rarely are there any greengages worth speaking of. An old plantation in the same neighbourhood which still had gisborne-trees mixed with the greengages continued to produce good crops of greengages, and this led to the conclusion that the gisbornes were necessary for the fertilisation of the gages. Plum-trees were, therefore, planted near the greengages, but still the crops

did not come, and further investigations showed that in adjacent districts where gisbornes and greengages grew together, years sometimes passed without a crop of gages. The whole matter is, therefore, one of mystery, and so far scientific investigators have been able to give no explanation that in any way solves the problem.

It must be acknowledged that the scientist with his theories is often far behind the practical man; but, on the other hand, the practical man frequently allows his prejudices to prevent him from taking advantage of the scientist's researches, as, for example, when he refuses to spray his trees to destroy insect pests. It is difficult to say whether these pests are on the increase relatively, though, of course, there is no doubt that they are actually. With the advent of the great preserving firms, an enormous impetus has been given to fruit-growing in Great Britain, and thousands more acres are now under fruit than was formerly the case. With such an increase in the provision of their food-plants, it is only natural that the insects too should increase and multiply; and there is no doubt that there is a real need for a national campaign of investigation and action, such as is being permanently carried on in the United States of America.

One firm of fruit-growers in England conducts its spraying on a very large scale, having laid permanent mains and pipes underground in its orchards. Through these the various spraying liquids are pumped by engines. The actual spraying is done by men with hand-pipes, who tap the mains at various points. In a season like that of 1918, when, owing to bad weather and other conditions, the crop was poor, spraying did not, of course, produce fruit; but by saving the foliage of the trees and bushes from the ravages of the pests, it went a long way towards ensuring a good crop for this year. Those who did not spray had, in many districts, the dissatisfaction of seeing their trees bare of leaves, and as leaves are the breathing apparatus of plants, a lack of leaves means a weak and unhealthy tree, incapable of bearing a good crop at the next fruit season.

In all the various phases of fruit-growing, the United States is far in advance of ourselves. Take, for example, its method of dealing with greenfly, that most prolific and destructive of pests. The story is one of the great romances of science. The orchards of California were overrun by greenfly, which destroyed melon and cucumber vines, and blighted apple and pear trees; and every year it was estimated that in the Imperial Valley alone the growers lost a million pounds' worth of produce through this terrible pest. It was so prolific that no amount of spraying would keep it down. There are from eight to eleven generations in a year, and a single female aphis would muster by the eighth generation, if all her children lived and multiplied like herself, no fewer than 441,461,010,000,000 descendants. No wonder, then, that a creature which multiplies at this rate does enormous harm to the plants on which it feeds; and as a matter of fact in California some of the great orchards extending for miles used to be stripped almost bare within two or three days of the first appearance of the greenfly each season. No remedy could be discovered but that of burning the attacked plants wholesale, and ruin seemed to stare the growers in the face.

Now the natural enemy of the aphis is the ladybird, and formerly, before man began to change the natural conditions, the ladybird was able to cope with the aphis in California. After the hibernation period the ladybird became active just when the aphis was beginning to appear, and it made short work of the pest. But the Californian farmers and fruit-growers, by scientific methods of cultivation, have been able to change the time when their melons and cucumbers come to perfection, making it later in the year; and the aphis or greenfly has adapted itself to the new conditions, and also appears later than it used to do. The result is that when the ladybirds wake from their winter sleep, there are few aphides on which they can prey, and they die of starvation; while the greenfly, when later on it begins to multiply, finds its natural enemy, the ladybird, absent from the plantations, and thus has a free field for its depredations. This, at any rate, is what did happen. The matter became so serious, in fact, that the orchards were threatened with extinction; and the State University, with the Californian Commission of Horticulture, decided to appoint the Superintendent of the State Insectary, Mr E. K. Carnes, to make a complete study of the subject.

For months Mr Carnes investigated the habits and life-story of the ladybird, and he came to the conclusion that the solution of the whole problem lay in introducing the ladybirds to the orchards in April and May—that is, later than the time when Nature wakes them from their winter sleep. At this time the melon and cucumber vines are at their best, and the greenfly is beginning to get to work. This was the obvious solution; but how was the advent of the ladybirds to be delayed for some weeks? The difficulty might seem insuperable, but Mr Carnes was not the man to give up a task because it seemed to bristle with difficulties or even impossibilities.

The entomologist's investigations had convinced him that some ladybirds hibernated on the snow-clad tops of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. He therefore went with two assistants up to these difficult regions, and hunted among moss and leaves and pine-cones on the ground to see if any quantities of the sleeping insects

could be found. Great was his joy when he discovered that his theory was correct, and that millions of ladybirds did hibernate in these mountain-tops.

Mr Carnes collected some of the insects in sacks and took them to the State Insectary at Sacramento, where he carried out some interesting and important experiments during the succeeding months, waking up different batches of them at different periods by changing the temperature. The problem was to discover if the ladybirds could be kept asleep through the hot months of early spring by being placed in cold store. It was a daring proposition that only a man with a vivid imagination could have conceived, but the future of the Californian orchards depended upon the success or otherwise of the experiment. Mr Carnes placed the ladybirds in boxes in dark chambers at a low temperature, and succeeded in preventing them from waking until April. Months after their usual time they began to rouse and get active, and when let loose in the orchards, at once set to work devouring the devastating greenfly.

This was only one step, but Mr Carnes's wide vision saw the solution of the whole problem. The ladybirds must be collected in the mountains in millions during their hibernation. They must be carried to the State Insectary, and there kept in cold and darkness to continue their sleep until April or May; and then, when they were wanted for the great battle with the greenfly, they must be awakened by being placed in a higher temperature, and finally let loose in the orchards. This was the scheme propounded, but the farmers scoffed at the idea. Mr Carnes, however, knew that the problem was solved, and he went ahead, being triumphantly vindicated by the result.

A few thousands or hundreds of thousands of pounds properly spent in the way demonstrated by American official and educational bodies means a saving of millions every year; and there is no doubt that if more money were available for similar scientific study and investigation in this country, an immense amount of loss could be saved in farm and orchard.

Mr Carnes's experiments and discoveries have led to one of the most remarkable industries in the world. At the beginning of November every year a band of men go up into the mountains to the places that the ladybirds are expected to visit for their winter sleep. These men hunt and watch for the early arrivals, and then mark the spots on maps. It is not their business to collect the insects; their work is to indicate the sleeping-places to the actual collectors, who come later.

We all know that our British ladybirds, when handled, give off a peculiar odour; and Mr Carnes discovered that the early arrivals among the ladybirds on the mountain-tops, as soon as they settled down in their winter quarters, gave off a scent that attracted other ladybirds arriving later. In this way the pioneers who go up into the mountains early in November and note where the first ladybirds settle are able to mark on maps where the bulk of the insects will be found during that winter. Not only so, but these skilled pioneers have learnt by practice to know roughly how many insects will hibernate in each spot, and this number they mark on their maps for the guidance of the collectors. They also give any other information likely to prove useful.

A little later on, in the depth of winter, collectors go up the slopes accompanied by mules, with hundreds of empty sacks, and guided by the maps prepared by the pioneers, they are able with the least possible delay to collect millions of sleeping ladybirds. The work is hard and dangerous, for many of the spots which they have to visit are almost inaccessible, and the climate in winter is severe. For three months, from December to February, this work of collecting ladybirds goes on, and two men—for they work in pairs—will generally collect from fifty to a hundred pounds of insects in a day. These are placed in sacks and loaded on the mules, each mule carrying a little over a hundredweight. Some places are inaccessible to the mules, and there the men go alone, fill the sacks, and bring them down to where the animals are tethered. Often several feet of snow have to be dug away before the ladybirds can be reached; but all obstacles are overcome, and the loaded sacks are brought down the mountain to a camp, whence they are sent to a railway station. There the insects are transferred from the sacks to boxes, and are despatched by train to Sacramento to the State Insectary, where they are kept in cold store for several months. Then, when the warm weather has come, and the orchards are beginning to show their luscious and valuable crops, the ladybirds are weighed out in pound lots, packed in wooden cases with wire ends, and sent off to the various farmers and fruit-growers. Each pound contains about thirty-three thousand ladybirds, and when the farmer gets his box he carries it into his plantations and opens it. The ladybirds, which have already been thawed out of their sleep in the Insectary, are now fully awake and vigorous, and are eager to get out. They fly away to the trees and the vines, and, without any preliminaries, begin their hunt for greenflies. The result is that the pest is kept down, the fruit comes to perfection, the plants are saved, and the farmer reaps the reward of his labour.

This is only one illustration of how thoroughly the Americans go into a question concerning fruit-production, and how persistently they follow up every detail until they have solved a problem such as that presented by the greenfly. In

all directions they are equally thorough. The American Bureau of Plant Industry is always busy seeking new varieties that can be grown in all climates. Its agents travel to all parts of the world, its scientists carry out thousands of experiments, and with the United States Reclamation Service, which deals with questions of irrigation, it has made many a dreary wilderness blossom as the rose.

Equally good work is being done in Great Britain (in connection with Cambridge University, for example), but here the funds are not forthcoming to do it on the grand scale as in America. As the recently published report of the Agricultural Policy Subcommittee of the Reconstruction Committee declares, much stronger support is needed for research-work. The staffs are poorly paid, with the result that there is a steady flow of the most promising graduates to our Dominions over seas, to India, and to foreign countries, simply because they are unable to secure adequate salaries in this country.

'That this is bad policy,' says the report, 'and utterly uneconomical, needs no argument.' The use of artificial fertilisers, new varieties of plants, the treatment of pests and diseases, the detection of waste and loss in cultivation are all dependent on research-work, and yet Great Britain is behind even third-rate States. The committee points out that 'the scale of the organisation at Cambridge is still far behind that of the plant-breeding station at Svälof in Sweden.'

'With a little more time,' continues the report, 'and with access to the necessary funds for growth, it is certain that results will be obtained remunerative in themselves and of the utmost financial value to the industry as a whole.'

The war has shown the need for increased home production. Let us hope that there will be stronger Government support for scientific research, on which the whole question of production turns.

SCOTLAND COMES TO ARGENTINA.

By JOHN AULAY STEELE.

HE was a sick man, this Roderick, the red-bearded Scots shepherd, and as I sat by his rough trestle-bed the long Southern night through, he babbled to me in his delirium of the home that he had never seen—a queer, uncanny tale, in the scattered idioms of three languages: broken English, that came haltingly to the man's tongue; rapid colloquial Spanish, decked out with phrases about *lazos* and *bolas*, *tropillas* and *cañadones*; soft Gaelic speech, of which I could make out little or nothing, save that now and again came up such names as Colintraive, Glendaruel, and the Kyles. From some 'lone shieling' on the coast of Argyll, a century past, the forefathers of this Roderick, Argentine *puestero* or shepherd, had come, forsaking those fancy-haunted valleys and dark hills to challenge fortune on these vast and treeless plains. Still bearing good Scots names, and hoarding in their hearts the songs and legends brought across the broad seas by the early settlers, the third generation of exiles had well-nigh lost their fathers' speech. Shepherds they had come, and small flock-masters their grandsons were still. By alternate floods and droughts and by disease they were kept poor men in a land of plenty. Cut off from all book-learning, and isolated from their kind, they had intermarried with the sons and daughters of the soil, till now not only did they think in the idiom of Castile, but in many respects they had become indistinguishable from the *gauchos* among whom they had passed their lives. The sole link left with their Highland home was the old worship. From spots many a league away they would gather when the Scots minister came round to their province on his infrequent visits from the mother-church at Buenos Aires. They loved and welcomed the sight of his black Geneva gown and snow-white bands; they brought their little ones to him for baptism—had 'saved them up,' as one such parent put it; and at the communion dispensed by the itinerant pastor they sang 'the Lord's song in a strange land.' The pipes do not readily lend themselves to church music, but at such gatherings their droning cadence was sometimes the only strain.

Scottish settlement on the river Plate goes as far back as the year of Trafalgar. When in 1805 Britain had one of her 'absent-minded wars' in that far quarter of the globe—the Monroe doctrine had not yet been promulgated—a small British expeditionary force found itself in surprised possession of the city of Buenos Aires. The patriots of the Plate soon drove them out, however, and as a result of the reconquest many a private of the historic Highland regiment engaged was despatched to captivity in the interior.

But the real Scottish invasion was a peaceful one. Twenty years after Whitelock's ignominious surrender to Liniers, the British Government, under Canning, recognised the independence of the new-formed Argentine Confederation—the first of the Great Powers to take that step. The years 1824 and 1825, it will be remembered, began a period when the 'company' and 'association' mania was rife in England and on the continent of Europe, and Canning's commercial treaty with the United Provinces of

the river Plate gave a southward direction to the stream of immigrants led by the various associations of the day. Our countrymen, in consequence, became from that date settlers in the towns of Argentina as merchants, and in the rural districts as proprietors, shepherds, or labourers. These were to establish many of the finest *estancias* of the period, of which some still bear their founders' names.

Without doubt the most notable of these 'colonies' was that which was brought out from Scotland by the two brothers John and William Parish Robertson, natives of Kelso, in the early spring of 1825. John Robertson, at the tender age of thirteen, had begun life as powder-monkey aboard one of Admiral Stirling's vessels, in our attack of 1806 upon Montevideo. The following year found him in Rio de Janeiro, with but two guineas in his pocket, one of which he sent home to Kelso as a present to his mother. Four years' experience of commercial clerking resulted in the youth being sent by some adventurous merchants, in the year 1811, to dispose of a cargo of miscellaneous goods in 'the hermit state' of far-off Paraguay. One result of his hazardous trading on that occasion was that at the age of thirty-two he was able to return to Scotland with a fortune of one hundred thousand pounds, in a vessel of his own, holding besides the position of diplomatic agent for certain of the new South American republics. In six more years, however, war and revolution had rendered him almost penniless. Though now nearly forty years of age, Robertson conceived the idea of entering Cambridge University as an undergraduate, and the remainder of his life was spent in literary labours, of which his *Letters on Paraguay* remains a most vivacious example. John Robertson was the first man to send a steamer up the river Plate, and the first to attempt agriculture on a large scale in Argentina. The interesting memoirs of this remarkable 'Scot Abroad' are crowded with exciting incidents and hair-breadth escapes, illustrating vividly the dangers and the hardships of the early pioneers.

It was this man, then, who, before the smash of 1831, brought out the Pilgrim Fathers (and Mothers) of the Scottish colony in Argentina. He purchased some sixteen thousand acres, among the best land in the country for agriculture, at a spot called Monte Grande ('Big Wood'), about twenty miles outside Buenos Aires, and the year 1824 saw about two hundred and fifty persons—farmers and farm-servants, tradesmen and labourers, with a sprinkling of professional men, along with their young families—embarked at Leith on board the good ship *Symmetry*. These Robertson had collected mainly from Stirlingshire and the Lothians, Ayr and the Borders, he himself being a South-Country man; and after grounding on the 'English Bank,' off Montevideo, they at length reached the Outer Roads of Buenos Aires nearly three months later.

A rather remarkable effusion by the ship's poet, 'Tam o' Stirling,' has been preserved:

Frae the land o' brown heath and tartan plaids,
Frae the country o' cakes and barley bannocks,
A comely selection o' chiels and maids
On board the *Symmetry* swung their hammocks.

Farmers and blacksmiths, prize-ploughmen were there,
Dairymaids, fresh as the butter they made;
Guidwives wi' their weans, sae rosy and fair,
And the honest guidman, wi' his collie and spade.

The elders confessed, as each blew his nose,
And stealthily wiped off a trickling tear,
That the dear auld Scotland, wi' skim milk and brose,
Wad beat Buenos Aires, wi' five hunder a year.

All wondered what people the Argentines were—
Savage or civilised, colour and figure—
And lasses resolved they wad droon themselves ere
They 'd gang without claes, or be kissed by a nigger.

Twenty-two such verses, descriptive of the social side of the seventy-eight days' voyage, bring them to a land

Where jabbering foreigners their luggage received,
The babel o' tongues was enough to confound them,
But naebody understood Scots, they perceived.

Betimes then there stairtet a coo-cairt procession
O' colonists, implements, bedding, and rations,
All bound for the south, where the Rob'son Concession
Lay spread out to welcome the Scots Immigration.

The colonists quickly set to work and built houses at Monte Grande with bricks that they had themselves made. They fenced in and cultivated a large acreage, on which they grew fruit and maize. They raised great numbers of sheep and cattle and horses. They supplied the Buenos Aires market with butter and cheese and flour. All promised fair for 'the Rob'son Concession.' Yet the unsettled state of South American politics was to prove too much for their peaceful penetration, for after three short years the entire colony was dispersed, leaving not a trace behind. Civil war arose—a veritable reign of terror. The colonists were plundered of their goods and chased from their homes; some were murdered on their own thresholds—whole families mercilessly butchered by desperados of both contending parties. Already the founders of the colony had sunk sixty thousand pounds upon it, and their means were now exhausted. The venture, in fact, was really a generation before its time.

No longer might the colonists exist as a community; they must needs spread out and shift for themselves. Of the tradesmen and the artisans, most found their way into the capital and established themselves there as carpenters, blacksmiths, and bricklayers. Of the agriculturists,

some went in for dairy-farming, fruit-growing, &c., and in course of time acquired land of their own; others took up cattle and sheep, and did well or ill, according to the variable seasons; others, again, settling in the wrong districts, met with mishaps innumerable. Of these were Roderick and his like, with whose ill-fortunes this chronicle opened.

It has often been remarked that our countrymen who emigrate to foreign lands invariably thrive better individually than collectively. And so it proved in the present instance. The break-up of the Monte Grande colony turned out for good to most of its surviving members. It removed them from a position of dependence, developed their individual initiative, and put in their way opportunities that would never have arisen within the limits of a small and self-contained settlement. The labourer threw down his spade, the tailor his goose, the shoemaker his last, to become adventurers in sheep-farming. Husbandmen, on the other hand, dropped the stilts of the plough to become substantial merchants. For in a new country there is no hard-and-fast division between the occupations; a man may try his hand at whatever comes his way.

Within a year of its dispersion the domestic servants and the milkmaids of the colony were all happily married, and as families arose there began to be felt a need for those traditional Scottish associates, church and school. Ministers were called from the Old Country, and ere long in the capital and in various districts of the province there were flourishing congregations of the Kirk, destined in due course to unite the scattered elements of the Scots community throughout the Republic.

The schoolmaster, too, was abroad. At most *estancias* where there was a family there was also a dominie. These tutors had their many entrances and many exits; some of them, it was whispered, had in their time played many parts. Many were highly educated men, excellent teachers. A few had come to Argentina in search of health; more had come to mend their fortunes; some had come through love of travel and adventure, and some (in geographical error) to shoot buffaloes!

Not far from the Scottish settlement of Chascomús, in the province of Buenos Aires, there arose in the late 'fifties a wattle-and-daub building known as the 'Rancho Kirk.' There has happily been preserved an amusing poem, described as 'An Idyll or Bucolic,' from the hand of one talented wielder of the cane in those pampa schools, and it pictures well the scene within twenty yards of that church door on any Sabbath morning:

Here, on these vast and thistly plains,
Where universal darkness reigns;
Here, like a candle in the mirk,
The Scots support a Rancho Kirk.

And farmers flock, with all their crews,
To worship God and hear the news.

The coaches, carts, and horses there
Would with amazement make you stare.
Before the little bell has rung
The people stand, a stalwart throng,
And chat in native Scottish tongue;
But words Castilian intermixing,
Which to the stranger is perplexing:
Alfalfa, *trebol*, and *gramillas*,
Arrojos, too, and *carretillas*;
The price of wool, the health of sheep,
Are there discussed with interest deep;
How much the *sarna* spoils the clip,
And if 'tis best to pour or dip.
Then Southdown wash perhaps is mooted,
And all its pros and cons disputed.
One grumbles, while he cuts tobacco,
That all his horses are so *flaco*,
He might as well have trudged on foot
As rode to church on such a brute!
Some tell how many sheep they 've lost
By *secas*, *temporals*, and frost;
And when they 're tired of sheep and cattle,
Discuss a Paraguayan battle.

But when the little hand-bell rings
They lay aside all earthly things,
Their souls absorbed (my muse supposes)
By what is said by Mark or Moses.

The description, we feel, is true to life—of men who were a quietly religious, God-fearing race, isolated from their fellows, and with few opportunities of social intercourse—the original Scottish settlers and their sons, when Scotland came to Argentina.

HIGHLAND NIGHT: 1715—1815—1915.

O TURN ye homeward in the night-tide dusk!
Return, O lad, across the watery dark.
The wind is eerie, and the sea growls low,
And voices mutter in the caves. O hark!
The sea-bird hath her mate, but none I know.

All day the gulls are crying round the rocks,
And spray is leaping white against their face;
The child is shouting, and the wind is sweet;
Above our heads the flying cloudlets race,
Where we are on the hillside cutting peat.

The sun glints on the waves. I have no fear;
My heart is filled with ancient battle-songs;
But when the winter seas are crying loud,
Phantoms of eld, and marching faery throngs,
From strange old tales into my fancy crowd.

They hold before my eyes a bloody plaid—
A wail of warning hurries down the gust,
The door blows open, and the baby cries,
And dark-red drops are trickling in the dust.
Kneeling I fall and cover up my eyes.

O turn ye homeward in the night-tide dusk!
The door stands open, and the sea growls low.
Ah, lad, my candle shines across the night.
The sea-bird hath her mate, but none I know;
Turn ye to me before the morning light.

ISABEL WESTCOTT HARPER.

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THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA, 1814–1815.

By Sir RICHARD LODGE, LL.D., Litt.D., Professor of History in the University of Edinburgh, and Author of *The Student's Modern Europe*, *The Close of the Middle Ages*, &c.

PART I.

IT is a commonplace of history, and recent history has made it a commonplace of journalism, that a coalition of States is ill-fitted to wage a successful war. Nothing but the imminent danger to the Channel ports and to Paris which was threatened by the German advance of last March could have overcome the reluctance of some of the Allies to accept that unified control of military operations which so happily reversed the current of success in July. But it is less generally apprehended that it is still more difficult for a coalition to negotiate a harmonious peace. So long as actual warfare is going on, the necessity of making head against the common enemy serves to hold the Allies together; but that cement is exhausted as soon as hostilities have ceased and diplomatists enter the arena to adjust a final settlement. The interests of allied Powers can be identical only up to a certain point, and even of common interests some bulk much larger in the eyes of one State than in those of another. And behind all divergence of actual interests there lies the instinctive and almost unreasoning feeling of jealousy, the sense that gains ought to be equal, and that no single State should be allowed to carry off an unfair share of the advantages obtained in a common cause. A completely disinterested State, if such can be conceived, would enjoy under these conditions an immense preponderance, and would almost be able to dictate terms to its colleagues.

To the outside observer watching the course of the recent struggle, the history of the prolonged wars against the French Republic and Empire was necessarily of absorbing interest. And now that the course of events calls us to play our part in the settlement of a world-wide peace, it may be instructive to survey in outline the termination of the only great war which is comparable in extent and in importance with that which raged from August 1914 to November 1918. In order to grasp the situation clearly it is necessary to realise that the settlement of 1814–15 was not embodied in any single document, and that attention must be given (1) to the events leading up to peace; (2) to the settlement with Napoleon in the so-called Treaty of Fontainebleau, and with France by the Treaty of Paris; (3) to the reconstruction of Europe, partly by separate treaties, but mainly by the final act of the Congress of Vienna—the most colossal treaty recorded in history; and (4) to the attempt to secure the permanence of the settlement by the formation of a league of States, which is usually, but not very accurately, known as the Holy Alliance. From each of these episodes some lesson, and perhaps some warning, may be applied to current and future events.

(1) The wars against France had begun in 1792, and had lasted, with occasional interruptions of uneasy peace, for twenty-one years. Coalition after coalition had been shattered, partly by the unity and military strength of France, but far more decisively by the internal dissensions which had rendered the successive alliances impotent to effect their purpose. And every failure had left France the stronger, until in 1810 Napoleon, after his marriage with the daughter of the Emperor of Austria, was the virtual dictator of Europe, with nothing to dread but the maritime hostility of Britain, and what seemed at the time a mere minor disturbance in the Spanish Peninsula. By 1813, however, the whole situation was changed. The loss of the Grand Army in the snows of the Russian winter was followed by the formation of a final European coalition, more formidable than its predecessors, not only on account of its wider extent, but also because behind the opposition of rulers and governments was the force of national sentiment, inspired equally by French example and by resistance to French oppression, and because Napoleon had now to reckon not only with avowed enemies, but in addition with the growing alienation and exhaustion of France.

The history of the formation of this coalition has great significance. The pursuit of the retreating French Army had brought the Russians at the beginning of 1813 to the frontier of Germany, but they could not advance farther unless they secured the assistance of Austria or of Prussia, or of both Powers. Prussia and Austria had both been allies of France, and both had

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unwillingly furnished troops for the campaign against Russia in 1812. Both States were partially freed from their dependence upon Napoleon by his disastrous retreat from Moscow; in both cases the commanders of the auxiliary forces accepted armistices in defiance of the interests of France; and both Governments were confronted with the problem as to how far they would venture to free themselves from a complicity which had preserved their existence, but had almost destroyed their independence. Prussia, which had suffered most and gained least from France, was the first to take a decisive step. The foundation of the coalition was laid in February in the Treaty of Kalisz, when the Prussian Government, eager to avenge the humiliations endured after Jena and Tilsit, made an alliance with Russia against France. By the conclusion of this treaty the Czar Alexander I. disclosed his momentous decision to follow up the successful championship of Russian independence by undertaking to restore liberty to Europe. Great Britain, whose forces under Wellington only needed the continuance of war in central Europe in order to secure a complete triumph in Spain, readily forgave past defections and promised sorely needed subsidies to the Allies. Sweden, whose Crown Prince, Bernadotte, was an ex-marshal of France, was induced to condone the loss of Finland to Russia by the promise of territorial compensation, and agreed to join the coalition against the French Emperor. But Napoleon, still master of western and southern Germany, and with the advantage of moving on interior lines, was more than a match for the ill-jointed forces of the nascent coalition, and his confidence was increased by victories at Lützen and Bautzen, which confirmed the wavering loyalty to France of the King of Saxony. These French successes gave to Austria the opportunity for which its astute Minister, Metternich, had been eagerly looking. The position of Austria on the flank of the contending Powers gave it the control of the balance between them, and enabled it to intervene so decisively as to secure a preponderant voice in the future settlement of Europe. The masterly use which Metternich made of the advantages which circumstances placed in his hands justifies his claim to a foremost place among the great diplomatists of Europe. He proffered Austrian mediation, obtained from Napoleon an armistice to allow negotiations to proceed, and drafted terms of studied moderation in order to throw the odium of their rejection upon the French Emperor. At the same time he secretly pledged himself to join Russia and Prussia if the proffered terms were not accepted by 10th August. His schemes would have miscarried if Napoleon had had the wisdom and the foresight to make peace, but Metternich had shrewdly reckoned that the Emperor's pride and military self-confidence would resent anything that savoured of dictation from a State that France had so frequently defeated. While diplomacy pursued its dilatory course, Austria was feverishly collecting its forces. The 10th of August passed without any assurance of concessions from France; on the 12th Austria declared war; and on 10th September Metternich concluded the Treaty of Töplitz, by which, for the first time, Russia, Austria, and Prussia were combined together against France. The balance was now decisively turned, and in October the battle of Leipzig destroyed Napoleon's hold upon Germany. The Confederation of the Rhine was dissolved, and its members, with the exception of the unfortunate King of Saxony, who was imprisoned in a Prussian fortress, joined the coalition by separate treaties with Austria. A similar policy was pursued in Italy, where even Murat, the King of Naples, sought to purchase the security of his crown by deserting his brother-in-law and by concluding a corrupt treaty with Metternich.

With the expulsion of the French from Germany and Italy the primary task of the coalition was accomplished, and Napoleon had another chance of peace if he had been content to retain the so-called natural frontiers of France—the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. But he knew that his power in France was based upon military triumphs, and that it would be endangered by the confession of failure. His obstinacy, partly due to the conviction that the aims of the Allies were not identical, forced the Powers to invade France in 1814 in order to compel him to come to terms. But the extremity of danger only served to stimulate him to gigantic exertions, and military critics agree that Napoleon never showed greater skill than in his operations on French soil. His very successes, however, contributed to his downfall. At every reverse he was willing to accept terms previously offered to him, only to find that, as in the case of the Sibylline books, they had been altered to his disadvantage. And at every temporary success he disowned his agents and repudiated the proffered peace. The inevitable result was to alienate Austria, the one Power which desired to maintain a Napoleonic dynasty, and to force his opponents into closer union. The four dominant Powers of the coalition renewed their alliance by the Treaty of Chaumont on 1st March, formulated their demands to be put forward at a final conference at Châtillon, and, these terms, which would have reduced France to the old boundaries of 1789, not having been accepted by the prescribed time, resolved to have no further dealings with Napoleon, and to press on to Paris. On 30th March the French capital capitulated, and next day the allied forces made their formal entry. On 1st April the Senate appointed a Provisional Government, with Talleyrand as its President; and on the 2nd the same body decreed the deposition of Napoleon and the recall of the Bourbon dynasty after an exile of twenty-five years. France had no great love for the Bourbons, and the Allies

had been careful not to demand their restoration. But there was no alternative solution which commanded any support, and the recognition of Louis XVIII. was the only feasible way of putting an end to the foreign occupation of France.

(2) Napoleon, who was at Fontainebleau while these momentous events took place, was eager to continue the struggle, and was confident that by cutting the lines of communication he could still compel the Allies to evacuate France. But the outspoken remonstrances of his marshals convinced him that there were limits to the loyalty even of the army, and, with the ready compliance of a fatalist, he agreed to abdicate. The Allies could now dictate their terms to him, and by a declaration issued on 11th April they allowed him to retain the title of Emperor, and to hold the sovereignty of the island of Elba for life, with an income of six million francs, to be divided between himself and the members of his family. A declaration by the Provisional Government intimated their adhesion to these terms, and their willingness, on behalf of France, to carry them out. These two documents constitute what is known as the Treaty of Fontainebleau.

The problem of adjusting terms with France was not very difficult, as it had been thoroughly considered both in the various treaties between the allied Powers and in the successive negotiations with Napoleon. As the restored Bourbons were not likely to adopt an aggressive policy so long as their domestic position was insecure, as the Allies had no quarrel with the new Government, and as it was obviously impolitic to discredit and weaken that Government by associating it with a humiliating peace, it was possible to grant somewhat more lenient terms than had been offered at Châtillon to Napoleon. By the Treaty of Paris, which was signed on 30th May, the frontiers were to be those of 1792 instead of 1790, which gave to France Avignon and Savoy, in addition to making certain rectifications of boundary to the advantage of France. This fixing of the French frontiers left more or less derelict countries such as Belgium, Holland, Germany to the left of the Rhine, and various parts of Italy, which had been previously annexed to France. With reference to the disposal of these territories and other matters provision was made, partly in the public treaty, and partly in a separate and secret article annexed to it. By Article 32 of the treaty it was provided that 'within two months all the Powers which have been engaged on one side or the other in the war shall send plenipotentiaries to Vienna in order to regulate in a general Congress the arrangements necessary to complete the present treaty;' and by the secret article, 'the disposal of all territories which His Most Christian Majesty renounces by the public treaty, and the relations necessary to create a real and durable balance of power in Europe, shall be regulated in the Congress on foundations fixed by the allied Powers between themselves.'

But the Powers were not content to leave everything to the Congress, and certain matters which lay outside the direct agreement with France were determined in detail or in outline in the Treaty of Paris. Thus Holland was to be placed under the House of Orange, with a territorial addition, which by a secret article was defined as the country between the sea, the French frontier, and the Meuse—that is, Belgium. The German provinces to the left of the Rhine were to serve for the aggrandisement of Holland, and for the compensation of Prussia and other German States. The States of Germany were to be independent, and united by a federal tie. Switzerland was to be independent, and to obtain Geneva. Italy, outside the provinces returning to Austria, was to be composed of sovereign States—that is, it was not to be united, and no foreign Power, other than Austria, was to hold Italian territory; Malta was to belong to Great Britain; and Antwerp was henceforth to be exclusively a commercial port.

(3) The Congress of Vienna did not meet on 1st August, as had been contemplated at Paris, because the allied sovereigns paid a notable visit to the Prince Regent in England, and the Congress was postponed for two months to suit their convenience. With regard to the Congress —the largest and the most important diplomatic assembly recorded in history—attention may be concentrated on two points: (*a*) the problems to be dealt with, and (*b*) the composition and the procedure of the assembly. Both were more or less defined by the two articles already quoted from the Treaty of Paris, which constituted the only reference and guide to the assembled diplomatists. The completion of the Treaty of Paris laid down in Article 32 was expanded in the secret article to mean the disposal of the territories renounced by France, and the relations necessary to create a real and durable balance of power. These, with the creation of a federal government for Germany, a readjustment of the Swiss federation, and a redistribution of provinces in Italy, were fairly substantial and difficult items. It is true that some matters were either wholly or partially dealt with by separate treaties which had been made in the process of forming the coalition and of detaching supporters from the cause of Napoleon. Some were actually *faits accomplis*, and were never debated at Vienna. Thus Ferdinand VII. had been restored to the throne of Spain; and Norway had been actually handed over to the King of Sweden, though with securities for the maintenance of its constitution and liberties. But in other cases the previous agreements, often made by single Powers without the approval of their Allies, and in all cases frankly opportunist and based upon no guiding principle, created more difficulties than they removed. This was notably the case with the treaty which Austria had made with Murat, by which the latter was secured in the kingdom of

Naples, while both he and Austria were to be aggrandised at the expense of the papal States. Another, and, as it proved, a still greater, difficulty was provided by two provinces which had belonged, not to France, but to an Ally of France. The King of Saxony had received from Napoleon the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw, formed out of Polish territories taken away from Prussia. He had loyally adhered to France even after the Russian *débâcle*, and had lost all his territories in 1813. Both Saxony and the Duchy of Warsaw were in 1814 occupied by Russian troops, and the king himself was a prisoner in a Prussian fortress. It was taken for granted by the victorious Allies that both kingdom and duchy were forfeited by their ruler, and were at the disposal of the Congress.

The composition of the Council was defined in Article 32 of the Treaty as including representatives of all the States who took part in the present war on either side. This was a considerable number; but it proved impossible to exclude from the Austrian capital the representatives of almost every State which had anything to lose or to gain, and also of States which had ceased to be sovereign States before the last war began, but which wished to regain the rank and independence of which they had been deprived. And some States were represented not only by professional politicians, but also by their sovereigns. The Emperor of Austria, the Czar of Russia, and the King of Prussia, besides several lesser princes, were all present for a time, and, though they attended no formal meetings, they were necessarily consulted upon all important points; and the Czar was one of the most industrious wire-pullers in Vienna. It has been estimated that some two hundred and seven States, or would-be States, were represented, some of them by several delegates, at the Congress. It was obviously necessary, if the Congress was to be constituted, to have some authority to decide which of these representatives were entitled to attend, and to settle such problems as whether the King of Saxony could send a representative, and whether the delegates from Naples were to come from Murat, the *de facto* king, or from Ferdinand of Bourbon, who claimed to be king *de jure*. And when the representatives had been selected and these thorny problems had been solved, it was clear that in some way or other the quality, as well as the number, of the represented States must be assessed. It would be impossible to treat the Congress as a mob of delegates with equal rights of speaking and voting, and to allow the greater Powers to be swamped by a majority of minor and often inconsiderable States. The only practical expedient to meet this difficulty was that the Great Powers should form an inner committee, and that their recommendations should be submitted to such outside discussion and acceptance as might be deemed necessary and desirable.

But who were the 'Great Powers'? There were two possible answers to that question. The signatories of the Treaty of Paris had practically constituted the Congress, and might reasonably claim some right to regulate its procedure. They were eight in number, and they included Spain, Sweden, and Portugal, which could hardly be called 'Great Powers' in a normal sense; and, besides, their direct interests were already largely provided for. Sweden, as a matter of fact, held rather purposely aloof from the Congress. The other solution was to accept the guidance of the four Powers who had constituted and guided the coalition of 1813, and who in 1814 had reunited themselves in the Treaty of Chaumont as a sort of permanent league. These Powers—Austria, Russia, Prussia, Great Britain—had dictated the Treaty of Paris, and in the secret article already quoted they had deliberately asserted their right to a preliminary and predominant voice in the settlement of Europe. But this claim on their part raised an extremely delicate question. France was a signatory of the Treaty of Paris, and France, so long predominant in Europe, could hardly be treated as a secondary Power. Besides, the France which sent Talleyrand to Vienna was not the France of Napoleon, against whom the coalition had been formed, but the France of Louis XVIII., with whom the Allies had no quarrel.

(*Continued on page 37.*)

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER III.—CUSTOMS OF THE SERVICE.

THE old 'com.' fairly caught me out at the 'prelim.' We had a general knowledge paper set—a fairly easy thing. I finished mine in about half-an-hour; then, getting bored waiting for Beefy, I started to write some skittish answers for my own amusement. Beefy, who is a practical joker, got hold of these, and when we were asked to pass our papers up, substituted the wretched things for my real answers. Just to show you how I put my foot in it, here are samples of the silly tripe I concocted.

(*Q.*) What is meant by strategy? (*A.*) Giving a fellow a thick ear—suddenly.

(*Q.*) Explain the term Tactics? (*A.*) Correct handling of a platoon when passing a brewery.

(*Q.*) What is an outpost? (*A.*) A military mortuary.

(*Q.*) What is meant by camouflage? (*A.*)

Wearing a Burberry to hide a hole in your pants.

Now, just imagine what the old 'com.' thought of me when he went through this piffle. I was in a blue funk. To make matters worse, it was Saturday and leave-day. Adela had got her mother and father off to a Red Cross bazaar, and she had engaged the drawing-room for us—all to ourselves. Beefy and her sister had commandeered the dining-room. This heavenly prospect was damped by a terrible cloud.

'Cheer up, John Brown,' said Beefy.

'That 's all jolly fine, Beefy. You 've let me down, and if I get chucked out, it 's all your fault.'

'You 're a ruddy pessimist. The old colonel is a sport. He 'll be tickled to death. Of course, he will probably have you up, make a hellifa fuss, &c.; but when you go out he 'll burst with laughter. You have got no humour, you silly ass. And you forget that the old chap used to do things at Sandhurst. Hang it all! it 's only a rag; and if there 's trouble, John, I 'll own up. I 'm not a sneak.'

'Fall in for lecture!' shouted the C.S.M. 'And, I say,' he added.

'What, sergeant-major?'

'Is John Brown here?'

'Yes.'

'You 're for orderly-room after the lecture. Make your will out. You 're going to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.'

'Right-o!' I answered, making the best of a bad job.

We then marched away to the lecture-hall to hear the adjutant on his favourite topic—'Customs of the Service.' He was not a bad lecturer, and quite funny at times. We called him 'Blasé Percy.' He had been at Mons, the Marne, and Ypres. Half his nose was off; he had a glass eye, a dummy hand, a silver plate in his tummy, and a game leg. Poor chap! no wonder he was blasé. For all that, he was a sport, and had the Legion of Honour.

'Now, gentlemen,' he said, 'when you 've finished wiping your feet on the tables, I 'll start. You 've got to go through it, so don't go to sleep. My lecture is, "The Customs of the Service." When you leave here you will have commissions. And when you join your regiments, try to do "the correct thing." Don't lurch into your new battalion like an actor-manager looking for trouble. Slide in quietly, just like a little dawg. If you 're not humble by nature, look as humble as you can. When reporting to the adjutant, don't have a woodbine between your lips and your hands in your pockets. He will eat you alive. When I was a sub. I saved *myself* an awful lot of trouble by cutting the *English Dictionary* down to two words—"Yes, *sir.*" If you 're not brainy, that 's quite a good scheme. The adjutant will mark you down as decent and harmless, and the men won't know. Of course, this beastly war has upset our easy old system. We 've got to be intelligent to please the newspapers. It 's a bit of a bore, but the best people are trying to do it, and it 's good to be in the fashion. At the same time, it isn't the correct thing to argue the point with majors and colonels. They are big-bugs in the military scheme, and should an old gentleman announce in the anteroom that Macedonia is in Texas, or that Florrie Ford is the wife of President Wilson, don't call him a liar. You will make him unhappy, and when he gets you on parade, he 'll most likely twist your tail. Use your brains, certainly, but don't advertise them—that 's bad form.

'A man is judged by little things, and it is very easy to discover a man's temperament and schooling. For example, in one battalion to which I was attached, a gorgeous youth barged in and presented his card to the adjutant as if he were a commercial traveller. Mark you, he was only joining his battalion that day: but the adjutant was amused to read the following:

LIEUT. TED TIDDLEWINKS, Esq.,
1st Batt. Bombing Buffs.

Tel. address: 'Hustle.' Red Villa, Tooting.

'Now, that visiting-card was all right for *The Bing Boys*, but it was no good for an officer of His Majesty's Service. I agree it wouldn't prevent our going on with the war. And I am glad to say it was no indication of the real ability of dear old Ted, as he turned out to be. But officers are officers. We control the actions of millions of men, and it 's not at all a bad thing to make the British Army a school for etiquette and good manners. Ted, I may tell you, was an advertising agent in civil life. He simply couldn't help getting that card printed. From his telegraphic address you will observe he was a hustler, and we can do with lots of men like him. However, the adjutant handed him over to me, and I got him to dump his one thousand gold-edged, red-lettered visiting-cards into the ashpit, and gave him a bit of pasteboard like this:

MR TED TIDDLEWINKS,
1st Batt. Bombing Buffs.

'Thus was he shorn of all his gilt, his Esq., his Red Villa, Tooting, tel. address, and all the fripperies of Suburbia. No officer requires a brass band or a newspaper poster to announce his commission or importance. The uniform is good enough, and it 's a mighty good kit, too. Ted was such a good fellow, so willing, so generous, and afterwards so brave, that we adopted him as

a regimental mascot. He's now a captain, a D.S.O. And what do you think that devil Ted is going to do next week?'

'What, sir?' I asked.

'He's going to marry my sister.'

'Hear, hear!'

'My sister, I may tell you, is a jolly good-looking gel—so is Ted good-looking—and when she asked my benediction, I wired: "God bless you, Red Villa and all."

'Another point. Don't start attempting to tip adjutants and colonels. You may be very rich, and imagine that if you send me a gold cigar-case studded with diamonds I shall pass you out for your commission. Personally, I should have no hesitation in court-martialling a man who did so. I recall a youth named Solomon M'Isaaks, who blew in from the Argentine. Out there he had to deal with grafters and twisters. To get business he had to give palm-oil on a lavish scale. He was not at all a desirable fellow. He wanted short cuts to success, and didn't like the daily grind of orderly officer, drill, marching, &c. Somehow or other he suddenly conceived the idea that by patronage he might buy a colonelcy or a brigadier's job. So he started to throw fivers about like hot peas, and ended up by sending a cheque to a brigade major. That finished him. He was booted out. If there is one thing we ought to be proud of, it is that the British Army has not the graft of South America. Merit counts, although I'm just afraid a sneak soft-soaps his way occasionally by acting the part of Uriah Heap.

'I may also tell you there are hundreds of little things you have got to know. For example, when the commanding officer enters the anteroom every officer must promptly rise to attention—as a mark of respect. Colonels do not insist on this from mere vanity. It is really discipline, and as all of you may be colonels some day, you will realise the benefit of the system. Another custom is, when you meet the C.O., the major, or the adjutant in the morning, salute smartly, and say, "Good-morning, sir." If the C.O. had occasion the day before to reprimand you for some error, make a point of saying a cheerful "Good-morning," and he will *then* know that you are no petty-minded individual.

'Remember your table manners. For dinner assemble in the anteroom five minutes before the time. Allow the C.O. and seniors to lead the way to the table, and take your seats quietly. Don't eat with your knife, and when you finish a course, put your knife and fork together. When a mess servant sees a new officer leave his knife and fork sprawling all over the plate he says nothing—but he thinks a lot. He really believes the delinquent is not a gentleman. And it is most important that officers should convey to all ranks that they have a knowledge of the courtesies which are the hall-mark of all well-trained people.

'Of course, you may say, "What has all this got to do with winning the war?" My reply is, it is *the whole scheme*. For example, the German officer is quite a brave man, but he is not a gentleman. His manners to the German soldiers are the manners of a brute. He never uses "please," seldom "thanks;" while Faith, Hope, and Charity are absent from his curriculum. His whole life is based on brute power, the penal code, and—orders. What a difference from the British Army! Our discipline is the firmest, yet the kindest, in the world, simply because cadets and *all* officers have had their noses shoved on the grindstone by sergeant-majors, lecturers, and seniors, who insist that if you fail in your duty, and neglect to cultivate the love and the friendship of your men, then you are absolutely no use to the British Army.

'Again, when you want to leave the mess table before the mess president does so, you must go and ask his permission. On a guest night you must not leave the room, except on a point of duty; and you should remain with the guests of the evening till they go.

'I think that is all just now, gentlemen,' concluded the adjutant. 'Fall out, please.'

. . . . . .

At other times this most excellent lecture would have cheered me up, but the coming ordeal made me tremble, and I shuffled to the orderly-room with a heavy, heavy heart. I wasn't worrying so much about what the 'Old Man' was going to say; it was the thought of my leave's being ruthlessly cancelled which made me sick of life. Adela—alone in the drawing-room—waiting for me! To be denied that hour of crowded life seemed like cutting the legs off a race-horse.

As I passed the orderly-room I saw the commandant had a fierce and livery look, for it was a raw, wet morning.

'Quick march—right wheel—left wheel—halt—hands back!—John Brown, sir,' announced the sergeant-major.

The 'com.' looked up. His eyes were sparkling fire, his moustache was like that of a walrus, his cheeks were puffed with wrath, and his neck *was* red. He struck terror into my soul, and I quaked like a schoolboy. I didn't know, of course, that this was the official orderly-room manner, specially cultivated by ancient mandarins to impress all tyros with the majesty of military law.

'Well, young man,' he blurted out, 'I have seen your effusion. It's all right for *Comic Cuts*, but it's a personal affront to me. Do you think the army and the war a cock-eyed revue for flippant cadets to throw their mocking tosh'——

'Really, sir, I'm—I'm——

'Silence, d—— you! You, a future officer, get an examination-paper given you, and you deliberately sit down and turn it into a music-hall farce. It's outrageous! It's a scandal!

You're a disgrace! When I commanded the Fuzzy-Wuzzy Camel Corps I would have shot an officer for such an offence. Do you realise the enormity of your crime? It's almost treason. Under the Manual of Military Law I can do anything with you for this. And if I were the C.I.C. I might order you to be strung up by the thumbs. What do you mean, sah? What the devil do you mean, sah?' he concluded, stabbing the blotting-paper with a pen and making it fly into a thousand fragments.

It was impressive—awe-inspiring! I felt like a worm between two stones. I am five feet ten inches, but at the moment I seemed no higher than a grease-spot.

'Please, sir, I'——

'"Please" be d——! Speak like a soldier.'

'I did two papers, sir—the correct one and this one. Unfortunately this silly one was sent up. I did it for my own amusement. I'm most awfully sorry, sir.'

'You're most *awfully* sorry, are you? Where is the proper paper, then?' he roared.

'Here, sir,' I said, handing it over.

His eye quickly scanned it over. 'Humph! saves your bacon, my lad. I was preparing to heave you out, bag and baggage. However, you're a youngster. I've got boys of my own. I'll give you a chance. Come again and you'll be shot! Now, are you due for leave to-day?'

'I hope you won't stop it, sir. I've an important engagement with a tailor about my uniform.'

'Did you say a tailor or—a lady?' he inquired, looking deep into my eyes.

'A—lady, sir.'

'Well, I have no desire that an innocent person should suffer for your misdeeds. You can have your leave. But never come here again—*John Brown.*'

'Thank you, sir.'

I was marched out. As the orderly-room closed I heard the 'Old Man' burst into laughter, and say to the adjutant, 'By Jove! we put the wind up that young bounder.'

'Yes, sir,' replied the adjutant.

(*Continued on page 41.*)

MOSUL—NINEVEH.

By Louise Peralta.

DOWN the broad, wine-coloured river comes a fleet of *kelluks*, the great skin-rafts of the Tigris, upon whose brown a golden dawn flings splashes of orange. These *kelluks* carry troops and equipment from Jezireh-ibn-Omar, whence a road through the passes of the Karaja Dagh connects with Nisibin, and so with the rail-head east of Ras-el-Aïn. Close to each shore of the level reach of water are long lines of *mahailas*, high-prowed like Chinese junks. At its one high, forward-sloping mast each carries, against a background of pious green or set in blazing red or yellow, the Arab crescent and star, with astrological figures underneath, or, it may be, a verse from the Koran in vivid white letters. Conducted with a leisureliness that reaches almost to the contemplative, unlading is going on. From these *mahailas*, since the country is nearly self-supporting, supplies were conveyed on camels and asses to the garrisons on both banks. For the Eighteenth Turkish Army Corps was astride the Tigris here at Mosul, and the River of Much Experience served as the third line—that is, as the general reservoir from which the daily issues proceeded—for British and Turk alike. With their access to the Gulf, the British could increase and replenish their river transport indefinitely. The resources of India's inland navigation, from the *shikar* boat of Kashmir to vessels of the Royal Indian Marine, were taxed with this objective from Bhamo to Sind. The Turk had to carry on with his more picturesque craft, in and out among which in this region no longer skims the gondola of Mesopotamian waters, the *bellem*, which is a down-river boat peculiar to the city of pale-pink Persian roses—Basra. Moored behind the *mahailas* are two strings of the up-river *gufars*—exactly the same kind of reed baskets with wooden uprights, plastered over with pitch from the bitumen-wells of Hit, which Herodotus describes as spinning down-stream, 'sound as bucklors,' with merchandise from Nineveh to Babylon.

From the eastern bank of the river a bridge of boats gives passage as far as the mid-stream rocks which at the season of low water are islands whose melon-patches gleam like rich outcrops of pyrites. From the chrysoprase and gold of the islands, whence the heat has hardly yet cast adrift the mists of the morning that linger in delicate gray, the western half of the river is bridged by a solid structure of masonry which touches land in front of the great Bab-el-Jisr, the chief of the seven gates set in the modern walls of sun-dried brick that were built to protect the inhabitants of El Mausil—which is, in Arabic, 'the Place of Connection'—from the raids of the Shammar Arabs, the great Ishmaelite clan which ranges over the whole of Irak. For the Shammar tribes, consummate foilers of the Othmanli tax-gatherer and evaders of conscription, Midhat Pasha, when sent in 1869 as Vali of Baghdad, legislated in an effective fashion which at once bewildered and enraged the palace at Stambul. On the Pasha's

recall the Shammar became once more masters of Mesopotamia.

The flame and the flush of sunrise are now thrown upon a ceaseless human stream pouring across the floating highway, and thence along the masonry leading to the El Jisr Gate. At this hour the throng is composed chiefly of such people as are concerned with the provisioning of the town. Nomads of the Beni Lam tribe, their blue *keffiyehs* bound round their heads by plaits of camel's hair, hustle the herds of goats that are to be milked in the courtyards of the houses. Muntifik Arabs, Semitic in feature, dignified of carriage and gesture, the very folds of whose robes assert independence, drive in the sheep about to be slaughtered according to the Mohammedan usage. Urumiyan water-sellers carry in huge skins the muddy water from the Tigris, which, when filtered, is not the bringer of sudden death one would imagine it to be. Kurds in many-coloured turbans display, on shallow baskets of pomegranate-twigs woven together with string, the still leaping *maseh* (trout), or, possibly, a fine *azad mahi* (salmon), just caught in the deep and rapid tributary of the Tigris, the Khansar.

On the other side of the town, in the portion of the walls which faces the west, are three gates hardly less important than the Bab-el-Jisr: the Gate of the Sunset; the Gate of the Abd-al-Jalil, named in honour of the originally Christian family whose chiefs, until the ninoteenth century, were the hereditary governors of the pashalik of Mosul; and the Gate of Saiadin, close by the site of the gate within the ancient walls from which the Conquest-Laden is said to have been driven back during his unsuccessful investment of the town. Towards these western gates, at this early hour, strings of laden camels, horses, and mules move slowly, the drivers armed with long lances of bamboo. The demands of two great armies enormously increased Mid-Asian trade. During the period of activity in Western Asia of the Russian troops, lines of communication between the Middle East and Anatolia and Armenia were to some extent cut off. Throughout the war it was upon the regions eastward of the Caspian and of the Great and the Lesser Zab that the armies in Irak depended for the supplementing of their equipment and stores. Therefore, driven ahead of a dancing rain of far-flung sunbeams, a *kafila* from Isfahân, with the inevitable white Persian cat seated, for luck, in front of the foremost horseman, would wind itself of a morning within the walls of Mosul at the end of its long road by way of Kum and Sehna. During the war the camel-train from Meshed regularly brought to the Town of Connection the produce of Turkestan. And, far off, against an unflecked horizon, could be seen the caravan from Kasbin that had threaded the toilsome Sauj Bulagh Pass.

The great mills of Bombay have captured Mosul's trade in muslin. Its fame, and the cunning craftsmanship that won it, are gone from the Market of the Inlayers which bequeathed its art to Venice and Cairo. But the Town of Connection is still the collecting and distributing centre for Irak and Kurdistan, and to-day opens one of the two great weeks in the year when the caravans make Mosul a meeting-point. Already the khans in the town overflow with merchants, animals, and bales of goods; and many of the traders who came with the *kafilas* that arrived the previous evening, having rested, are now making their way in these still fresh hours through the Bab-el-Jisr. They do not enter upon the bridge, but, turning to the left, take the road leading towards Hammam Ali, the great thermal-resort of Mesopotamia, to the north of the town.

Heaps of yellow sand are upblown between the river and a long, low, white wall. The wall edges the broad terrace beyond which rise, each set within its fragrant garden, the consulates of the greater European states. As always, by night and by day, there is on the terrace a *va-et-vient* of men of every race of the Eastern Mediterranean (Greeks, Armenians, and Syrians predominating), who form the motley crowd employed at Eastern consulates in some capacity or other, from interpreter and clerk to kavass or spy. The opportunity is not lost of falling into groups, the centre of each of which is one of the newly arrived merchants fresh from the murmur and the restless rustle of far-off bazaars, or from the sun-gilt silence of the desert. Even in this hour in which the drum throbs through the song, there is in Mosul a good deal of social intercourse, of the formal Oriental sort, between the consulates and the wide, flat-roofed houses in the town belonging to leading Levantines and Asiatics. And now that the day grows, but is not yet too hot, courtesies begin to be paid; and the knots of traders and hangers-on have to make way for ladies mounted on ridiculously small donkeys, and enveloped from head to foot in shapeless calico wrappers, but without the hideous horse-hair masks worn by the Bagdadi Hanums when they emerge into the streets.

Ophthalmia is a haunting terror of Mesopotamia, and at these meeting-times of the caravans, when Muslims observe almost more strictly than usual the duties of almsgiving and hospitality, noticeable among the throng that betakes itself to the sulphur-springs are the poorer students, suffering from diseases of the eyes, from the Sassoon School and from the Midhat Pasha College of Baghdad. Contrasting with these, of an arrestive beauty of the classic Iranian type, are the lads of from twelve to fourteen from Basra and the Gulf, who, by devious routes and by devices equivalent to shipping before the mast, have worked their way with the *kafilas* to this great intertribal mart. It would seem that in mankind's first home the race is, here and

there, still found in its pristine physical perfection, which, however, deteriorates all too quickly as each youth hastens to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Is it that in this old land there is still some divine reminiscence of the lost heaven? Does Memory, out of young eyes, gaze back through the aeons to the splendour of the Natal Day?

When these 'cure'-takers of almost all peoples and tongues have emerged from the succession of heated brick chambers at the baths, they pass the hot hours in the fountain-cooled verandas of the Hammam, comforted with the perfumed *nargili* and stayed with copious draughts of *yoghoort*, the very refreshing preparation of thick, sour milk. Even the amber wine of the famous Kullar vineyards of Shiraz may here, for his health's sake, be poured for the Shi'ah; while the amazing events of a stupendous era are discussed in the Kurdo-Syriac Arabic of Irak Arabi, with the liquid Persian vowels of Irak Adjemi, with the sibilant consonants of Arabistan. For, if West knows little of East, there is not much which—when it wants the information—East does not know of West.

When the intolerable heat has abated, for the return to the city the Arab 'cure'-taker draws over his white garments his *sebba*, the camel's-hair cloak which Europeans also find so useful in the extremely varying climate of Mesopotamia. The Hamdani saddler, of whom the Great War has made a 'leather king,' gathers his *pustin* about his shoulders; while the Kurd tent-contractor of Tabriz, who is become a bloated millionaire of Orient, slings, in his curious fashion, about his waist—the shaggy side out—the enormously thick felt *yapanieh*. War brought a great life to the River of Much Experience, but it did not change this people, which has lived through all things. Islam, which is Acquiescence, has laid a heavy hand upon this land. But cycles before Islam the East was fatalist, and looked upon life as upon *un jeu inévitable*. Yet, though lying almost upon the heart of the old, the town of Mosul is comparatively new; and Commerce is its lord.

'My soul has borrowed a portion of pain from hell!' In the great Chauk of the town, sitting cross-legged in front of his piles of sacks of gall-nuts, the mouthpiece of a hookah between his lips, a Khorasani thus expresses the anguish with which he is wrung by the ridiculously low price hazarded by a would-be buyer. Surrounded by possible customers, a trader in shawls is appraising and bargaining over his stock, great bales of which take up nearly half a side of the vast, open courtyard, giving on the Chauk, of the Khan-el-Khalili, the largest of Mosul's score of caravanserais. A crisp odour of roasting herbs tells of the *kebabs* that are being prepared for supper, and the animals are already at their evening meal, the camels kneeling in the centre of the courtyard of each great khan, and eating daintily the durra served them on a clean white cloth. The beasts that carry the merchants and their merchandise are always objects of interest to the people of Mosul. In the markets everywhere in the Middle East the Arab pony of the Persian Gulf always fetches its value. Though not equal to the pure Arab, it is a most serviceable as well as a handsome animal. The big-boned, clumsy-looking Atak horse is brought in great numbers in the *kafilas* because of its marvellous powers of endurance. But the favourite is the Turkoman horse of Khorasan, which is strong, fleet, of an extraordinary intelligence, and devotedly attached to its master. The Khorasan camel is also found in large numbers in the *kafilas*. Of great size and strength, it will carry six to seven hundred pounds to the three hundred and fifty or four hundred of the Persian and the Indian camel. At the end of the ten or twelve days of trafficking in the Chauk there will be a sale and exchange of beasts, when the ungainly but strong and docile cross between the two-humped Bactrian and the one-humped Arabian camel will be in huge demand.

In the Chauk, as the evening wears on, the heat is still great. The day's business over, the traders throng into the underground *serdabs* of the open-fronted cafés, where they squat on high-backed benches and squabble over dominoes. The *shraf*, ink-horn and scroll in his waist-scarf, is already established here and there in the square, where some Jews from the Mehalla Yahudi of Shiraz find it agreeable not to be shut within their own quarter for the night, which is what is done with them in that 'Seat of Learning, the Athens of the East'—the city of Hafiz and of Sa'adi. Some Arabs of the town fraternise with them; for in Irak not only is Ishmael on half-brotherly terms with Israel, but these 'Scars upon the Beauty of Islam,' as the orthodox Sunni piously call the Shi'ah, live in complete accord with Syrian Christians and with those gone over from Nestorianism to Catholicism who use the Chaldean rite. Muslim and Nazrini unite in honouring the patrons of the place—Mar Jirgis, who is to us St George, and Nebi Yunus, whom we call in English Jonah, and of whom many curious legends are told in Irak. It was near Mosul that Heraclius broke the power of Chosroes II., and recovered the sacred wood of the True Cross; and although, just nine years later, this region was swept within the khalifate, Mosul remains the Metropolis of Toleration. The followers of the faith which inspires Endeavour are distinguished from the devotees of the religion which inculcates Acquiescence only by the cross tattooed upon their thumbs. They swear by Aïssa, the others by Mahomet; that is the sole difference. Acceptance, therefore, is easy of the error that these people's Christianity is dead. It is certainly mortared solidly within a mere belief that their little parcel of doctrines is the material safeguard

of a race. Nevertheless, vitality still throbs in the immured existence.

The Orient takes swiftly—as it gives—the light. Into a surf of marigolds the sun goes down. The lovely dream we call an Eastern night is about to be realised. From the leaning minar of the great Mosque of Nur-ed-Din that rises upon the site of the Christian Church of the Forty Martyrs comes the call of the *muezzin*: 'To pray is better than to sleep!' The harshness of the full-throated Irak Arabic has softened to an almost liquid echo, when, clear and arresting, with quick-following compelling notes, the bell of the mighty Dominican church outside the walls rings for compline.

Of what avail—the question leaps out of subconsciousness—here, in face of the soulless forces of the Inevitable, the psychic leaven represented by those two Voices? Tenacious, indeed, impalpably but imperiously, of its possession is every influence that has laid hold upon the Oriental psychology.

What, then, of the influences from across the river? Does that Dust over there still lay the cable of its sentience to ours?

East of the Tigris, very far off, the snows of the Tiari heights rest against an intact aquamarine. Subject ranges do homage to these, and receive from sun, snow, and sky robes of honour more dazzling-hued than any bestowed by Mongol Padishah or Sasanian king. Below yet lower terraces, and separated from the town of Mosul only by the Khansar River, is the mound of Kuyundjik—Nineveh, the dust which, seven centuries before the Incarnation, was the exultant capital of Assyria. Here were the Triumphal Way of Sennacherib and the Palace of Assur-bani-pal. A few hours' caravan journey distant, the Diggers—Layard, Rassam, King—have laid naked the crumbling skeletons of the palaces of the Second Shalmanezar and of Esarhaddon, lords absolute over a people snared in the hazard mesh of existence, whose life was made the food of Pride, their love's jewels trampled into a despot's warpath.

Has Death, which for them was not 'august and royal,' sung their sorrow 'up into immortal spheres'? Has Ashtar—she of the Great Temple that commanded the mud-covered plain—breathed a soul into this abased earth in its eternal bed? Has she linked that soul with the souls of the living over there in El Mausil, the City of Connection, and with their cult of 'the gods whose names are with us still'? Has she given this Dust knowledge that it lies again under epic skies?

BLACKLISTED.

PART II.

I.

BRUCE and Pajarillo recrossed the garden in the glow of approaching sunset, and, as requested, summoned the *concierge* to let them out.

'Señor Marinero has finished his paper,' said the Little Bird.

The woman led them back to the door in the street wall, and having received a gratuity, was about to open it, when footsteps sounded behind them, and Marinero himself came down the path. Greeting them courteously, he dismissed the servant, saying he would himself let them out. 'But first,' he added when the woman had left, 'let me assure myself, gentlemen, that you have seen all my poor house has to show.'

'We have spent an interesting and instructive hour, señor,' answered Bruce. 'You are fortunate indeed to have found a retreat so full of historic memories.'

'Full, indeed, it is,' Marinero agreed—'fuller even than your short visit might suggest. The house itself, as you will have perceived, is comparatively modern, but it is not, perhaps, known to you that the Moors, as well as the Romans, had a fortress here, and that in parts of this building the tribunals of the Holy Office were held during the period of their power.'

'I confess we had no idea of it,' answered the Scot.

'You must return another day, and make a fuller examination at your leisure, gentlemen. But, to whet your curiosity, I must show you, before you go, something of what still awaits your attention. Come.'

He led them along the inner side of the street wall to where it made a corner with the Roman masonry. Here a short flight of worn stone steps descended to a small Moorish doorway cut in the older stonework of the wall. 'I take it,' Señor Marinero said, 'that this door took the place of an older one dating from the Roman epoch, for it is inconceivable that the chambers to which it leads could ever have been hewn out, once the wall had been constructed.'

With a key which hung from a nail he opened a worm-eaten oak door, and lighting a candle which stood within, proceeded along a narrow stone passage, flanked on either side by small chambers which had apparently served as dungeons. Tiny windows in the inner side of these gloomy cells admitted from the passage itself the only light and air which they received. Presently the passage widened into a fair-sized square room constructed in the thickness of the wall, floored with stone, and lit by two slits from the side of the garden. Immediately

beneath these windows, if such they could be called, was a small raised dais, and round the walls of the apartment, and here and there on the stone roof, were remnants of rings and iron constructions of a sinister look.

'I imagine this,' said Señor Marinero, 'to have been a kind of examination-room for prisoners. We are fortunate to have been born in another age.' He shrugged his shoulders, and passing through the grim room, went on along the passage. A little farther on it ended abruptly in a much smaller room, perfectly circular, and floored with wood instead of stone. A single slit in the garden wall admitted a faint glow of the evening light, and below the slit several stone steps were built into the wall. Beneath the perpendicular slit of the window was a narrow horizontal one, which admitted no light, and from one end of which a thick iron bar or lever protruded.

'This room, gentlemen, is one of the most curious in the whole place,' said Señor Marinero. 'As the light is fading, it will be convenient if we conclude our tour here for the present. This room has evidently been used in comparatively recent times, and its purpose is a strange one. With your permission, I will show you a quaint example of medieval ingenuity.' He ascended the stone steps, and placing his candle on the top one, took hold of the iron bar. Looking back over his shoulder with a smile, he added, 'If you will stand somewhere towards the middle of the room, you will better appreciate the effect.'

Totally unsuspecting, the two friends did as requested.

Bearing his weight on the lever, Marinero thrust it the full length of the slit in the wall. A rumbling seemed to come from all round the room, and a wild shout broke from the Little Bird: 'Treachery! *Madre de Dios!*'

He sprang for the corridor, but too late. Responding to some infernal mechanism, the wooden floor gave way suddenly beneath their feet, and, like children shot off a seesaw, Bruce and Pajarillo were precipitated violently into a chamber below.

II.

Bruised and half-stunned by the fall, they looked up from the darkness of their prison, and saw their guide, candle in hand, peering down from the security of his stone perch with an expression of malignant triumph.

'What do you think of our Moorish mouse-trap?' he cried, shaking the fist of his left hand at them. 'English spy and Spanish cut-throat, what do you think of this interesting example of medieval ingenuity?'

With a great effort controlling his voice, Bruce answered, 'Do you intend to murder us?'

'I will tell you a little story, English pig,' said the other. 'A fine romance, by Franz von Festinghaus.' He laughed gloatingly. 'There are two villains in my story. One is called Donald Bruce, and the other Pajarillo.'

A knife flashed suddenly out of the darkness past the candle, but the Little Bird was too shaken by his fall for a true throw, and striking harmlessly on the stone wall, it fell back into the blackness below.

'Do not interrupt,' said the German with a grin. 'If anything happened to me, you would assuredly never get out. Well, there was once a fine fellow named Franz von Festinghaus, of good family, but poor, and condemned for the sake of the Fatherland to labour in that desert of thieves called Spain. Of that cursed land this Franz by industry and application acquired a very thorough knowledge, which enabled him, to his great joy, to give valuable help to his country in her struggle against the attacks of her enemies. In his youth he had served in the glorious German Navy, and by care and forethought, and his wide acquaintance and influence in Spain, he was able to contrive many schemes to aid our gallant undersea boats, which earned him high commendation from his country's representatives, and were even brought to the notice of the All-Highest War Lord himself. After some time, however, it began to be evident that sinister agencies were working on the part of the enemies of *Kultur*; unaccountable disasters overtook many of our heroic vessels. The representatives of his country sent for Franz, our hero. Money without limit, and the services of a regiment of trusty agents throughout Spain, were placed at his disposal. Two orders only were given him—"Protect our heroes, and destroy those who are working against them." Well, he set to work, our Franz, but the task was hard and dangerous, for the enemies were cunning, and left little trace. They were working, moreover, not all together, or on any settled plan—for our enemies do not understand co-ordination—but like blind mules they were toiling obstinately, one here, one there, to defeat our successful campaign whereby we hold the Mediterranean in a grip of terror.

'I will not tell you how Franz obtained his information, but he obtained it, and as the evidence accumulated against this or that agent of our foes, one by one was suppressed. But month after month there came stories of two men, an Englishman and a Spaniard, and wherever these two went there occurred mysterious losses to our cause. Whence they came, and who financed them, it was long ere Franz von Festinghaus could ascertain, and even to-day there is much to be explained. As for the Spaniard, he was reported to have been a notorious smuggler, and to have lost a brother in one of the ships torpedoed by our commanders. The unearthing of these two men caused our Franz more uneasiness, and—yes, I will admit it—more fear and worry, than any other inquiry. It was just when he had begun to despair of bringing them to book

that one of their shrewdest blows against the Fatherland gave him at last the opportunity he sought. Through the plotting of these two villains, a trusty comrade, who was gaining valuable information for our commanders, was captured by the French on the frontiers of Andorra. The French did everything possible to keep the matter secret; but it is not easy to defeat our intelligence service, and at length, to his joy, Franz received from a sure hand a series of photographs of these two men. That was already two months ago, but in two months much may happen. Copies of these photographs were disseminated through Spain, wherever a faithful soul was working for the Fatherland, and high rewards were promised to him who should succeed in tracking those villains. Two days since a telegram—oh, a harmless commercial message!—came to me from Portugal. The spoor had been struck! And then, like a gift from the gods, this very day, as I was pursuing my hobby of an artist outside the station, behold, the very men came walking up to me! I knew them at once, so carefully had I studied the photographs. Yet at first I dared not believe my eyes. I studied them both. I studied the likeness again. I was certain! And now, *Gott sei Dank*, they are down there!' The German shook his fist again with fierce delight. 'And they ask what I am going to do with them! *Ach*, my good mouse-trap—it is *kolossal!*'

'This is a civilised land,' said Bruce. 'It is known that we came to this house. There will be inquiries.'

'And it will be known that you left, swine-dog!' was the answer. 'My servant saw you to the door, whence I myself can swear that I dismissed you. And who will be likely to inquire about you?'

'Those who sent me hither,' answered the Scot. 'And they have a long arm, Herr von Festinghaus.'

'They will need it, to reach you,' laughed the German. 'But this brings us to something practical. Who are "they"? I have suspicions, and a chain of evidence, but it lacks the connecting link. If either of you wishes to see again the light of the sun, you will answer that question, and in exchange for the information, duly verified, I will give you your lives.'

'And the alternative?'

'To lie here till you rot,' answered the German brutally.

'And what security have we that your promise will be kept?' asked Bruce, steadying his voice.

'The word of Franz von Festinghaus.'

'For my part, the security is insufficient,' answered Bruce. 'My companion will exercise his own judgment.'

'Señor Bruce,' said the Little Bird, 'it coincides with yours.'

'In that case,' said Von Festinghaus, 'I leave you to your reflections. To-night I start for Barcelona to remove another obstacle to our cause. In a few days, when I return, I will come and see whether your views—if by that time either of you still has any—remain the same. *Buenas noches, caballeros!*'

He set the candle on the stair again, dragged at the lever, and the great timbered floor, which hung aslant like a tilted plate, slowly resumed its horizontal position, shutting off from the captives the last spark of light. They heard the German's footsteps die away in the stone passage; then all was dark and silent as the grave.

III.

'This is an evil place, Señor Bruce,' came the voice of the Catalan presently through the blackness. 'I ask your forgiveness.'

'For what, Little Bird?'

'If I had restrained myself a little, my knife would have gone through that fellow's throat. A man's temper should be under better control at my age.'

'Nonsense!' said Bruce testily. 'It is I who am to blame for leading you into this, Pablo. Yet, sooner or later, there must be inquiry after us.'

'Sooner or later,' echoed Pajarillo grimly. 'It is not to be denied that that fellow is clever. But he is no Christian.'

'He is a devil!' cried Bruce. 'Are you hurt, Pablo?'

'My left wrist is sprained, and my legs are bruised.'

'I am not hurt. I must have fallen on you,' said Bruce. He struck a match. Its feeble glow showed how desperate was their position. The floor of the cell was of dry earth, smooth and hard. The grim wall which everywhere surrounded them, massive stone on massive stone, gave not the faintest hope. Ten feet above their heads the huge wooden floor of the chamber above shut them down—'like the lid on a saucepan,' as Pajarillo said. Along the middle of it a great iron bar provided the axis on which the floor had swung. The nature of the mechanism which operated the turning was not apparent, but on the circumference of the floor on one side were metal claws which now held the floor in position.

There came a sudden flutter of wings in the pit, and something struck the flickering match from the Scot's fingers. 'A bat!' he exclaimed, starting back with repulsion.

'Where bats can enter, air can enter. Light another match, *amigo*,' said Pajarillo. Bruce did so, and Pajarillo groped about the floor. '*Gracias á Dios!*' he cried, 'my knife is not broken. *Viva* the steel of Toledo!'

'Toledo steel will not cut through Roman masonry, Little Bird.'

'Nevertheless, with this in my belt I feel better. One more match, now, and a cigarette apiece, while we compose our minds.'

The cigarettes were lighted, and the companions sat smoking in the terrible dark.

'Pablo,' said Bruce, 'I have not your philosophy. God knows our own state is bad enough, but there will be murder done in Barcelona when that German villain gets there.'

'If so, we cannot help it, Señor Bruce. It is a mistake to think of what one cannot help. There is but one thing for us to think of, and it is how we are to get out.'

'It is impossible,' said Bruce wildly.

'I admit I fear it. Yet a man's brains are for thinking, and may the good God direct our thoughts!'

'Little Bird,' said Bruce in a harsh voice, 'if I go mad in this awful place, strike that knife of yours into my heart. Strike true, and Heaven reward you!'

'Dear friend, whom I love,' the Catalan replied, 'if the time comes I will strike, and strike for two. But the time has not come. Think!'

They sat a long time smoking in silence, then threw away the ends of their cigarettes, and watched the tiny red sparks go out. In the utter stillness each could hear the other's breathing.

'Little Bird!' whispered Bruce at length. There was no reply. 'Little Bird!' he whispered more loudly. Still no reply, though the breathing beside him came deep and regular. Bruce realised with a shock that the old man was asleep!

Well, let him sleep. He knew it would be cruelty to disturb him. Long he sat listening to that regular breathing, filled with agonised thoughts. At last he, too, must have dozed, for he suddenly felt his shoulder shaken, and discovered his companion standing in the dark beside him.

(*Continued on page 45.*)

ONE DAY.

By INNES LOGAN, Author of *On the King's Service*, *The Raid*, *Notes from a Field Message Book*, &c.

I.

'AND that,' said Charters, who was rather fond of using long words, 'is one of the most despicable accompaniments of the whole war.' He pointed to the open page of an illustrated weekly paper, whereon was a large photograph of a person doing 'war work' in a stage costume and a conscious and affected attitude. 'And these'—he ran his finger down a row of 'war workers.' 'And when you think of the *real* workers—the nurses toiling year in and year out, all day long, amid sickening sights and stenches, and the appalling monotony of it; and the mothers, staying at home and looking after their own children instead of pursuing the popular whim of the moment—why, you sometimes wish the Huns would get among them and teach them the *Schrecklichkeit* of war.' He threw the paper at a brown rat which ran rapidly across the sunshine between one heap of ruins and another.

'Yes,' said the doctor rather abstractedly, anxiously hunting through his pockets for their one box of matches; 'have you seen those matches anywhere? Oh, here they are.' He lit a cigarette.

'It's the hypocrisy of it all that sickens me. For downright hypocrisy give me one of your worldly-minded people every time. The religious hypocrite can't hold a candle to him or her. He hasn't got the cheek.'

'Exactly,' the doctor agreed emphatically; 'bad plays in the name of art, and bad books in the name of psychology, and *such* virtuous indignation if questions are asked.'

'And look at those shows got up for war charities,' continued his friend, filling his pipe very carefully. He did not know how long his pouchful would have to last him. 'If the people who go and the people who act would simply put their hands in their purses for what they could afford, they would raise ten times the amount in a quarter of the time.'

'Yes,' was the sarcastic reply; 'and not a new dress or a picture in the papers to show for it.'

'Of course, all this sort of talk is old-fashioned, and so on, and so forth; but, mark you, doctor, this war is going to be won by the old-fashioned people who think a lot of the stupid old virtues, like conscientiousness and devotion to duty. We have worked through the aristocrats, and the born fighters, and the professional soldiers. What I mean is, we can draw no longer, to any extent, on the men who fight well because *noblesse oblige*, or those who loved fighting for fighting's sake, or the Regular who instinctively sacrificed himself in obedience to duty. After all, it is leadership that counts. And this war is going to be won by the nation that has as its company and platoon commanders in its amateur army the greatest number of boys who would rather die, literally, than lose their self-respect by being false to their immediate duty.'

'*And* the greatest number of like-minded people at home to back them up, padre.'

'That too, of course. And it is not the public schools that are going to give the answer. The great majority of these young officers have never been at a good public school. They've been educated at grammar schools, secondary schools, Board schools even—and uncommonly well-educated in a sense, too. But the test is the home. Is the British home producing the

right stuff? It is just what we preachers have been hammering at for years—ay, and practising, too. Have any homes given more liberally of their sons to this war than the manses of Scotland?'

His voice trailed off. He saw in a swift vision, as he often did, the Scottish manses in field and town. He saw the spotless, shabby stairway, and the worn study lined with books, and the dressing-gown hanging behind the door, to be at hand because so often a fire could not be afforded. He saw, as in a flash, those square houses where poverty and strict virtue and honourable ambition and a sacred love of learning for its own sake had their home. He saw the toiling and the pinching and the planning, that the boys' education might be worthy of their breeding, and the long years of it, and at last the battle won, and the stalwart lads standing upon their own feet, facing life with quiet, confident eyes, facing life equipped through a father's and a mother's sacrifice. He saw them giving themselves proudly to their country because they had learned to serve, not self, but the King of kings. And he saw, too, the lives, so many of them, quenched by the flick of a bit of lead, the rich lives with the infinite might-have-been—and the manses empty of all but the memory and the pain.

The two officers were sitting on the ground outside the little brick shanty where they had spent the night. Ruin lay all around, and the morning sun blazed on the white chalk-stone of the broken buildings. Their battalion had been rushed into support the previous day, and on arrival had found that the ridge in front had been lost, and that 'support' had become the front line. There were no trenches, but the men had dug in with fury and efficiency; and as the afternoon wore on and no attack developed, medical officer and chaplain had set out rearwards to discover some central place for their aid-post. They had found this lean-to, and, near it, a Nisson hut big enough for any wounded likely to come in. There was ample accommodation, and though there was no shelter, the shelling, so far, had been intermittent and scattered. The camp had few traces of occupation left in it, save a supply of coal and a number of illustrated papers and magazines. If one stood up at the door of the shanty he could see the front (and only) line about three hundred yards away, across the little valley which lay between. They had spent most of the night keeping their little fire going, for the hours of darkness had been bitterly cold; and all night long occasional shell had screamed overhead, bursting sometimes in the buildings round, more often on the road beyond.

Outside the aid-post the ground declined sharply for a hundred yards, and then rose in a gradual slope to the brow of the ridge. There the front line, dug only yesterday, ran. The two Scotsmen began the morning with a systematic exploration of the neighbouring ruins, and before long discovered two other Nisson huts, partly dug in. They were by no means even moderately safe to the experienced eye, but a careful search revealed nothing better, and the doctor finally ordered the aid-post staff to move in as quickly as possible. Then, setting off down the valley, the chaplain and he made their way to battalion headquarters, a hut with walls one brick thick and a tarred-felt roof. There they got some eggs and biscuits which, with a supply of port wine, had been left behind in a canteen, and reported the position of the aid-post to the commanding officer.

There was little news, apparently, and what there was seemed too bad to be true. The situation beyond the brigade front was what is called 'obscure.' The Fifth Army had 'gone;' the Boche had separated the French and the British; there was no one on our immediate right. So the tale, half-believed, went. The two officers filled their pockets with provisions, and hurried back to their post, to find the removal in full progress. The doctor, who was of a sanguine temperament, suggested a visit to the front line.

II.

Parties of men of another division lay scattered in groups of two or three from the dry bed of the stream below to the ridge. Their heads turned to watch the two officers as they pulled themselves up the steep bank to the slope above. As they stood erect the air around them immediately became filled with whistling sounds.

'Machine-gun bullets, padre!' cried the doctor. 'Down again!'

They dropped beneath the bank, and, turning, moved to the left, keeping beneath its shelter, and working round to a sunken road that ran straight up the hill towards the trench. Two days before it had led past a large ammunition-dump, and the elephant-shelters in which the men had lived still lined the road. Each was now filled with men sitting idly with their rifles in their arms—men of the same division as those lying in the field to the right.

'What are you doing?' asked the doctor.

'Waiting for the Germans to attack, sir,' was the reply.

'That 's bad'—they were on their way again—'and I 'm not sure if it does not explain a good deal, this perpetual waiting for an attack. If a man has any imagination, it gets the better of him. It takes a stouter man to defend than to attack.' The doctor paused. 'If he had said, "Waiting for Jerry to come over," it would have had a different sound, somehow.'

They passed a group of officers sitting near the top of the road, and, saluting the colonel, asked if there was any machine-gunning over the eighty

yards of flat ground between the top of the road and the trench.

'Only an occasional burst.'

'Well, let's hope the occasional burst does not happen now.' The doctor apparently felt quite cheerful about it.

They reached the top of the road, and began to run. They ran hard, and then, with the laughter born of relief—first cousin to the cheerfulness of the wounded—they dropped into the trench below, among their own men. It was a model trench of its kind, very deep, very narrow, and with a good fire-step. A sentry glanced round at them, then turned to his duty again.

'Yes, sir, you can see them quite plain over there.'

The two officers peered over the top of the trench, and saw a line of gray figures moving quickly, now disappearing, now rising again.

'I think it must be the flank of a big body of them working round to our right, sir. You only see a few of them now and then.'

The loud, angry chatter of a machine-gun farther down the trench broke out, and stopped, and began again.

'What a pity our guns are not here!' said some one as they worked their way down the trench. 'I suppose it's always a perplexing problem whether to withdraw them and risk leaving infantry without support, or to leave them and risk losing them.—Well, Bob, how are things going?'

'All right, sir,' said a tall Guardsman; 'we are getting some fine shooting.' He lifted his rifle to his shoulder as he spoke, and aimed rapidly. Charters and the doctor stepped up on the fire-step to watch, and saw two gray-clad figures moving across a gap. The shot rang out, and at the moment one of the Germans pitched forward on his face and lay still. The other leaped aside and disappeared. The soldier withdrew the long barrel of his sniper's rifle from the parapet, rested the butt on his foot, and grinned.

They passed on, exchanging greetings with the men, and always finding the same cool and watchful confidence that was typical of their battalion and division.

III.

But at the aid-post things were not going so easily. It stood on high, exposed ground at cross-roads, and the shelling had become more persistent and definite. As, safely returned, the padre and the doctor ate their frugal lunch of hard-boiled eggs, biscuits, and tea, the bursts drew unpleasantly near. The knowledge that a matter of fifty yards' difference would land one through the roof of the hut did not add to the pleasure of their lunch.

'Here 's the colonel from the field ambulance,' said the sergeant, appearing suddenly at the door.

They looked out, and saw the commanding officer of the brigade ambulance striding steadily across the open towards them. A shell crashed into the ruins behind him as he came. He walked down the steps into the hut, and took off his steel helmet (better known as a 'tin hat'), and with characteristic directness began discussing arrangements for removing the wounded. Finally he advised them to clear out of a 'foolish place for an aid-post.' One of his cars had been knocked out on the road hard by already.

The colonel's experience was so wide and personal that the medical officer (who was secretly rather proud of his aid-post) reluctantly agreed. Charters frankly heaved a sigh of profound relief. Events proved the decision a wise one. A few hours after they left a shell burst in the stretcher-bearers' quarters, and soon after another blew clean through the officers' hut.

But where were they to go? That was a question not easily answered. So, immediately the colonel had gone, the two set out again, this time accompanied by the 'stretcher-bearer' and 'sick' sergeants, to hunt for a site. Two nights' lack of sleep was beginning to tell, but the need was urgent. A battle might occur on their front at any moment; it was, indeed, expected at any moment. Striking across country, they tried the fields behind the road; up and down and backwards and forwards they searched. The road itself they soon found to be barren of shelter, and a narrower road running back from it towards the rear was in like case. The fields also were quite open; and though, under the efforts of a number of men, a broad trench began to zigzag across them, it was, and would long be, innocent of dug-out or shelter. At length they decided to try a ruined village at another cross-road to their right front.

Villages and cross-roads are not ideal spots for lingering in during a battle, but there seemed no alternative. For long they drew blank in the village. Its ruin was complete, and it contained no cellars. One concrete shelter they found at last. It was small; the short flight of steps which led to it had a nasty twist, awkward for stretcher-bearing. It was half in ruins in any case, and very dirty. They rejected it, and cast round the country-side once again, but again without success.

The afternoon wore on. Once a dispute about a map reference threatened to become acrimonious. Fatigue fell on them. Like every one else in the battalion, they had been on the alert since the morning of the 21st—it was now the afternoon of the 23rd—when at dawn the shattered city where they slept had wakened to the hurtling whistle of the high-velocity shell's incredibly swift approach, its thunderous explosion, and the slapping clatter of whirling masonry falling earthward. They decided to send the sergeants back to the old aid-post meanwhile, and crossing the road towards the line again, lay down on its bank. A steady shell-fire, directed either at the road or at

battalion headquarters a hundred and fifty yards forward, broke between the two, thrashing the bare ground. Through the indifference of their weariness, of their supreme desire for rest and sleep, the thought of tea suddenly presented itself, and refused to be dismissed. Tea, and not sleep, now appeared the desirable thing in life, the only thing worth having, and all at once, with a word, they rose and walked, in a half-circle to avoid the shelling, towards headquarters.

The frail hut had two rooms in it, with a kitchen opposite the door. In the room to the left the commanding officer, the adjutant, and the intelligence officer lay stretched on their wire beds, snatching a few minutes' rest. The shells passed overhead at short, irregular intervals. At times they passed so close overhead that it seemed that only by a miracle was the roof untouched. They passed so near that the occupants of the hut had a physical sensation on the crown of their heads as though they had in some sense felt the sweep of the racing shell. The two officers turned to the kitchen and asked for tea. It was served in the room to the right. It was nectar, ambrosia—what do these mean to the soldier?—it was life; it was tea! The waiter, paying no attention to the alarming noises overhead, retailed at great length the symptoms of some small ailment to the doctor, who listened, bright-eyed, happy over his tea.

They emerged reinvigorated, satisfied—and the situation had become suddenly clear. The aid-post must go to the concrete shelter, inconvenient though it was. It was the only place. They sent a message to the sergeants, and turned towards it; and not even the discovery that a hut eight yards from its door contained seven hundred boxes of Mills' bombs could altogether quench their good spirits. They gravely discussed the problem whether one direct hit would send it and all in its neighbourhood sky-high, or if the bombs would go off separately, and so give a man a chance of getting to cover. The aid-post staff could be seen dribbling down the valley laden with bandages and splints, and soon all hands were at work cleaning out the shelter. An orderly, his rifle slung over his shoulder and walking with the steady, assured gait of a man tested and sure of himself, crossed from headquarters with a message for the doctor.

'I know what this means, padre,' said he; 'it means another move.' It turned out to be so; headquarters had got instructions to side-step to the right, and during the night the battalion would move similarly. They began wearily to pack up again.

A stretcher case, one of the few of that day, came down from the front line, in great pain. A fragment of shell had struck the poor fellow over the stomach, leaving no external wound, but causing rupture and bleeding. He died as he was being carried to the 'loading-post,' where the ambulance-car waited.

IV.

Darkness had fallen when the order to move came, and once more the little party set out to find a home. There was the village to go through, a main road to follow, a railway crossing to negotiate; but all these ordinarily dangerous points lay quiet. The enemy was too busy driving down south through the gap to attack on the northern flank as yet. (The attacks came a few days later, and were completely repulsed.) They reached a side-track with a sensation of relief and achievement, for a broad main road is, of all places, the least desirable to be on during shelling. The dry bed of the river was now on their right, and a protecting high bank on the left, between them and the enemy. Three tall trees, one with a great branch shot away and lying across the road, loomed up through the darkness. Just beyond was a row of shelters, a few feet deep, dug into the bank. One after another they cast down their bundles and sought a sleeping-place.

In the officers' shelter there were already two occupants, but they made room for the newcomers. A chair appeared marvellously, and, still more welcome, cups of hot tea. With the false feeling of security one has when he is in a place in which he has never been shelled—the three trees were destined to be the object of much enemy attention later—they gratefully drank the hot, strong liquid, comparing experiences.

'Wasn't it Napoleon who said that an army marched on its stomach, padre?' asked the doctor.

'Yes,' said another; 'but Foch says "*c'est l'âme qui gagne la bataille*"—it is the soul that wins the battle.'

'Shut that door, for goodness' sake!'

The drone of a Hun bombing-aeroplane sounded very near, so definitely different from the sound of a British engine. The beat of it, the regular pulse, rising and falling, swung round overhead, and moved off down the line. They placed their haversacks under their heads and snuggled down into their overcoats.

'No boots off to-night either, I suppose.'

'Fourth aid-post we've established to-day,' murmured a voice sleepily. 'Wonder where we'll move to to-morrow.'

Outside, the night lay almost soundless, except for the occasional rattle of a machine-gun in the front line. There would be no rest for the men there that night—the staunch men who did the deeds of the long campaign, without self-seeking or advertisement; the brethren of the trenches who had drunk to the bottom of the bitter cup of the weariness and the terror of war.

Another day of the war was over. It had been a day singularly free from casualties; the morrow might bring a different tale. The shelter sank into silence. Their last thought, as always, was of those at home.

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THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

PROLOGUE.

MY friend Keene-Leslie has often urged me to tell the story of the strange experiences which befell us a few years ago. I would willingly have turned the task over to him, but he is a much-occupied man in his peculiar calling. It was too much to expect him to devote his hard-won snatches of leisure to the chronicling of his own or other folks' adventures. After procrastinating as long as I decently could, at last I gave my partner in adventure a promise that I would tackle the story as soon as I could bring myself to remain long enough indoors. My bondage held compensations, for it was my good fortune to write this narrative in a well-beloved corner of the earth, at a library window which frames a picture of an old, bird-haunted garden; in the middle distance the sun-shot links of a Highland river; and beyond, heaved against the clouds, the great shoulders of the mountain-wardens enclosing the horizon above the long Spey Valley.

On king's highway, lonely bridle-path and sheep-track, through silent forest, over hill and moor, I have wandered across old Scotland from the Braes of Glenlivet until the wind flung me a waft of seaweed from the Linnhe Loch. The enchanted road has led me through a hundred bonny glens, but of them all Gleann Ciuin—The Quiet Glen—calls clearest to my heart, for, its charm and solitude apart, it is my 'kenned' country, the land of my forebears, and its river and its hill-burns still sing, as they did in my boyhood, of happiness and holidays and home.

Ciuin is not its real name. You may search map and gazetteer in vain for it and other places in the tale. So you may the parish records for the names of some of the people whose fortunes are chronicled in these pages. There are a few men left who shun the limelight. Enough, therefore, to say that the Glen hides near where three noble Scots counties join hands, and, looking southward from its uplands, if the mists are not trailing, the eye, following the dark line of ancient woods, past vivid green patches of 'brae-set' crofts, past the birch-clad foothills, mounts to the solitary places of the mountains, haunts of golden eagle and ptarmigan, where, summer and winter, the lonely corries that neighbour the high tops of the Cairngorms are slashed with virgin snow.

In the Glen stands the country-house called, in the Gaelic, Tigh-na-Sith; in the Lowland Scots, The Bield. The word is a full one, conjuring up tranquil visions of a house of peace, shelter, content, voices of friends, the altar-fire of a hearth. Its name chimes with its setting, for the old house hides in a green fold off the beaten track, under the lee of the southern slope of a burly hill, screened by pine woods from the gale, so near the selvage of the moor that the heather creeps close to the gates and on still autumn mornings one may be wakened by the call of the grouse. 'Into Glen Ciuin and out of the world,' so runs the saying in the North; and indeed, when the velvet dusk is closing round The Bield and the warm-lit squares of its windows welcome me home, many a time I ponder the strange chain of events which brought the persons of its drama together on so sheltered and remote a stage.

Doubtless, the place had its share of unrest in the wild old days beyond the Highland Line. A dark memory of the Wolf of Badenoch lingers in the rhyme known to a few of the curious in folklore:

The Wolf he rides wi' four-score men,
Black be his tryst and black his en';
Red runs Spey and red's the sky
In Ciuin, when the Wolf rides by.

In later times the Glen saw its clansmen march away to join Montrose or Tearlach, many of them never to carry claymore home again, their beds in the heather wider than in castle or in shieling. But these ancient strifes are dead, and to-day The Bield rests in its quiet eddy, hardly vexed by a ripple from the great current of the world. Yet, not so long ago, its tranquillity was suddenly broken, and to my friend Anthony Keene-Leslie and myself there came, in consequence, some eventful enough weeks.

The old house is now mine. It contains some things of interest to the antiquary and the sportsman, but I give the place of honour to an old brass casket which rests under a glass case in my sanctum. The exquisite fifteenth-century craftsmanship on its border appeals to the

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expert in Dinanderie, but the ordinary man might not give the casket a second glance.

Yet my eyes often turn towards it. Centuries have died since, jealously guarded, it set out under the benison of a great name, and I am now to tell its dark story, and of the share which Keene-Leslie and I—not forgetting Dr Hall—took in strange affairs, meetings with crafty and violent men, stratagems and spoils.

CHAPTER I.

TO a romantic, the quest of hidden treasure may conjure up palms and the tropic moon mirrored in a still lagoon, the 'peacock seas of the buccaneer' and the boom of far Southern surf, with a schooner in the offing, like enough; and if your romantic be of the true, never-grow-old breed, he will hear the sharpening of cutlasses, strange oaths, and one of the crew singing 'Ho! for the Spanish Main' out on the dizzy topgallant-yard as the schooner heels to the Trades. But the winds of chance have set the course of this tale elsewhere. Let our romantic put the tiller of his fancy about, and make his first port of call in one of the windy streets which climb the steep slope of the 'New Town' of Edinburgh, where the eye, looking down the hill from the city's heart, finds a pleasant sense of distance and escape from the pavement in the picture of the blue floor of the Firth, the Fife hills, and the sails of ships seeking harbour or heading for open sea. The ranks of a heterogeneous regiment of shops, from print-sellers to public-houses, straggle and thin out after passing the cool green of Queen Street Gardens, before handing the street over to lawyers' grimy-windowed offices and rows of tall dwelling-houses with flights of steps from their doors, bridging railed sunken basements.

Some of the doors display little brass plates which announce with simple economy of language that there reside within members of the Scottish Bar. Mine bore the inscription, 'Mr Neil Forbes, Advocate.' It now hides a tarnished face in the dusty exile of some lumber-room; but once, in the heyday of its youth, it was the newest and shiniest in all that hopeful street. The familiar plate on many—too many—doors in Edinburgh conveys little or nothing to the layman of the status of its owner; but from the street itself and the number of 'stairs up'—the height of the rookery where the legal bird nests—any lawyer's clerk can classify the owners of the brass plates with swiftness and accuracy. So it is written that Jura Street is dedicated, not exactly to the juniors, but a large subdivision thereof—the young and struggling, the young and lazy, the young and unlucky, all those who are described in the polite euphemism as 'not in full practice.'

Behold me on a raw February evening alone in my bachelor quarters, three stairs up, in No. 19 of the street. I should like to be able to present a picture of myself immersed in work, my table snowed under by documents, corrugations on my young brow through overwork, a pile of 'papers' awaiting my sagacious attack. *Sed major veritas.* None of these things was there except the corrugations, which were certainly not born of having too much to do. In truth, I was sitting by the fire, a prey to gloomy thoughts, doing nothing more profitable than burning tobacco. Briefs I had none. Until lately, some house property I owned had brought me close on a couple of hundred a year—enough to live on. But there came an evil day when I rose to the Devil's best-dressed fly, the notion of making money without sweating for it. The details of how this came about are now of little concern to any one except myself. The central fact is that I borrowed as much as I could on my property, and put the proceeds into an adventure, felicitously christened 'The Running Target Mine.' If any of the shareholders of this ingenious contraption happen to read this, I offer them fraternal sympathy. Now I sat meditating on my chilly outlook, for that afternoon I had interviewed the family lawyer. He is self-made, hails from the practical North-East, and his countenance—as hard as his head—has never been able to conceal his inability to understand the strange people who cannot take care of the bawbees.

We discussed ways and means until it was appallingly clear that I should be forced to sell my little patrimony, and this I instructed him to do. The result of my 'deal' was painfully easy to comprehend. My bank-book informed me that I possessed forty-seven pounds eleven shillings and fourpence. The rest of my capital had vanished in less than a couple of months into the pockets of the riff-raff of the Stock Exchange. Here ended the first lesson.

The knowledge that I was alone to blame for my being on a lee shore may have been a powerful illuminant in a revaluation of myself, but it was as a farthing dip in the process of getting rid of my troubles. The more I pondered a way out, the darker it grew. I got a few guineas for law reporting and occasional articles for the newspapers and magazines; but I never had made more than a pittance at the bar, and though I was sanguine enough, a merciless clairvoyance told me that I never should. I was near the end of my tether. The thought (I suppose) ought to have left me cold, but I was not so much discouraged as the state of my affairs may suggest. Thank Heaven, resilient youth sees visions of blue sky and open water through the roughest weather. If empty pockets were hateful, they were not the blackest things in a world of compensations. I thankfully reflected that I had been spared the worst of all punishments, the spectacle of others suffering through my want of sense. Notwithstanding

my bad miss at the Running Target, I had a vague belief in myself, in the mysterious something which people are accustomed to call luck. The wolf was not actually snuffing at the door, and as I had no notion of meeting trouble halfway, I tackled a Report with what concentration I could. I was in the middle of it when a knock sounded on my door.

In many ingenious narratives where the young and briefless one is sitting alone and a knock sounds on the door, Destiny (ignoring professional etiquette) conveniently appears in the guise of a mysterious, frequently a beautiful, client, and, hey presto! from that moment fame and fortune are his. But the knock heralded nothing more dramatic than my landlady's diminutive 'slavey,' who brought me a couple of missives. One was a bill, which I put beside its depressing brethren in their lair behind the clock on the chimneypiece. There was not much room for it. The other was a note from Keene-Leslie asking me to dine with him at the club that evening. He had just arrived from London, and had sent me the note by a messenger on the off-chance of my being at home and disengaged. With very great pleasure I scribbled a few lines accepting my old schoolfellow's invitation. I had not seen or heard of him for a long time, but I never put his name on the lengthening mental register of the men who have dropped out, for Anthony Keene-Leslie, busy idler, traveller, sportsman, dreamer, man of action, had a way of turning up unexpectedly, debonair, cheerful, bright-eyed and resourceful as in the days when we were boys at school.

Brains were his in plenty. Had he willed, I believe 'Tony' would have made a fine special correspondent; but he preferred the life of a free-lance, and for a time I used to see his name under magazine articles on sport and travel in remote parts of the earth. He had more than a competence—jute and ground rents—and could well afford to gratify an incurable restlessness of mind and body. Danger had an irresistible attraction for him. He had been mountaineer, pearl-fisher, Arctic explorer, big-game hunter in all sorts of savage places, and had done excellent work for a great newspaper in the Russo-Japanese War. After that he had loafed about London, so he told me, doing nothing, and trying to do it well; but the last I had heard of him was from a man who had met him strolling on the Östergade in Copenhagen, well set up and immaculate as of yore, looking as if he had never roughed it for a day in his life. Yet, with all his restlessness, there was nothing febrile in his blood. My old friend was a cool-headed and courageous gentleman.

I had been dining too much of late in the poor company of my own thoughts, and I welcomed whole-heartedly the chance of turning my back for an hour or two on myself and my affairs in Tony's society. Consideration of the Report was promptly adjourned. In half-an-hour I was on my way to the club.

I have good reason to remember the weather on that February evening. It was cold and misty; a raw haar was stealing up from the Firth of Forth; the street lamps looked as if they had been wrapped in dirty cotton-wool. Edinburgh is blest by comparison with London or Glasgow in its freedom from fog; but there is an undeniable thoroughness in some of its easterly haars. After the comfortable warmth of my rooms, the clammy air made me shudder, and I was not sorry to reach the shelter of the club, and to find the wanderer stretching his long legs by the hall fire.

There were a good many men dining, but we got a table to ourselves, and fell a-talking of old times and old friends with great zest. The dinner was good (trust Tony for that!)—whitebait, a Madras curry, and a saddle of mutton—and the wine was a Clicquot of a classic year. By the time we had settled in arm-chairs with our cigars, and Keene-Leslie had begun to discourse of his wanderings, I had almost forgotten that there were such things in the world as bad weather and the Running Target Mine.

My host was a deft raconteur. His yarns led me far afield—Newfoundland and days after caribou; evenings by lonely lakes; camp-fires in spruce woods; big game in Rhodesia; whales in the Arctic; woodcock in Albania.

'The life agrees with you, Tony,' I said to him. 'You look uncommonly fit.'

'To be frank, old man, I can't say quite the same of you. You're looking only middling. Anything the matter? Seems to me you're a bit pulled down.'

'Oh, I'm fit enough, I think,' I said.

'Your statement lacks conviction. Overwork?'

I smiled.

'"*Vina, Venus*"?'

'Nothing so interesting.'

'What is it? Out with it, my son.'

I hesitated for a moment, and then blurted it out. 'I've been chasing wild-geese on the Stock Exchange, and have got a bad knock. I deserved it; but I don't want to talk about it, Tony. I heard of you in Copenhagen the other day,' said I, to turn the talk from the dreary subject.

'Yes, I was there. I have an interest in a lease of some quarries in a couple of islets in the Gulf of Bothnia. Fancy bringing granite to Aberdeen! But we do it, and it pays, Neil. Well, I was at Copenhagen after my first and only visit to those God-forsaken rocks, and looked up "Fatty" Willis. You remember him at Cambridge? He was in the Foreign Office, before he succeeded to the family place and took to rock-gardening and prize pigs.'

'I remember him. He pulled "Four" in my year.'

'The same. I helped him a bit in a little affair. The details don't matter, but I got a letter of thanks from his Chief, and an invitation to go and see him. I did, and the upshot is that I am now a tracker.'

'A whatter?'

'You'll never guess!' He bent forward and whispered in mock heroics, 'I am one of the cogs of the great machine of Empire, gentlemen, on which—er—on which—er—finish the cliché, Neil.'

I fell into his humour. 'On which the sun never sets; of whose destinies you, gentlemen, the free-born electors of—of Glauryhole, are the custodians—you, whom I am proud to desire to represent in the Palladium of British liberty.'

'Loud applause! You may be in the Palladium yet, if it doesn't improve.'

'Be serious for a moment, Tony! What do you mean?'

'I am one of the members of His Britannic Majesty's Secret Service; but, I pray you, do not form a hasty impression of these gentlemen from the shilling thrillers. I do not pay calls upon ambassadors at 3 A.M., modestly but triumphantly bearing lost papers of State. No Ruritanian princess has insisted on bestowing her lily-white hand on me. I have had no picture-house escapades. No! Mine are minor operations out of the limelight, chiefly concerned with finding out what the fellows on the same job, employed by other Powers, are up to. Hunting the hunters, y' know. Keeping notes of a few suspected people, and all that sort of thing.'

I had an idea that Tony's airy 'and all that sort of thing' meant a good deal.

'Been in any "scraps"?'

'One or two, but all in the day's work;' and he told me of the disappearance and the recovery of one of our attachés in a European capital; of illustrious 'crooks;' of strange moves on the chessboard of foreign politics; the thin, inflammable curtain between the nations and the furnace of war. They were matters which are not seen in the newspapers, and they made me stare.

'I like the job. It suits me. I'm a mixture of impatience and perseverance. Something new to rub one's wits on turns up every now and then.' He puffed meditatively at his cigar for a minute. 'You remember the accomplished Mr John Vandeleur's verdict in the *New Arabian Nights*,' he went on. 'Let me recall it. "I have hunted most things," quoth that redoubtable rascal, "from men and women down to mosquitoes; I have dived for coral; I have followed both whales and tigers; and a diamond is the tallest quarry of the lot." Well, my friend, I have the temerity to differ from him. I have found man-hunts more interesting than searching for beasts or jewels, and I have chased all three. Yes, the life suits me. But I am a selfish dog, yarning away about my own affairs. Tell me about your coming a cropper.'

'A purely personal matter, and of no interest to any one.'

'"Of no interest!" You know me better than that. Out with it. I insist.'

The story of the Running Target was disagreeable, but it had the merit of being short. I let him hear it.

When I finished, 'I'm sorry, Neil,' said he. 'The old definition that "a mine is a hole in the ground, frequently owned by a liar," is true. Can I help you? You can count on me.' He said many kind things which may be guessed.

'No, my friend. I'm going to stick it out, and meanwhile put up with the bed I've unmade.'

'Like the lower deck, "Grouse and carry on." Well, "Wull to Cupar, maun to Cupar;" but if ever you're up against the dead end, or anywhere near it, let me know, even if I'm at the ends of the earth. Promise me.' He meant what he said and I promised, little thinking of the queer times that were in store for us.

It was midnight when I gave Tony 'Good-night,' after promising to lunch next day with him at the Caledonian.

An unwelcome surprise awaited me when the hall-porter opened the door. The haar which had been creeping up from the Firth in the earlier hours of the evening had grown into a North Sea fog—so dense that the line of the street and the very pavement at my feet were hidden, and my hand, held at arm's length, was scarcely visible.

CHAPTER II.

FEELING strangely alone in the stillness, I began to grope my way homeward slowly on foot. The fog filled the streets from roofs to pavement with a blinding vapour. I had slipped an electric-torch into my pocket before starting for the club, but its light was a mere pin-point against the impenetrable gray wall. Foot by foot, blindly, but without a blind man's assurance, I crept along until I came to the corner of the street which led northward to my quarters. It must have been close on half-an-hour before I got my bearings, but I managed to reach the railings of Queen Street Gardens, and there I felt more confidence. I was within a few minutes' walk of home, and with a hand on the railing I made quicker progress. I had not met a soul since I left Tony, nor had I heard a sound except the melancholy voice of the sirens from the blind ships in the fog-wrapped Firth.

Suddenly my fingers touched something alive, and my wrist was gripped by a strong hand. I am not a weakling. With a wrench I freed myself, and flashed the electric-torch on the man, my mind made up for a struggle. It was a hundred to one that the fellow was a professional thief who welcomed the fog as an ally;

but to my, 'What the devil do you mean?' there came a stammered, 'Pardon, signore!' The torch showed me a tall, shaven, dark-eyed man. He repeated his 'Pardon, signore!' and added, 'A vile night, and you made me 'fraid.'

He probably spoke the truth, for my silent approach in my rubber overshoes may have startled him. His face was very pale, and I remember the light from the torch glinted on a pair of brass rings in his ears. From these and his clothes I put him down to be a sailor, and his use of the word 'signore' told me his race.

'No harm done,' I said curtly, and moved on, keeping my ears open in case he might follow me, but I heard nothing; and in another minute I arrived at No. 19. I had just opened the outside door, when I was brought to a standstill by the sudden beat of swiftly running feet. I listened. The man who ran with the haste of this one on such a night most assuredly had something to run from.

Curious to get a glimpse of him, I left the key in the latch and went down to the foot of the steps. The fleeing man was in the middle of the street, coming up the slope towards me. He must either have been running for some time or he was woefully out of training, for he was gasping. When he drew near me he slowed down and came to a standstill, trying to control his breath, and, I thought, listening intently. The density of the fog forbade my seeing him, but I kept perfectly still; and presently he moved off again, walking quickly and softly, and, so far as I could judge, still in the middle of the street. When his footsteps died down I turned to go into the house, and at that instant came a low whistle and once more the sound of flying feet. This time they came from the opposite direction, as if the runner had turned and was now doubling on his tracks. Some rowdy undergraduate's escapade or a commonplace prowler dodging the police, I thought; but in a few seconds he came full *pelt* almost past me, swerved suddenly, and fell within a few yards of me, where he lay very still.

I hastened to the roadway, and a flash of my electric-torch made it plain that the man was hurt, perhaps in danger. I put my arms under his shoulders, and had no difficulty in picking him up and carrying his light weight. The key was still in the latch, and in a trice I had opened the door and lifted my limp burden inside, where I laid him down gently on the stair. The gas-jet was burning, and by its dim light I made out a pale face, with straggling wisps of sandy hair. To reassure him, I put a hand on his shoulder. It was wet, and the torch showed me that his sleeve was blood-stained. When I bent over him he opened his eyes and said in a hoarse whisper, 'Have they got it?' The words were hardly out of his mouth when he swooned again. Just then I felt a slight current of cold air, and glanced at the door. It was being very cautiously opened, inch by inch. Still bending over the man, I kept a wary eye on the door, and presently the profile of a man's face appeared and a dark eye peered stealthily through the opening about a couple of feet from the floor.

I sprang erect. Instantly the face vanished, but I had caught sight of a brass ear-ring, and I knew that the watcher was the man whom I had stumbled against at the railings a few minutes before. Jumping to the door, I threw it wide open. The fog filled the doorway, and realising that the prowler might be near me, intent on some devil's work, I drew back swiftly and slammed the door. Its clang may have stirred the clouded wits of the man on the stair, for when I reached him his eyes were open and his hands raised in a feeble attempt to ward off something.

'Come with me. You are safe,' I said, as I took his arm and helped him to his feet. He was trembling, as much, I believe, from sheer terror as from bodily weakness.

For a moment he hesitated. 'Is—is there—any one wi' ye?' he asked, staring wide-eyed over my shoulder.

'Not a soul.'

(*Continued on page 53.*)

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA, 1814-15.

PART II.

ALL these problems were in the air when, in the course of September, the Ministers of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Great Britain began to take up their residence in Vienna. These men—Metternich, Hardenberg (with Wilhelm von Humboldt to assist him on account of his deafness), Nesselrode, and Castlereagh—had been intimate associates for nearly a year and a half. They had conducted all the ramified diplomacy of the coalition; they had sat together in conference with the agents of Napoleon; they had followed the allied troops into Paris; and they were the men who were mainly responsible for the Treaties of Fontainebleau and Paris. On their arrival in Vienna they at once assumed the function assigned to them by the secret article of 30th May, and undertook, as a matter of course, to draft a programme for the coming Council. Metternich was accepted as president, and Gentz, his friend and confidant, was to be secretary. They were still at the threshold of their work when they were confronted with

two very serious difficulties. Talleyrand came to Vienna as the plenipotentiary of France, and before long it became apparent that the comparative unanimity which had enabled the coalition to extort its terms from France by no means extended to the general policy to be pursued in Europe.

It did not require the acumen of a Talleyrand to discover that France, in spite of the Bourbon restoration, was still regarded as a pariah among the States of Europe. There were several problems in which France was vitally interested. Louis XVIII. was resolved not to recognise Murat as King of Naples; he did not wish for a national union of Germany under Prussian guidance; he hoped for the restoration of his kinsman the King of Saxony; he desired to aggrandise Piedmont as a possible balance to Austrian ascendancy in Italy; and the Czar was to be prevented, if possible, from obtaining that dictatorship in Europe to which Alexander's ambitions tended. But the primary task imposed upon Talleyrand was to break up the coalition, which was still in spirit anti-French, and to vindicate for France that share in the settlement of Europe from which the dominant Powers proposed to exclude her. For carrying out this task there were certain obvious advantages on the side of France. Her own fate was already settled by the Treaty of Paris—no territorial gains were open to her; she could pose as a disinterested Power, and as a disinterested Power could act as arbiter between the contending interests of other States. Also, all the secondary States, finding themselves excluded from the inner diplomatic circles, were inclined to combine with France against the pretensions of the Allies of Chaumont, and to look to her as the champion of their rights. And, finally, Talleyrand was prepared to put forward a principle—the Bourbon principle of legitimacy—as a guide to the Congress, and, however fallible such a principle may appear to us a century later, it was better to have some guiding principle than to allow the Congress to degenerate into a disorderly scramble for the selfish interests of individual States.

Talleyrand's first opportunity came on 30th September, when the representatives of France and Spain were for the first time invited to confer with Metternich, Nesselrode, Hardenberg, and Castlereagh. The programme which the four had drawn up and signed was now laid before the Conference, and in the discussion Hardenberg spoke of the 'Allies.' A dramatic scene followed. Talleyrand at once fastened on the word, and asked who were the Allies and against whom were they allied. It could not be against Napoleon, for he was at Elba; if it was against France, then a representative of France was out of place in Vienna. Yet the presence of France was necessary to consecrate the principle of legitimacy, on which the maintenance of order and stability in Europe depended. He concluded by demanding the speedy meeting of the Congress, and by contending that the Congress alone could give a mandate to selected Powers to prepare the basis of a settlement. The embarrassed Ministers of the four Powers found it impossible to answer the arguments and the claims of the French representative, who had at one bound made good his position in the inner committee of the Council. With this victory Talleyrand was content. He tacitly withdrew his demand for the meeting of the Congress proper, which in the end never met at all. The formal business was, without a mandate, undertaken by the eight signatories of the Treaty of Paris, but in practice Spain, Portugal, and Sweden hardly counted, and the real decision rested with the five Great Powers—Austria, Russia, Prussia, Britain, and France.

This notable success on the part of France was not due solely to the superior dialectic of Talleyrand. It really arose from the circumstance that on certain vital questions the Allies of Chaumont were diametrically opposed to one another, and that France as a matter of fact held the balance between them. The great bone of contention was Poland. Alexander I. had occupied the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw, and was determined to retain it as a kingdom of Poland, of which he was to wear the crown. This involved a complete reversal of the policy of the partitioning Powers, who had agreed in 1795 that Poland should be blotted from the map of Europe, and that the name should never be used again. To obtain the assent of the other States, Alexander proposed that Prussia should receive the forfeited Kingdom of Saxony, and contended that Austria was sufficiently compensated in Illyria and Italy. Prussia was reluctant to resign what had once been its provinces in Poland, but was afraid to alienate Russia, and was ultimately induced to accept the bribe of Saxony. Austria was averse to a kingdom of Poland, whose creation would endanger its hold upon Galicia, but was still more hostile to the proposed transference of Saxony, which would bring Prussia to the most exposed frontier of Austrian territory, and would give to Prussia an immense preponderance in Germany. Britain, less directly interested, cared little for Saxony, was not unwilling to aggrandise Prussia, provided Prussia would accept British rather than Russian patronage, but was resolutely opposed to the aggrandisement of Russia. Castlereagh professed his willingness and even his desire to see a real kingdom of Poland reconstituted; but it must be an independent Poland, not an additional kingdom for the Czar.

These dissensions gave to Talleyrand an immensely strong hand to play, and he played it with his accustomed skill. He set himself successfully to strengthen the antagonism of Austria and Britain to the proposed distribution of territory,

and less successfully to sow dissension between Russia and Prussia. Alexander, who knew Talleyrand well, tried in a personal interview to intimidate or cajole his formidable antagonist. It was a dramatic conversation. The doctrine of legitimacy was a red rag to the Czar, who boldly declared that the interests of the Great Powers constituted the public law of Europe, and threatened war and the desertion of the Bourbon cause if he was not allowed to keep his coveted spoil. As Talleyrand was obstinate, he tried to bribe him by offering to support the French contentions with regard to Naples, but the French diplomatist was too wily to sacrifice a primary for a secondary interest. Unsuccessful in diplomacy, Alexander tried to confound his opponents by confronting them with accomplished facts. He handed over Saxony to the occupation of Prussian troops, and he sent his brother to Warsaw to proclaim the restoration of the Kingdom of Poland. The only result was to increase the alienation and the obstinacy of his opponents; and finally, on 3rd January 1815, a secret alliance was made between Austria, Britain, and France, by which they agreed to defend their common interests by armed force. Bavaria, Holland, Hanover, and Sardinia were willing to join the league. Talleyrand wrote in triumph to the French king: 'The coalition is dissolved; the isolation of France is at an end.'

The threatened rupture was averted. Convinced that the hostile forces were too strong for them, Russia and Prussia gave way. The King of Saxony was restored on condition that he should renounce the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw, and cede a considerable part of his kingdom to Prussia. Prussia recovered its old province of Posen in Poland, and the part of eastern Galicia which had been wrested from Austria in 1809 was now restored. The remainder of the Grand-Duchy, with the exception of Cracow, which was made a free and neutral city, was handed over to the Czar, with the title of King of Poland. These arrangements, practically settled in February, were embodied in the final act of the Congress.

Events proved that Talleyrand had gained a Pyrrhic victory. The news of the dissensions at Vienna, which he had so artfully fomented, reached Napoleon at Elba, and encouraged him to believe that his hour had come. His return to France, the rally to his cause of army and people, and the flight of the Bourbons constitute one of the most dramatic episodes of history. The foundations on which Talleyrand had built were utterly destroyed. He had acted as if he had been the Minister of a Louis XIV.: he was now the discredited Minister of a James II. The coalition against France, whose dissolution he had exultantly proclaimed, was reconstituted, and the Treaty of Paris was for the moment a dead-letter. But the Congress of Vienna continued its labours through the storm, and carried out its work with a precipitation which was in strong contrast with the slowness of its earlier proceedings. Various committees, consisting for the most part of minor and industrious diplomatists, adjusted the settlement of Italy, the constitution and composition of the Swiss Federation, the limits of the new kingdom of the Netherlands, the provision of a new and very unsatisfactory constitution for Germany, the distribution of German territories left of the Rhine, which gave to Prussia the guardianship of the western frontier, the condemnation of the slave-trade, and the regulation of the traffic on rivers running through separate states. The once thorny question of Naples had been settled by outside events. Murat, distrusting the willingness and the ability of Austria to protect him, had thrown in his lot with Napoleon, had been declared an outlaw, and had perished in an attempt to recover the kingdom from which he had been expelled. The Bourbon Ferdinand was restored. The final act, which embodied the decisions on all the questions before the Congress, and which left the question of the Turkish dominions in Europe severely alone, was signed on 9th June 1815. France, after Napoleon had been defeated and sent a prisoner to St Helena, had to submit to a new Treaty of Paris, by which its boundaries were reduced to those of 1789, and it was compelled to submit to the humiliation of being occupied for some years by foreign troops. The Bourbons came back 'in the baggage of the Allies,' and Talleyrand, who for some months had played so prominent a part as their agent, ceased to be a Minister of the Crown.

(4) When peace had at last been assured to Europe, the allied Powers were free to consider measures to ensure its permanence. Alexander proposed that they should pledge themselves to act together in brotherly affection in accordance with the precepts of the Christian religion. This mystical document, which was signed on 20th September 1815, constitutes the 'Holy Alliance.' But the more practical measure was the renewal, on the initiative of Metternich, of the league of Chaumont. By the 6th Article of the treaty which was signed on 20th November, the four Powers undertook to hold periodical meetings for the consideration of measures desirable to secure the tranquillity and the prosperity of peoples and to maintain the peace of Europe. In accordance with this agreement successive Congresses were held at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 (when it was agreed to terminate the military occupation of France and to admit that country to the Quadruple Alliance), at Troppau and Laybach in 1820, and at Verona in 1822. The peace of Europe was not seriously threatened during these years, and the Congresses were mostly employed in securing the tranquillity and the prosperity of peoples by suppressing all attempts to gain constitutional liberties.

The reader may draw his own conclusions as to the bearing of the Vienna settlement upon present problems. But there are a few obvious points to which attention may be called. It is clear that, even if separate treaties were imposed upon Germany and her Allies, as the Treaty of Paris was imposed upon France in 1814, a Congress is necessary to settle such imperative questions as the relations and the boundaries of the Balkan states, the boundaries and the future government of Poland, the future of peoples possibly detached from Austria or from Turkey, the fate of Constantinople and the Straits, the evolution of order out of chaos in Russia, securities for the maintenance of peace and for the observance of international law, &c. It may be urged that all these problems should have been settled beforehand by the Allies. The answer is that this was impossible. No politician, however prescient, could be assured what the precise conditions would be when a settlement came to be made. Premature agreements were found in 1814 to hamper rather than to aid decision. And the attempt to solve such problems at the outset would destroy a coalition before its work was done. If it had been proposed to assign Poland to Russia or Saxony to Prussia before the Congress of Vienna, Napoleon would never have been defeated.

In 1814 defeated France sought to conciliate her enemies by deposing Napoleon and restoring the Bourbons. In 1918 defeated Germany sought to obtain better terms by getting rid of the Kaiser and by accepting a democratic Government. The first attempt to merely tinker the existing constitution of Germany has been abandoned with the retirement of Prince Max, and a national convention is proposed for the framing of a new constitution. This creates a difficulty which did not arise so acutely in 1814, as it delays the creation of a stable Government for the conclusion of peace. But the new Government, whatever it may be, will be associated with the humiliation of Germany, as the restored Bourbons were associated, however unfairly, with the humiliation of France. The Hohenzollerns may hope to have at least the chance which Napoleon had in the Hundred Days.

The place of the defeated Power in the future Congress is a matter of interest. The prejudice against France was extremely bitter when the diplomatists met at Vienna. The prejudice against Germany will certainly be no less when the Congress assembles at Versailles. A change of Government does not immediately absolve or whitewash a people. Yet Talleyrand was able, by fomenting dissensions among the Allies, to gain for France an active and effective voice in the settlement of vital questions. Germany has already shown her desire to play the same game, and it will be the task of the allied statesmen to frustrate her by maintaining that unity which has given them their present ascendancy.

Allusion has been made at the outset to the influence which a disinterested Power may exercise in a diplomatic conference. This is as true now as it was a century ago. The fact that the United States stands aloof from the distractions of Continental politics has given peculiar importance to American intervention, and is likely to give to President Wilson or his representatives a balancing and possibly a decisive voice in many post-war problems in the West.

There are two points which specially concern us. In the great French wars Britain was, as she is now, the supreme naval Power, and complaints were made then, as they have been now, both by belligerents and by neutrals, of the way in which we used our maritime ascendancy. The cry for the Freedom of the Seas was as familiar to our ancestors as it is to us. Yet at the Congress of Vienna no allusion was made to these intricate problems of international law. British maritime power had rendered such invaluable services to the allied cause that no member of the coalition was prepared to propose its curtailment, and France could not venture to do so. And in the Treaty of Paris, Britain restored to France almost all her conquered colonies except Tobago, Santa Lucia, and Mauritius, an act which Napoleon at St Helena described as quixotic. On these points it would be dangerous to prophesy from past history.

As to the Holy Alliance and the future League of Nations, the differences are so great that it is not possible to draw much guidance from any analysis of the past. The Holy Alliance is interesting as the first attempt to devise an inter-State control of separate States which in theory retained their independence. It achieved some measure of success so long as the original motives which inspired it, war-weariness and hostility to the French Revolution, remained in full force. It began to break down when international jealousies and divergent interests rendered the co-operation of the Great Powers difficult; and it broke down altogether when the revolution of 1830 gave France and Britain to the guidance of principles which were diametrically opposed to the cautious conservatism of the remaining reactionary Powers, Austria, Russia, and Prussia. The first great breach of the Vienna settlement was made when Belgium was severed from Holland. The aims and the composition of the League of Nations are not likely to resemble those of the Holy Alliance, and therefore its fate may be different. But it is clear that it will be easier to found such a league than to maintain it when circumstances and conditions are changed.

There is one final difference between the Congresses of the past and the future. The Congress of Vienna had no guiding principle: it would not accept the principle of nationality, which savoured of the French Revolution, and

it was reluctant to accept to the full the more congenial principle of legitimacy which Talleyrand propounded. But the allied Powers in December 1916 pledged themselves to the principle of nationality, and this may furnish a useful (though not an infallible) guide through some of the tangles of post-war problems. It will not, however, in itself strengthen or cement a League of Nations, which must seek to correct the excesses of national aims and ambitions by supplying the check of international control.

THE END.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER IV.—WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT.

NO doubt our military dons believed that after drill we swotted Haking, Needham, Infantry Training, and Stonewall Jackson, not forgetting *Notes from the Front*, and all the pamphlets on soldiers' bunions, number nine pills, &c. We certainly did swot—when they were looking or moving around. But a cadet's day is a strenuous day. From 6 A.M. to 4 P.M. running, drilling, lectures, and physical jerks feed up the best of men, and we were glad to leave shop and gather together round the fire. There we unbared our souls, and made no bones about it. Army life is an open life, a much manlier life than even the public school. There's no beastly fagging, no 'bloods,' but a universal hate of the prig and the prude. War is a wonderful leveller. And at this school there was a regular mix-up of breeds and classes.

In my own hut there were many characters. Ginger Thomson, for example—the queer beggar who wouldn't wash. But he had the M.M., as well as the French Military Medal, and a brilliant record at Oxford. He entertained us when he dissected our professors, and it was good to see him cross swords with Billy Greens, the ex-parson. Greens hadn't the chest of a hen, but he was the Church militant. He was a plucky little devil, and if any man interfered with his evening devotions, Greens would get up and fight. Nobby Clarke was a howling Radical lawyer, inclined to argue the point; while Tosher Johnson was a Canadian cow-puncher. There were others, not forgetting Beefy Jones, the lustiest beggar who ever carried a gun. So, when gathered round, we were interesting. One night we discussed religion.

'Men can't be intellectual and godly, old chap,' declared Ginger. 'If you want us all to sing psalms and chant "Holy, Holy," you'll have to close the schools and breed us like heifers and hogs. To be a Rationalist, one need not be a morality-wrecker. Many unbelievers are clean—cleaner than those who attend communion on Sunday and commit perjury on Monday. Clean up the Church, and I'll be a parson.'

'How can we clean it up, when you're destroying any little good we can do?' exclaimed Billy Greens. 'We're not supermen—we're human. We can't perform miracles; and I'll tell you this, old chap, religion is a bulwark for the poor, the sick, and the blind. Destroy the Church, and you'll destroy the last shreds of public decency and restraint. Your doctrine will plunge us into the moral laxity of the Huns. We're fighting for God in this war, and that's why I'm in. I loathe the whole armour, but I won't throw it off till we rid the world of this canker and curse. This is a holy war.'

'Well, Billy, I'm giving you a hand, although my views are not your views. Personally, if all the padres were good fellows like you, I would cut out my doubting and inquiring brain, and become a sidesman in your parish church. Religion is all right; it's the average parson who is all wrong. Some are the fag-ends of humanity; others are ordained Don Juans; many are mercenary adventurers; and only a few are like you—real good men, who believe in what they preach. Hang it all, Billy! half of your parsons are not men; they're women in breeks. You're about the only man I've seen fit to be Archbishop of Canterbury. When I'm Premier, you'll get the job.'

'Hear, hear!' echoed the boys, for Billy Greens was a popular chap.

'Your flattery's well meant, Ginger, but I've no need of it. I can carry my own bat. You're not morally bad. Indeed, you're on a higher plane than many. But, for all that, your intellect makes you dangerous. And it's up to me to keep you in order. In this hut I'm the Church militant, and if you convert any of these boys to your doubting Rationalist creed, I'll take it out of your skin.'

'By Gad, Billy, I *do* like your pluck! You're a white man, if you are a parson. I'll be a real good boy,' murmured Ginger, who in his heart had a swelling love for the plucky little padre.

'I'll vote you in as a bishop too, when I get into Parliament,' interjected Nobby Clarke.

'Thanks, Nobby; but you're a rotten Radical. I've no use for your Mumbo-Jumbo trickery and Manchester morality. Your crowd is a mixed bunch of twisters and prudes. You sing the Auld Hundred on Sunday, and pull down the Established Church on Monday.'

'Good old Billy!' shouted Ginger.

'My dear old Pieface, your Church won't be any good till you get Disestablishment. As long as padres have got security of tenure, they won't work. They regard a living as an investment.

All you can get them to do is to play bowls, read Elinor Glyn, and drink whisky with the squires. They 're the enemies of freedom, Free Trade'——

'And Free Beer,' piped Beefy.

'Yes, they are political mandarins who want to keep the Old Country in chains. The Liberal Party will save all you High Brows from revolution and anarchy. Yet you won't thank us. You gobble the *Morning Post*, chew the *Spectator*, and lick the feet of Arthur Balfour. You Tories are a damned lot of nose-wipers and job-seekers. You haven't the stomach of a fly.'

'What about Haldane?' roared Beefy, who got his politics from the *Daily Mail*.

'Well—what about him?'

'The *Daily Mail* says his soul is in Germany.'

'If you read the *Daily News* you would find that it was his Expeditionary Force which landed in France in 1914, and his Territorial Force which warded off invasion. All your Tory Government did when in power was to change the design of Tommy's shirt-tail and hand out caps made in Germany. You 're great fellows for political swank and eyewash, but you haven't the brains of a hen. And even in your Tory Coalition Government you 've got to get Lloyd George to pull you through.'

'Nobby!' cried Ginger.

'What?'

'I 'm fighting your constituency at the next election. You 're a pest, a peril, and a blighter. And if the Boche doesn't kill you, I 'll smite you dead on the platform as soon as you whisper Free Trade. Free Trade will ruin the Empire. We 're going to have Protection, even if I 've got to lay you out on a shutter of the *Daily News*. And I 'll bribe the hooligans to smash up the printing-machines of the *Manchester Guardian*. You Radicals have got to be destroyed.'

'Gentlemen,' said Nobby, striking an oratorical pose, 'look at this unwashed pro-consul from Oxford. He 's really afraid of Advanced Liberals passing a Utopian measure that every citizen must be washed. And he, the product of culture, the flower of chivalry, the superman, would bribe the toughs to smash up the *Manchester Guardian*. Oh Ginger, thy name is Autocracy!'

'Yours is Democracy, and it 's a pretty rotten creed. You 're rushing us into a Republic, with a President in overalls, and Cabinet Ministers who drop their h's, and snore when they 're sucking their soup. You won't be happy till you see field-marshals as bus-conductors and admirals as A.B.'s. You 'll cut off the Colonies, and let us fizzle out as the inglorious scrap-heap of a once glorious old Empire. Nobby, you 're a politician and a public fraud.'

'Is he?' said Tosher Johnson, the Canadian.

We all looked up with a start. Tosher was a dark horse.

'Yes,' Ginger retorted with emphasis.

'Well, I guess Nobby's Free Trade is all bosh, but he 's a man of push and go. You 're too darned slow for a funeral over here. Your hoofs are sticking in the feudal mud. An earthquake 's the only thing to stop your browsing on Homer and chewing the rag about "form." This is the Dollar Age. Make good or go under. You wowsers from Oxford and Cambridge want your blinkers taken off. The classics cut no ice in this age. Homer, Socrates, and Plato won't sever the hamstrings of the Hun. When you were loafing around with Shakespeare, Tennyson, golf, tennis, and "Rugger," the Hun was dumping his goods in Canada and every bush town in the Empire. It makes me sick to hear all this gaw-damned talk in your papers. You 're a fine people, but you only crawl. You won't run. If you don't get a spark under your old machinery, this old scheme will peter out like Spain and Rome.'

'Rotten materialism,' shouted Ginger. 'Your philosophy is "guessing," your soul is "calculating," and you 're clean gone on "results." You 've been taught no history. Old things you don't know or understand. And when you land in the Old Country, you want to bring your commercial morality into the only decent Government in the world. You 're all jolly good fellows. Fine soldiers! Good citizens! But you 're dollar-mad, and have no bottom in your politics or finance. Smuts is a colonial, but he doesn't talk like you.'

'He was at Cambridge. Good old Cambridge!' shouted Beefy.

'Yes,' answered Ginger. 'Smuts is about the only man you 've produced at Cambridge. He refused to play the giddy goat, and put his nose down on the classics, logic, history, and law. That 's what you want, Johnson.'

'Not for me, old chicken. Homer never built the C.P.R., Shakespeare ain't a bit of use on a Calgary beef-ranch, and Darwin's theory won't milk a Holstein or a Jersey. A clear head, a strong back, and a good riding leg cut ice in these times. Business is business. And dollars keep up men and munitions. You ain't wise, Ginger.'

'Well, boys,' said I, butting in, 'we 've discussed everything from bishops to Free Trade and the classics, but we are getting muddled and fogged. This fellow Ginger from Oxford is paralysing our repartee and logic, and old Tosher wants to make the Old Land into a dollar-factory. It seems to me that the main issue raised by this howling Radical, Nobby Clarke, is whether we shall vote for Bolsheviks or Imperialists. I don't quite agree with high-browed Ginger, nor do I support all the materialism of Tosher. But the future is clearly a titanic contest between Republicanism and Imperialism. I move we put it to the vote.'

'Certainly,' shouted Ginger.
Result

Republicanism . . .	1	(Tosher)
Imperialism	23	
Imperialist Majority . .	22	

'Nobby!' shouted Tosher, after the vote.
'What?'
'You're a gaw-damned Tory, after all.'
'No—I'm a lawyer.'
Lights out!

(*Continued on page 56.*)

BAPTISM OF FIRE.

By R. P. Hughes.

'THIS,' said the C.O., indicating with a blunt forefinger a tiny red line on the map outspread upon the table, 'is the sap you will engage to-night.'

The line specified projected from another of similar hue, but slightly thicker, that ran undulating north and south across the surface of the map. Opposite this heavier line, one of blue followed an almost parallel course.

The crooked little projection on which the C.O.'s finger rested represented a German sap which for some nights past had been the occasion of considerable annoyance to the occupants of the British trench, shown by the blue line, across the way. Rifle-grenades and 'pine-apples' had a nasty habit of whizzing over at frequent and uncertain intervals. The harried officer in charge of that piece of trench finally lost his temper, and implored the powers above, almost with tears in his eyes, to turn the artillery on to the sap 'and blow the blasted place to pieces.' Artillery aid was accordingly invoked, and, in addition, the Stokes mortar battery received a chit from Brigade, detailing them to co-operate with one gun.

Stubbley, the junior sub. of the Stokes battery, gazed thoughtfully over his C.O.'s shoulder at the crooked red projection, and thence to a group of small black lozenge shapes set slightly in rear of the blue line, and designated by a facetious survey department 'Dirty Bucket Farm.'

'Just a nice distance from No. 1 emplacement,' he commented.

'Zero hour,' said the C.O., 'will be at 11.30. As soon as the artillery opens up, poop off for all you're worth. Let 'em have a "hurricane."'

Later in the day Stubbley made his way by devious communication-trenches to Dirty Bucket Farm—a sorry heap of red ruins, set in a wilderness of weeds and mud—and there examined with the utmost care a grim little gun squatting in the shelter of a low, crumbling wall, mounting guard, to all appearances, over a pyramid of gray cylindrical bombs at its side.

Stubbley whistled softly to himself as he made his inspection, testing elevating and traversing gears, squinting with puckered brows down the narrow barrel, and not overlooking the important base-cap. He was nineteen years old, had 'been out' one month, and was boyishly jubilant over the planning of this, his first independent 'shoot.' But for the absence of Thomas, his senior by one 'pip' in the battery, who had departed on an urgent visit to the field cashier, his chance might not have come so soon. Consequently he whistled at his task.

Before leaving the emplacement he applied an eye to a zigzag fissure in the low wall, and gazed across two hundred yards of solitary desolation at the broken sky-line of the German trenches.

'We'll make that sap look silly to-night,' he told himself cheerfully. . . . .

At a few minutes to eleven Stubbley and his gun-team arrived quietly at the scene of operations, blood-thirstily prepared 'to do the dirty on Fritz.' The night contributed ideal conditions to the enterprise, in that it was dark, clear, and windless. The men, stooping to their task of preparing the bombs for firing, conversed in whispers. Stubbley, standing a little apart, abstractedly watched the German Very lights as they curved gracefully through the sky towards the British lines. One would occasionally fall in the tall grass about the emplacement, and fizzle brightly for a few seconds. Then the men would pause in their operations, and remain crouching motionless till the glare died down. Standing upright they were in full view of the German trenches.

The leisurely sequence of the lights suggested to Stubbley either that the Boche mind was at peace with itself, or that he was secretly concocting some new devilment. Had he been at all 'jumpy,' or in the least suspicious of anything 'dirty' impending, hurried pyrotechnics and incessant bursts of fire would already have advertised the fact. But the night remained peaceful and still. Only once or twice in the distance did a solitary machine utter a querulous rat-tat. Overhead the stars shone with soft brilliance.

The minutes crept by sluggishly. From time to time Stubbley stirred impatiently, and he took constant glances at his watch. Once, when two flares fell in quick succession almost on top of the emplacement, he held his breath in an agony of suspense, fearing he and his team had been discovered. As the last few minutes ticked away he turned to stare expectantly into the darkness behind. Over his shoulder, in a low tone, he warned the team to 'stand by.' For

five palpitating seconds he watched, motionless, and then a long line of flame leapt and flickered silently across the dark sky.

'Fire!'

The command issued like the crack of a pistol from Stubbley's lips. With a short, vicious bark and a quick, leaping spurt of fire, the first bomb left the barrel. Overhead, at the same moment, swept a roaring torrent of sound. The silence of the night was ripped to shreds, and a screaming avalanche of shells descended with blinding flashes on the Boche trench.

As far as the eye could see the western sky was red, and furiously throbbing. Like a shaken tapestry it flickered in a fantastic medley of light and shadow. It danced feverishly. Countless fierce thrusts of flame stabbed it again and again, and for each coruscation back there a vicious crimson splash winked and crackled in front over the Boche trenches. The interval between the two was filled by a swift, rending scream, which, multiplied by a thousand, and flowing without pause, made up the terrific pulsing roar which in England, on the morrow, would echo feebly as 'some slight artillery activity.' To-night the undiluted force of it went like wine to the heads of Stubbley's team. They yelled and sang at their work. For a time they seemed to go mad. In that fantastic, lurid light they had the aspect of demons, furiously toiling in a dusky corner of Hades. The jaunty little gun seemed to partake of the fever of its masters. It barked hoarsely, leapt excitedly on its straining base-plate, and spat forth bombs and fire indiscriminately. Then the lust of battle fell fiercely on the sergeant. He snatched the bombs from his Number 2 as if they were hotter than he could hold, and almost flung them into the barrel. He was chanting at the same time in an ecstatic sing-song, 'What a fine little lady! Won't she give 'em hell?' over and over again.

Stubbley's heart danced for sheer joy. He leant against the brick wall, watching with rapt eyes the swift succession of blood-red splashes that marked the bursting of his bombs on the Hun sap. To the rest of the battle he paid no conscious heed. The louder and more shattering percussion of heavy ordnance he ignored with the amiable contempt of the front-line man for all back-area folk. At intervals the explosions lit up swirling clouds of smoke that rolled like a fiery fog over the Boche trench. Then, all at once, Stubbley's trained ear, engaged, practically of its own volition, in distinguishing between and identifying the multifarious notes of the bombardment, from the vicious scream of the whiz-bang to the leisurely trundling of the fifteen-inch 'how.,' picked up a new, sinister note—a swift hissing and spitting in the air about him, that sent him headlong to his hands and knees. In that position he listened attentively for a moment with his head on one side, then peered from the frail shelter of the wall across to the Boche trench. To his amazement, in the heart of the coiling smoke and flame he discerned the stabbing flash of a machine-gun. He smiled grimly to himself. Over his shoulder he yelled an order to his sergeant, then turned again to watch the machine-gun intently, admiringly. The position its team had chosen was suicidal to a degree. Stubbley swore at them for 'stout idiots.' He was almost impelled to dash across and shake them individually by the hand for their intrepidity! Iron Cross men, every one, he thought.

In ten seconds his mortar was laid afresh. It commenced to bark with short, staccato reports. Upon the doomed machine-gun, heroically blazing away to the last, suddenly descended a hail of furiously exploding bombs. . . . .

'*C'est la guerre*,' reflected Stubbley philosophically, and turned again to his gun.

Green flares were now shooting up from the Hun line, calling frantically for the aid of artillery. The answer came, after a short interval, couched in furious terms of 'crump' and shrapnel, and thenceforth antiphonal thunder shook the skies. The medicine with which we had been plying the Boche was being savagely flung back at us, to the last dregs.

Dense clouds of smoke, mingled with acrid, choking fumes, rolled sullenly over our trenches, blotting out observation and imparting an air of hopeless confusion to the duel. Men in the front-line, cowering beneath the whistling iron blast, becoming suddenly apprehensive of an attack by Fritz in person, fired their rifles feverishly, and flung bombs into the wire in front. Stretcher-bearers, encumbered with their loads, groped blindly from point to point, and called down bitter curses on the artillery for 'starting the blasted business.'

In Dirty Bucket Farm Stubbley's men, bathed in perspiration, continued to pour a steady stream of bombs on to the devastated sap. Death swooped and hovered threateningly above them. Bullets, from a concealed machine-gun this time, whipped viciously through the air, missing heads miraculously by short inches. Geysers of dirt and stubble flung up by exploding shells showered incessantly down on them. Still, with a stubborn, profane disdain of everything but the needs of their gun, the team 'carried on,' working in a sort of cold fury.

Suddenly a man fell with a gasping cry as a white-hot shrapnel-bullet found its billet in his chest. Stubbley and another bore him hurriedly to one side; and a moment later the sergeant's voice, sounding like a thin echo above the roar of the bombardment, cried, 'All rounds fired, sir.'

Stubbley was endeavouring fumblingly to apply a field-dressing to the already dying man's breast. 'Dismount the gun,' he shouted back, 'and send some stretcher-bearers at the double.'

The bombardment was near an end and the

shelling dying away fitfully when the stretcher-bearers came. They hurriedly lifted the limp form on to their stretcher, and staggered off down the smoke-choked trench, crouching low at exposed points to avoid flying shrapnel.

Stubbley's team had gone with their gun, and Stubbley set off alone after them. Portions of the communication-trench were blown to bits, and a sinister, foul odour rose in spots where recently had stood sad little wooden crosses. At short intervals Stubbley found himself compelled to climb out of the trench and proceed overland. All along the route he overtook straggling stretcher-parties bearing wounded to the dressing-stations.

'You 've had a lively time, eh?' said the C.O. when he arrived at the dug-out.

Stubbley made a weary gesture with his hands, and suddenly saw the colour of them. Being only a youngster at the game, he turned white and sank giddily into a chair. The C.O. poured out a stiff measure of whisky, and Stubbley gulped it down. He choked and shuddered as the fiery stuff bit his unaccustomed throat, and then said with a gasp, 'We 've had a hell of a time up there to-night.'

The C.O. lit a cigarette, and picked up the magazine he had just laid down. 'One soon gets used to that sort of thing,' he remarked coolly; 'you 'll come to look on it as more of a beastly nuisance than anything else presently. In the meanwhile, thank God you 've had your baptism so cheaply—and go to bed.'

Stubbley went to bed.

BLACKLISTED.

PART III.

I.

'AWAKE, señor; awake!' cried Pajarillo, and his voice had a confident ring. 'I have slept, but I have dreamed a good dream in a bad place. I was home in Barcelona, and from the glare of the streets I had stepped into the gloom of our grand old cathedral to say a prayer of thanks to San Pablo, my protector, in his chapel behind the apse. I had lit a candle before the image, and, as it burned, suddenly the flame shot upwards, a keen white shaft of fire that struck to the very roof. I watched in fear, and saw that the roof was burning, but I could not move. Then a glowing beam fell at my feet, and looking up, I saw the fire extinguished, and through the roof the moon sailing in heaven.'

'An odd dream, *amigo*. Would we were in the cathedral now!'

'With the blessing of God we shall be there ere many days. Strike a match, Señor Bruce.'

Before the match went out, the Catalan picked up their two straw hats from where they had rolled. Bruce heard him tearing the straw. 'Now,' said Pajarillo, 'take my knife, and get upon my shoulders. You are the smaller man. Cut away at the lid of our saucepan as hard as you can.'

'Cut through a solid oak floor with a sheath-knife!'

'*Por Dios*, if there were no better way, I would try that, ere I would die like a rat in a hole! But, by the blessing of the saints, we have both steel and fire. Oh, *là-là!* The good San Pablo shall have his candle! Quick! Climb!'

Understanding came to the Scot. Desperate as was the expedient, it gave new hope. 'You would have us burn our way out, Little Bird!'

'I would have us try. Step by step the pilgrim goes to Rome. Mount, and begin. Cut little chips and strips, till the knife bites well. Above all, do not snap the blade. When you tire, you shall carry me.'

Scrambling on his friend's broad shoulders, Bruce struck a match. The Catalan carried him to a point immediately beneath one of the iron clamps which held the floor, then bade him stand on his shoulders and steady himself by the wall as he worked. 'Keep the knife clear of the iron!' he warned.

In the inky darkness the Scotsman began hollowing out the timber above the iron as Pajarillo directed. It was fatiguing labour for a man who had not tasted food for many hours. After a while they changed parts, and so, taking turn and turn about, worked feverishly till exhaustion compelled a rest. By that time they had hollowed out two respectable scoops in the thick, though worm-eaten, timber—one horizontally above the iron claw, the other straight upwards through the floor, so far that its apex made a hole an inch or two in diameter. A match which they struck to inspect the result of their labours showed a goodly heap of chips and shavings on the floor of their prison.

'It will do,' pronounced Pajarillo. 'The timber is dry.'

They stretched their aching limbs on the ground, and smoked another cigarette.

'Now for San Pablo's candle!' said the Little Bird. 'First we will offer him our hats. Fill your pockets with chips. I will do likewise, and will mount first.'

Climbing up again, the Catalan inserted the strips of torn straw into the horizontal funnel, and applied a match. As the flame took hold he fed it with chips of wood, dodging from time to time the burning fragments as they fell. When they had burnt up all the wood in their pockets they refilled them, and Bruce took his

turn as stoker. By now the fire had gained a grip of the thick, dry timbers of the floor, and the flames licked redly round the angle between the funnels and up the chimney formed by the upright one. A few minutes later the corner of the floor was unmistakably on fire above their heads. With the heat and the smoke beginning to trouble them, the two prisoners strove to confine the outbreak to the area round the hole. In this they succeeded beyond their hopes, the strong draught created by the little window in the upper chamber causing the flames to roar lustily up through the chimney, while leaving them comparatively cool below. Their principal danger was from the burning fragments that fell upon them as they worked.

Gradually the heat and the smoke increased. The hole burned larger and larger; but their throats parched and their breath came in pants as they hacked at the glowing rim. From time to time they flung themselves down on the floor to escape the fumes; but they dared not lie long, lest the whole mass of timber above them should ignite and bake them, like St Eulalia, in an oven.

At last, as they were lying face downward in the remotest part of their prison, a great slab of red-hot timber crashed to the ground, leaving the gap nearly a yard across.

'We must put it out!' gasped the Little Bird. 'Can you bear me?'

They kicked the blazing fragments from under the hole, and acrid smoke filled the pit. Bruce tottered towards the fire, and the Catalan, climbing on his shoulders, hacked wildly at the burning edges above him till the showering fragments drove them, choking, back. Again and again they returned half-fainting to the attack, but little by little the conflagration was being curbed. Nerved by desperation, they conquered at last, and, utterly prostrated by their frightful ordeal, flung themselves, scorched and gasping, on the ground.

A long time they lay there like dying men, while the air slowly freshened about them, and above them the charred wood slowly cooled. Then they staggered to their feet again, cut away the still glowing edges, and rested once more.

'It will be cool enough to try now,' said Bruce at last. 'Come, Little Bird.' The younger man's vitality had lasted the better, and it was he who now, though his limbs tottered under him, took his companion on his shoulders. Getting his arms and shoulders through the gap, the Little Bird dragged himself up. It was too far down for him to reach his friend, but stripping off some of his clothes, the Catalan made a rude rope, by means of which, despite his injured wrist, he hauled the young man up after him. They rested again ere making their way along the dark passage by which they had entered, only to find the door at the end fast locked.

'*Ay de mi!*' groaned Pajarillo, 'that villain did not mean us to escape. But it is an old lock, *amigo*. It should be reasonable.'

They flung their united weight upon the door. The rusted lock gave with a crash, and stumbling out into the blessed air, they ascended the worn stone steps to the garden, and found themselves face to face with the old gardener.

White to the lips, the old man stood back against the street wall, and stared as at an apparition. And indeed, haggard and grimed with their fighting of the fire, with torn and burned clothing, they were a sufficiently terrifying pair to emerge in the first paling of dawn from the heart of the ancient ruins.

Bruce went and took the old man by the arm. 'Señor gardener, where is that villain, your master?'

The hue of life came slowly back into the old man's face. '*Madre purísima!*' he stammered. 'It is the *caballeros* of yesterday! Señor Marinero went by the night train for Madrid. I smelt fire, gentlemen, and came into the garden.'

'Señor Marinero has tried to murder us,' said Bruce. 'Get us out of this quickly, and say nothing to any one.'

'There is no one in the house except my wife, who is deaf, and my daughter, who answers the door, and she is asleep.'

'In that case, we will go first to the well, and wash and drink.'

As they crossed the garden Bruce outlined their night's experience, amid exclamations of sympathetic horror on the part of the old man. While they washed he brought them food, so that when they emerged later into the street their aspect was less calculated than it had been to arouse terror or suspicion. There was no train for the capital till nine o'clock, by which hour they had each purchased a much-needed new suit of clothes.

II.

On the slope of a wooded hill in the pleasant environs of Barcelona, a narrow gateway gives access from the road to a well-kept drive which, sweeping in wide curves through groves of oranges, citrons, and figs, leads to the white façade of a wealthy merchant's country seat. In a shady arbour, overlooking the rich plain, the distant city, and the blue sea beyond, an old man was sitting, with a girl of twenty summers at his side. The sunny garden around them was musical with the plash of fountains, and fragrant with the scent of flowers. It was Sunday, and a lifelong residence in the South had not changed the attitude of old Alan M'Allister to that day. In no single office or wharf of the many which his firm possessed throughout Spain was any business done on the first day of the week. A little Union-Jack hung over the arbour. A letter lay open on the old gentleman's knee—a letter from his only son, a captain in His Majesty's Navy. A proud light

shone in the old eyes as he gazed out over the Mediterranean.

'Thank God, you have a brave man for your father, child,' he was saying. 'I won riches; but my son is winning honour. Eh, Flora, but this war makes an old fellow wish he were young!'

The fair-haired girl smiled. 'How many old gentlemen of seventy-five could say positively, grandad, that they had put eight German submarines out of action?'

Alan M'Allister shook his white head. 'My dear, I am only the cashier. It is that young dare-devil, Donald, who is delivering the goods—he and that queer smuggler friend of his.'

'I wonder where they are now,' said Flora. A far-away look came into her blue eyes.

'If I were to guess, I should say at Mérida. In a day or two they ought to be home.'

'Oh!' cried the girl. 'And you never told me!'

A trim maid crossed the lawn to them, bearing a card on a silver tray. 'A gentleman wishes to speak to you, señor, on very urgent business.'

M'Allister passed the card to his granddaughter. 'Who is it, Flora? Your eyes are young.'

The Scottish girl took the card and read: 'Hernando Marinero, Casa del Palacio, Mérida.' She glanced at her grandfather, but the wrinkled old face told nothing.

'Bring him here at once, Anita,' he ordered.

A minute later Von Festinghaus stood bowing before them

'You come from Mérida, señor! I—I do not think we have met before?'

The anxiety behind the controlled old voice was too obvious to escape the astute Teuton. He bowed again, and took the opportunity to steal an appraising glance at the girl. Her sudden pallor confirmed his theory. He gave himself the pleasure of playing a little further upon their emotions. 'From Mérida, señor. I found your business office closed, but the caretaker gave me your address, and I came immediately.'

'I understand your business is urgent, señor?'

'It is, alas! It is a business of life and death.'

Flora M'Allister sprang to her feet. 'Has anything happened to Señor Bruce?' she cried.

Franz von Festinghaus looked grave, but in his heart he triumphed. 'Señorita, I grieve to say that Señor Bruce's days are numbered.'

Alan M'Allister, too, was on his feet, clutching the back of his chair with his hands. 'What is this you tell us—Donald Bruce dying?'

'Alas, señor! To-day, perhaps, or it may be in two days, or even a week. But it appears that he has a report to make to you—a matter of such importance that, though he lies in my house, I could not persuade him to entrust me with it. If he could see you personally, it would, I think, relieve his mind.'

'And his companion—what of him?'

'His companion, unfortunately, is in prison. I do not profess to know the details of this matter, señor. I only know that Señor Bruce lies very near to death, and that I have taken him into my house.'

'But the trains!' cried the old merchant. '*Dios!* The trains of this country will take two days to get me to my young friend. He may be dead by then.'

'Too true, señor. Yet, if you would condescend to make use of my automobile, which stands at your door, we should be there long before the railway could take us. It is a good machine, well found. On the way I could tell you all I know of this sad affair.'

The old man looked with troubled eyes at his granddaughter. 'Flora, I must go at once,' he said in English.

'Take me with you!' she pleaded. 'Oh, grandad!' A deep blush coloured her face, followed by deadly paleness.

'Go and get ready, child,' he said with great tenderness.—'Señor Marinero, in five minutes we will accompany you. Forgive me if I seem discourteous. This is a great blow—a very great blow!'

'I believe you, señor.' The German bowed with horrible irony. 'I will go and see that all is ready for you and the señorita.'

The trim maid-servant had left Señor Marinero in a cool apartment, and had set before him a box of the best cigars and a bottle of wine—one of the choicest wines of M'Ilroy, M'Ilroy, and M'Allister. She was returning to her quarters, when the bell summoned her again to the door. Another car had drawn up, and in the porch two men were standing—two haggard, travel-stained men, at whom Anita first looked askance, and then stood back with an exclamation. One of the men she knew, but, *Dios*, how he was changed!

'Señor Bruce!' she almost gasped.

'The master is at home?' demanded Bruce abruptly.

'*Si*, señor. But he is going out. A gentleman has called for him. His car is waiting, as you see.'

'What gentleman? Tell me, Anita; it is important.'

'A Señor Marinero.'

'Anita *mia*, I must see Señor M'Allister at once. At once, you understand! And Señor Marinero must not know of my seeing him. Take me to him!'

'To hear is to obey,' said Anita, with a curtsy in which was some mockery, for she was a favoured domestic, and not accustomed to this curt tone from one who was a frequent visitor to the house.

Before accompanying her Bruce spoke in a low voice to his companion. 'Little Bird, go back to the gates, and if that villain Festinghaus leaves before me, watch which way he goes. I will follow in our taxi and pick you up.'

III.

If Franz von Festinghaus had not allowed himself a few hours' rest after his long journey, before procuring the fine car which stood at the door, he would never have received the message which reached him as he was drinking his second glass of wine. He took it from Anita's silver tray, and tore it open with a queer misgiving. 'Señor M'Allister presents his compliments to Señor Marinero, and begs to state that important news just to hand removes the necessity for him to leave Barcelona at present. He hopes to have the pleasure of communicating with Señor Marinero at an early date.'

The German sprang to his feet. 'Is that all, girl?' he demanded angrily.

'*Si*, señor.'

Von Festinghaus stood staring a moment at the slip of paper, then strode from the room without a word. Anita followed him to the house door. 'Is there any message for my master, señor?'

'Only this,' said the German darkly; 'it is a proverb, my dear. The fox may know much, but the hunter must know more.' He sprang to the driving-seat of his powerful car, and glided away.

With a face ominous as thunder, and at a pace that boded ill for anything which might meet him, he drove towards the road gate. The drive narrowed in the last straight stretch before the gate, and as the German swept down this in full career a man stepped swiftly out from the shelter of some bushes—a gaunt old man with a grim, hawk-like face. The man's right arm jerked back over his shoulder, and Franz von Festinghaus caught the sudden gleam of a poised knife.

With wonderful quickness the German's right hand flew to his breast-pocket, his left hand still on the steering-wheel. Fifteen yards from the gate his revolver cracked out. It was all a matter of seconds; but so is life and death. His steering swerved ever so little from the straight as he aimed, and as the man with the knife sprang backwards, the great car crashed into the stone gate-post, and amid the shattered ruin Franz von Festinghaus lay still.

The Little Bird glanced swiftly up the drive, and saw that he was alone. The engine was still throbbing amid the wreck of stone and iron, and before returning his unthrown knife to its sheath, the Catalan drove its sharp point with all his force into the tire nearest to him. He was kneeling beside the dead man when the taxi in which he and Bruce had come to the house drew up, and the young Scot sprang out.

'There has been an accident, señor,' said Pajarillo calmly. 'One should drive slowly on such a narrow road. A tire bursts, one swerves —*adios!*' He threw up his hands with an expressive gesture.

The chauffeur of the taxi bent over the dead man. 'The *caballero* has broken his neck,' he announced. '*Santísima Virgen!* It is enough to unnerve a man!'

'It is indeed,' said Bruce. 'You must go and report this matter to the authorities at once. On the way, stop and send a doctor. My friend and I will await your return.'

The man drove off, taking the corner by the broken gate with extreme caution.

'Stand in front of me a moment, Little Bird,' said Bruce. 'There may be papers in this rascal's pocket which may be more usefully examined at the Casa M'Allister than at the Capitanía General.' He ran quickly through the dead spy's pockets, tossed the revolver among the bushes, and straightening himself again, caught the Catalan regarding the German with a whimsical expression.

'What are you thinking of, Pablo *mio*?'

'I was thinking, señor,' said the smuggler philosopher, 'how blind is the chance which sways the balance of men's lives—how you and I, after a hundred adventures, stand safely here, looking down upon the place from which we started, and upon this man, who, two days ago, held us as good as dead. He hated us very heartily; but he was a clever worker in his own cause. It is my belief he would have died more happily with my knife in his throat than by this blind cuff of fate. It would have been more satisfactory both for him and for me.'

'It would have been more difficult to explain at the Capitanía General,' said Bruce grimly. 'Pablo, I believe you are a pagan!'

The smuggler crossed himself piously. 'God forbid!' he exclaimed. 'All the same, accidents are tragic things, Señor Bruce.'

'You will take a better view of them, Pablo, when your wife and family welcome you home this evening.'

'*Hombre*, and that is true enough!' exclaimed the Catalan. 'To think that for the moment I was forgetting them—my wife and family, who have been awaiting me so long! Ah! here comes the doctor.'

THE END.

LOVE-LIGHT.

Dusk and darkness, dawn and day,
My belovèd, what are they?

Dusk—the clouding of thine eyes,
Doubt, and tears of sad surprise.

Dark—the passing of their light,
Leaving me in starless night.

Dawn—those harbingers of heaven
Shrive the penitent forgiven.

Day—O life once more worth while—
The sunshine of thy trustful smile.

Dusk and darkness, dawn and day,
My belovèd, such are they.

FRED. W. BAYLISS.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

FOR each and all—or nearly all—this that opens now should surely be the happiest of all New Years, if events and hope and promise can make it so. Storm and darkness have passed away. A terrible oppression is lifted; an appalling fear has gone. Life comes back to the world. Great powers of evil have been crushed. Never in its history did humanity face the opening of a new year or the beginning of any period, never did it await the dawning of a day or of a season, with such a leaping hope as now. Every man and woman, and every child, feels this pulsing hope; over all the world it is the same. Nations have been destroying; now they are going back to work, and to work as never before. They are to build a new civilisation, a new world. It is now that they begin. The grand work of reconstruction starts. Plans are laid, schemes prepared, determinations are formulated; and so, it seems, by the greatest force of circumstances that ever was exerted, here we are at the New Year, making resolutions as of yore. For four winters past it was only the effort to victory that was resolved upon or could have been. Now it is different. So are men and women and their thoughts and conceptions, and in this solemn hour of peace and a new beginning, with a new security and an overwhelming promise that seem almost too good to be true, we may be sure they will not think and then resolve in the old and little way. Resolutions must be made to match the majesty of events. Once it was good enough to contemplate small reformations in personal life and its little systems; but there has been a gigantic smash, and now there has to be reconstruction. We hear and see everywhere the vowing and the planning of this reconstruction. It is the word of the hour. The whole world and its system have to be reconstructed; humanity begins again with the New Year. And the nations have made a resolution to do their new building well.

* * *

The individual for his part, as an item in the nation, has two resolutions that he must make. They are not chimerical or optional things, of no account, as such determinations for the assistance of the weaker-willed used once to be. They are urgent and imperative; they are associated with each other; and they must be carried to realisation, or the war and the victory will lose some of their value. In the first place, the individual, the citizen, is beginning his own life anew. It can hardly be the same as it was before in any case whatsoever, even though old occupations are continued or resumed. The pressure of exterior circumstances arising from the war is on every person who walks the earth. So at the beginning of this new time there has to be some adaptation, varying in its measure, and it will follow from this that there must be some personal reconstruction. One imagines that most persons have been contemplating it. The war has given them new and broader conceptions of life; they see more clearly and farther; and doubtless they have resolved that, so far as they can, they will of themselves and in themselves make of life a better thing. By so doing they will not only assist themselves, but, as citizens make a state, they will force on a special national reconstruction, a new system of thought and action and ideals which, without their personal resolve, would not be accomplished, because politics, which in some measure assisted the beginning of the war, were not killed in it, and because it is the fatal tendency of politics to continue in their old courses and become worse in them, unless the citizens by their own resolve make new national ideals and establish new influences. At the very moment of the arrival of peace the old politics reared their heads again, and in Great Britain, never so great, thoughts were turned to a parliamentary General Election. Now, such an election may have been necessary or it may not. That, it may be said, is a matter of opinion, and here no such matters are discussed; much less are sides taken in such controversy. But, supposing for argument's sake that the election was necessary, here at any rate was a sudden, startling, and surely ominous return to one of the littlenesses of the old life, for, as we all know, an election at its best is but an orgy of insincerity. Now, in the same week—the very week of the armistice, the stoppage of the war—that our people turned to their election, the French—who were surprised at us—were devoting much of their time and thought in their Senate and in their Chamber of Deputies, and everywhere outside Parliament, to consider-

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ing and planning how they could best show and prove the gratitude that they felt to their soldiers who had won them this noble victory. That was the one thought that was uppermost in their minds, that seemed to fill them to the exclusion of almost all other thoughts. Here, with us, it was politics; with the French it was their brave, their splendid *poilus*, the saviours of their glorious country. If you examined the Paris newspapers of that week you would see that after the first exultation of victory, during the exultation even, thoughts were all of the *poilus* coming back victorious from the war, and of how Parliament and people might help them. The citizens were competing with one another to show their love and gratefulness. The municipal councils passed resolution upon resolution; they changed the names of streets in abundance, giving them new designations in honour of the soldiers. In the Chamber of Deputies new Bills, resolutions, and so forth were introduced to show that France at that moment was not, and never would be, forgetful of what she owed to her sons who fought and won. Provision in many ways was being made for them; our noble Ally felt that this was the first work to do in peace, and it must be well done. But we of Britain owe a debt, not smaller, to our own soldiers, not less worthy. And it is known, to our sorrow, that the soldiers back from the war before it was ended, with great suffering and handicap in life to bear for the sacrifice that they made for us, were not done by as they should have been. This is not the will of the people; it cannot be the intention of the Government; it comes about through the fault of system and of politics. However it may be, it is a most revolting thing that these soldiers of ours who made sacrifice were so neglected while an election was being arranged, though in France they were not neglected. Whatever the necessities of any election, surely the very first duty, supreme above all others, the safety of the State being assured, was the settlement of the debt we owe to the soldiers in so far as such a debt can ever be settled. Did we not, however inadequately, extol them in the war? Did we not so often say that there was no nobler death than death for country, that country might live on? We meant it indeed. But here at the first moment was a suggestion of insincerity, and we know that other nations make it a charge against us that we are insincere as a people. No doubt they are wrong, but they must not be given opportunities, and never was it so necessary that our consciences in a supreme matter should be clear.

* * *

That charge of insincerity against the British people sometimes stung. This, the moment of the new beginning, the reconstruction, the resolution, is surely the time for the nation and the citizen to determine above all things that in all matters there shall be a new and a very great endeavour towards sincerity. If there must be a new resolution for the nation and for the individual, should not this be the one, for in itself it must be the greatest of resolutions, comprehensive of all others? It means that henceforth there shall be truth and reality, and nothing else; and if there are truth and reality, the grand aims of life cannot go far amiss. Have we not said all through the war, and with terrible justification, that now at last we were being taught the meaning of truth and reality as never before, and that new conceptions of life and effort were springing from them? The war exhibited truth; it won for truth. Yet how well we know what insincerities were woven with the splendid deeds and noble achievements all through its history! Perhaps it was inevitably so. War is a negation; it makes a maelstrom of gross materialism; it seems to promote one supreme necessity, and every expediency must be introduced to serve that necessity of victory. The expediency is everything, and the twin-sister of expediency is insincerity. Governments and peoples, leaders of great movements, all who control and influence, feel that they should do and say that which best serves the great interests of the hour. Conscience may be a little strained, but it is felt that here for plain expediency is the best excuse there could ever be. Some virtues may be assisted by war, but the advantage to humanity here compares sadly with the loss. Yet at the beginning, taken by surprise, forced as we were by all considerations of honour and circumstance against our will to participate in this war, it was almost universally declared that war was, after all, a good thing in some respects for people who had grown rich and careless, and that Britain needed some such tonic. In such declarations there was surely a little expediency, insincerity; and there had to be more of them during the four years when so often, with shocking insincerity, that noble word patriotism was so much exploited. Expediency insisted; in the poor and faltering systems of the world there seemed no help for it. But now we know the truth about war, and the peoples will make a great effort to abolish this loathsome thing. Try to recall the occasions during the struggle of the world in which any argument was formulated against the practice of war. They were few indeed. That was not the time for them; nothing could have been more inexpedient than any such contentions. The good or the bad of war had to be not more than mentioned, for the supreme consideration was that the war should be persisted in and won.

* * *

For a plain and arresting statement against the practice of war—which, remember, for all the Leagues of Nations, some insist is inevitable in

the future—there was nothing in the last four years to surpass in candour and simple truth what was written upon the subject by Mr A. C. Benson in his delightful book, *Father Payne*. Here is a little volume which of itself for philosophy and ideals of life and conduct might be taken as the basis for a system of self-determination at the beginning of a new period. Some one had said to Father Payne that he believed it was good for a nation to have a war; that it united the people with the sense of a common purpose, it evoked self-sacrifice, and it made them turn to God. Then, in the course of a long and reasoned answer, the chief character of the volume stated most splendidly and with a courageous frankness the case against war and all its expediencies and insincerities. It is worth some fresh thinking now when the war has gone. The man who opened the discussion agreed, upon being questioned, that he meant that in spite of the loss of the best stock and the disintegration of families, and the hideous waste of time and money—subtracting all that—there was a balance of good to the survivors. Father Payne asked him if he were sure of this, and went on: 'How do you know? Would you feel the same if you yourself were turned out a helpless invalid for life with your occupation gone? Are you sure that you are not only expressing the feeling of relief in the community at having a danger over? Is it more than the sense of gratitude of a man who has not suffered unbearably, to the people who *have* died and suffered? The only evidence worth having is that of the real sufferers. Take the case of the people who have died. You can't get evidence from them. It is an assumption that they are content to have died. Is not the glory which surrounds them—and how short a time that lasts!—a human attempt to make consciences comfortable, and to relieve human doubts? The worst of that theory is that it makes so light of the worth of life; and, after all, a soldier's business is to kill and not be killed; while, generally speaking, the worst turn that a strong, healthy, and honest man can do to his country is to die prematurely. Of course, war has a great and instinctive prestige about it; are we not misled by that into accepting it as an inevitable business?' And then step by step a tremendous case is built up against this hideous thing. 'I don't agree,' says Father Payne, 'that it produces a noble temper all through. It does in many of the combatants; but there is nothing so characteristic at the outbreak of war as the amount of bullying that is done. Peaceful people are hooted at and shouted down; thousands of general convictions are overridden; the violent have it their own way; it seems to me to organise the unruly and obstreperous, and to force all gentler and more civilised natures into an unconvinced silence. Many of the people who do most for the happiness of the world can't face unpopularity. They are apt to think that there must be something wrong with themselves, something spiritless and abnormal, if they find themselves loathing the cruelties of which others seem to approve. I do not believe that war organises wholesome and sane opinion; I believe that it silences it. It is a time when base, heartless, cruel people can become heroes. It is true that it also gives serene, courageous, and calm people a great opportunity. But on the whole it is a bad time for sober, orderly, and peaceable people. . . . War seems to me the temporary triumph of the old bad past over the finer and more beautiful future. Do not let us be taken in by the romance of it. That is the childish view, that loves the sight and sound of the marching column and the stirring music.'

* * *

The people, each as individual, all as a nation, which, with all its faults, has been the greatest civilising, progressive, and uplifting influence that mankind has known, would do well to determine to think deeply upon the grand matters of fate and future with which they are so much involved. They did not, until recent years, realise to what extent they were the instruments of the unseen Force working out for them a mighty destiny, and through them adding a step towards some ultimate and far-off achievement of the most godly kind that we cannot imagine now. But the force, the future, the meaning, the mystery of it all made restless thoughts during the war in the minds of those who never before had disturbed themselves with any consideration or speculation upon what was not of the material moment. When death was spread over the earth; when love was lost, and sorrow and anguish abounded; when wickedness in many forms was rampant, hell was a grim reality, and life, uncertain, was scarce worth living save for something unknown, unimagined, but yet something that was set as an instinct in the heart and gave men and women faith and hope—in that time of a slow but vivid awakening stricken peoples looked at nights upon the firmament of stars, in the spring mornings upon the miracle of a budding flower, sometimes upon the innocence of a little child. They began to think for the first time in their existence—and to wonder. And little by little, without the teachings of priests or the learned, they began to construct some faint, vague image of reason in their own philosophy. Independence was conspicuous in this thought. Men and women felt weary of the methods of some old teachings; they sat and wondered and prayed in the great cathedrals of their own minds, and strove for some enlightenment; for if there were none, no hope, no promise, how pitiful were the earth and man, how meaningless and stupid must life be reckoned! We have all seen the phases through which what we call religion has passed in this fierce testing-time of war. In the early months

the people turned in prayers to God. They went to the churches and the chapels, which were filled on Sundays. God was claimed for us. But yet did there not seem to be a littleness in some of those conceptions in those days, and a strange opportunism in the sudden piety? This phase of a not wholly sincere fervency passed; the war bore heavily on the people, then more severely; in body and soul the strain was felt, and some gave way to doubts as the hosts of hell swung along in their temporary triumph. It was wondered then, if the spirit of this darkness and destruction should indeed gain, what for philosophy and truth? And it seems that it was from this and the rejection of the Devil and despair, the proud instinct of man insisting fiercely—yes, fiercely—on hope and belief, that brought him to more hard thinking, to a certain rejection in many cases of the shams and shibboleths of modern forms. The world at war seemed to make to dwindle everything in life and beyond life as it had been thought of before; all conceptions had been too puny; the God of the universe and all beyond had in these casual or formal or political fancies been too small, too local, too much concerned with the small things of the minds of the people of earth. That was the mistake of the careless, unthinking people, madly pursuing their poor pleasures. The horrible, hurtful war at least expanded the imagination and excited the conception. If the supreme achievement of existence were only to be obtained by the faithful and exact performance of nice, but seemingly unimportant, details of ritual, or, again, if it should be that the truth was only to be sought in the coldest austerity of manner and surrounding—here we speak not of creeds and denominations—how about this thundering cannon-stricken world in which men in millions were wrested from all earthly happiness and called upon to die? Here were forces working greater than all those little forms. The imagination was enlarged. Vague as they were, some certainties were created in this personal study of philosophy and metaphysics. Some true sense of the infinite was formed. It came even to be realised that in terms of the universe and eternity this war was, after all, only a little thing. Perhaps somewhere in some circumstances it might not be remembered.

* * *

There is hardly a word in the English language, a plain word, which is oftener misapplied than the word 'universe.' Really it means the all of which the world is but a tiny and perhaps insignificant atom. It means the firmament, the things we see and do not see, the whole system of created things. Yet in an egoistic ignorance we make it a synonym for the earth alone, and in the midst of the war a bishop, who should have known better, spoke publicly of London being the worst place in the universe. Some might with reason protest that it is perhaps not the worst place even on earth, but not even a bishop is qualified to state that there is more evil in our London than could be discovered in Mars and Jupiter, for we know not what evil they harbour or do not. But that is the way, to think of earth as all, and then it follows that life and simple materialism are likewise looked upon as all. M. Anatole France, in one of his essays on literature, utters a striking thought. He had been considering a new volume by his compatriot, M. Maurice Barrès, entitled *Le Jardin de Bérénice*, and was perforce led to deep reflections on the grand and elementary problems of existence. And near the end he says that, sceptics and believers, we are all submitted inevitably to the same necessities, which are the necessities of existence. 'This very night,' he writes, 'one of the first pleasant nights of the year, at the finish of reading your book, my dear Barrès, I opened my window; I looked up at the stars which quivered in the sky, relieved of its winter mists. And the mystery of those sparkling unknowns troubled me once more and as grievously as ever, for I had just been reading what was not consoling. And I thought, perhaps life such as we see it and such as we conceive it down here, organic life, that of the beasts and of men, is only an accident quite peculiar to this little, insignificant world that we call the earth. Perhaps this most trifling planet has been spoiled, has gone bad, and all that we see and are is only the result of the malady which has corrupted this poor fruit. The sense of the universe wholly escapes us; maybe we are bacilli, vibrions in dread of the universal order. Perhaps. . . . But, as Martin, who was a wise man, said, "Let us cultivate our garden."' Looking about us, we observe the alarm of the Churches, who realise or admit the littleness of their own dogmas. They are anxious now, in some cases, for their own safety; the politics of religion are being recast; here again there is to be reconstruction. But men and women have been set thinking in their own way; and now, when beginning their own lives afresh, with the awful revelations of the war sweeping through their minds, the fleeting vision of the tremendous infinite that has flashed upon their souls, surely they cannot go forward in simple uncaring thoughtlessness as once they did, devoting the power of thought to small matters of machinery and materialism and paltry politics as if these things, great and necessary in themselves, were in themselves complete, instead of being small assistances to that progress of humanity which some day may achieve its Creator's aim. When the brave soldiers made their utmost sacrifices, when they were at the moment of the last agonies of their suffering, in the great hour of their glory, their thoughts, their conceptions, their realisations expanded infinitely beyond the

earth and all its little works. In their last hour some sense of universe must have been upon them, however unthinking they may have been before; some determined grappling at a mystery which in some way was soon to be solved for them. 'Why?' The intensest pressure of the simplest interrogative was upon them then. 'Why?' What, they must have thought, were kings and emperors, wars and peace, happiness, as we know it, even? Could they have thought of politics and elections in any circumstances as being supreme affairs? Perhaps we must have elections, even politics; but would not these soldiers say, if they could speak again, that life is a mistake if in all its action and endeavour a wider, farther, greater view is not henceforth taken after the revelation of the war, after this immense gift of victory? But politics, Governments, will not of themselves take the grander view, move in the higher way. It is by individual thought and resolution that individual life, and so national life, may be rescued from all its littleness. Let, then, a people that has wrought well, and not without reward, resolve that in all things it will endeavour to be worthy of its victory.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER III.

THE wounded man drew a deep breath, and, my arm in his, we mounted the stairs to my quarters. Bolting the door, I put my queer guest into one of the arm-chairs in front of the fire. Then I turned up the light. I confess to having felt an irrational sense of disappointment, for the external man revealed was commonplace, with nothing to suggest midnight adventure: a man of medium height, slight in build, his sandy hair and thick, untidy, reddish stubble framing very ordinary features. He looked a city-bred type; dozens of his kind could be met in a quarter of an hour's walk. His clothes were of the variety known to the economical and the impecunious as 'reach-me-downs,' clean enough, but on the border-line of shabbiness.

Clasping and unclasping his hands, he drew another long breath as he looked round the room. I noticed that his hands were delicate and well shaped, though his nails were grimy. He was still looking white about the gills, so I mixed him a strong whisky-and-soda, which he swallowed in a couple of gulps. Then he sat back in his chair, a patch of colour stealing into his pale cheeks. He touched his shoulder gingerly, and on my suggestion pulled off his jacket. He had been stabbed in the shoulder; but although he was still bleeding a little, the wound was only a surface one. Sponge and water showed me that it was not serious. To give him a little time to collect his wits and get his bearings, I filled and lit my pipe leisurely. Then I asked him, 'Well, what is it all about, my friend?'

'I—I don't know, sir—at least, in a way of speakin', I do'——

'Up to the point where I picked you up and carried you off the street.'

'Aye! I'm a bit dizzy yet wi' the knock I got, but I'll begin to pick up the ends o' the business in a minute or two, I think.'

'Begin at the beginning,' I said. 'I call myself a lawyer. Short of law-breaking, I shall treat what you say as between ourselves, and possibly I may be of use to you.'

'Well, sir, you've dune me a kindness, but there's no very much to tell, and what there is, is no exac'ly to my credit; but ye can judge for yoursel'.'

He was a shipping-clerk employed by Neilsons of Leith, he began, in a high-pitched common voice. His name was James M'Nair, and he lived in bachelor lodgings near one of the Bridges, in a street the name of which I forget. He had been working late in the office in Leith, till about nine o'clock, in connection with the unloading of a steamer called the *Prospero*. Afterwards he had gone to a picture-house, where he met, for the first time, a second mate on a Baltic tramp. The two 'forgathered,' and he took the mate to the *Prospero*, where the steward regaled them with Danish corn-brandy and cigars. When he left the ship some time after eleven, the last car had gone; but he took the opportunity of hiring a four-wheeler which had arrived with one of the *Prospero's* engineers from Edinburgh. The fog thickened, and after half-an-hour's crawl the cabman refused to go farther. M'Nair decided to make for home on foot. He had groped his way up Leith Walk until, he thought, he must have been close to the junction at Picardy Place. There he almost ran into a man, who passed some remark about the vile weather and asked him for a light. M'Nair took out his match-box and struck a light, and in its momentary glare saw the faces of two men. He didn't like their looks.

'Thought they were Dagoes. At any rate, they didna look like Breetishers,' he said. But he showed no signs of alarm, and, with a remark about the fog, went on, quickening his pace, however, as he could not shake off an uneasy feeling that he was being followed. Once he stopped dead to listen, and thought that he heard footsteps come to a sudden halt.

'I started off again,' he continued, 'but my nerves broke, and I began to trot, and then fairly ran for't until I was clean dune.'

'When you slowed down near here.'

'Aye! Then I heard a whustle, and a man—like as no, one o' the men I met, but I dinna ken—closed wi' me. I jumped back, but he was quicker 'n me, an' afore ye could wink he had knifed me.' He fingered his shoulder again. 'My God! I was lucky, eh? I was mortal feared, but the sting o't roused me, and I let drive wi' my foot. He tripped and fell, and off I went again at random until I dropped.'

'Then I cut in.'

'Aye; and here I am, sir, thanks to you.'

'Why didn't you shout for the police?'

'At first, when I started to run, there was nothing to tell the polis. I was ashamed o' my fears, and I just ran and ran. This last business o' the knife was so sudden that it knocked me silly like. What beats me is to put a name to the business! If they were thieves, they maun have been gey hard up, for I'm no exac'ly like a Carnegie. . . . But did ye—did ye see anybody?'

'The face of a man watching us. He looked round the street door after I carried you into the passage, and vanished when I went to the door.'

Some colour had been coming into his face, but at my words a slow pallor crept over it. The man's nerves were in rags.

'Ye 'll no turn me oot, sir?' he said, almost abjectly.

I would not have turned a dog out in that night, let alone a terrified weakling, and I was curious to hear more of his story, for I had a suspicion that he was keeping something back from me.

'You are safe enough if you can make shift here until daylight.'

At my words a vast relief showed in his face. 'It 's kindly of you, sir, to a stranger. I 'll be no trouble to you.'

'But, first of all, I want to know what you meant by saying, when you were coming out of your swoon, "Have they got it?" Who are "they," and what is "it"?'

He stared at me for a little, plainly puzzled. Then his face cleared. 'I was thinkin' that a' the siller I had in the worl' was in my pocket. That must ha' been what I was at. I ken o' naething else. Ye maybe never kenned what it is to have only a poun' or two atween you and "the beach."' Little he knew!

He plunged a hand into his inside pocket, and, with a gulp of manifest relief, drew out a shabby purse, which he opened. 'All safe,' he said, fingering some one-pound notes. 'No that there are mony o' them. I was mair ta'en up wi' thinkin' o' the danger o' my life than my siller. I never was in sic' a deil's business before.' I was watching him closely. He caught my eye, and suddenly rose to his feet. 'Good God, sir! Ye surely—ye dinna think that I have been in ony mischief—or that—that I have onything that—that—doesna belong to me.'

'I have not said so.'

'No, but—— Well, it 's fair and due to you to put myself right. I 'll tell ye what I 'll do. I 'll leave everything in my possession wi' ye, in case o' ony trouble afterwards. But I 've nothing o' value except twa'ree poun' notes. Ye can hold them all until ye 're satisfied that I 'm an honest man.'

'I express no opinion. But your offer is fair. Suppose you turn out your pockets.'

'That I will,' he said without a moment's hesitation, and produced the purse first. It contained four one-pound notes and two florins. Next came an evening paper, a small ready-reckoner, a cheap gun-metal watch, a pocket-book, and a pipe, a tobacco-pouch, and a match-box. These made up the sum of his possessions. He smiled whimsically as he laid them on my table.

'That 's the lot, except the claes I stand in,' quoth he. 'There 's just one thing I 'm concerned wi', and that is no to lose my job,' he said earnestly; 'an' I tell ye, sir, I honestly think, somehow 'rither, that thae gentry mistook me for somebody else. I 'm no worth knifin'. But if ye send my things to the polis, they 'll come aboot the office, an' I 'll be ill put to it wi' the guv'nors. It 'll no be very pleasant.'

Sympathy with the under dog compelled me to explain that, while keeping a judicial mind on the whole business, I did not intend to consult the police, but that, as he suggested, I should retain his belongings for a day or two in case of developments. The fact is that I was now rather bored with the whole affair, and had come to the conclusion that the man was a harmless nonentity, who, out too late, had been tackled by some night-birds, not above such small deer.

After thanking me most cordially, M'Nair confided that he had a friend in 'the polis' whom he proposed to consult regarding the assault, and who might help him without unnecessary publicity. But he had little hopes of the ruffians being traced.

It was now after one o'clock, and, without more ado, I placed the articles belonging to my scared-looking guest in a small portable cabinet, locked it, and took it into my bedroom. I put some coals on the fire, and gave the man a couple of rugs. Then I told him to make himself as comfortable as he could on the sofa until morning, and lay down in my own room half-undressed to turn and toss until half-past five, when I gave up hope of sleep and got up.

When I opened my bedroom door, M'Nair was sitting in the arm-chair. I turned on the light, and was struck by the man's white and drawn face. Plainly, the poor devil had not closed an eye.

'You look done up,' I said. 'Lie down for an hour or two. There 's no great hurry.'

But he had to get home before he went to his work, so he protested. He would get a 'brush

up' and some breakfast at his lodgings. I had been very good to him, he said. Did I think there might be any danger from 'yon fellies' in the street?

'Most improbable that the blackguards would be fools enough to prowl round here and risk being caught; but I'll let you out by a back entrance to another street, and I'll go part of the way with you. Your stuff is locked up in the cabinet in my bedroom, and if you drop me a post-card to this address'—I gave him my card—'I'll be here to hand them over. I shall be interested to see you again, and to hear if you have anything to report.'

He wrote his own address in a slovenly hand on a slip of paper, and laid it on the chimneypiece.

CHAPTER IV.

ALL was quiet when we descended the stairs and slipped out by the back-door. It was nearly six o'clock, and a very dark, cheerless morning; but the fog had lifted, and the lamps picked out the lines of the streets. I piloted my guest along a narrow Mews Lane (which I had often used as a short cut eastward) to its junction with a thoroughfare parallel to Jura Street. We saw nobody, and, except for the rumble of a city dust-cart going its round in the distance, not a sound was to be heard.

'I ken where I am now,' said the adventure-ridden clerk, 'and I'll make for hame. I can tell ye I'll steer clear o' foggy nights and late hours after this. Just keep my bits o' things as long as ye like, sir; but I'll no forget your kindness, and I'll come back and see ye wi' any news I may have.'

He reiterated his thanks, shook hands with a respectful heartiness, and after giving a look up and down, set off at a smart pace in the middle of the street. In a moment or two he had disappeared in the half-light. I walked quickly back to my rooms yawning my head off, went to bed, and slept for a couple of hours.

With my after-breakfast pipe came clarifying reflections. Had I helped a deserving fellow-creature or a rascal? His story was coherent, and given without either glibness or hesitation. His 'douce' Lowland accent, his clothes, his little servile mannerisms seemed to me to proclaim him to be a harmless counting-house subordinate. He had probably been tracked by some of the scum of the port for the sake of his few shillings.

Yet I was haunted by his eager, whispered question, 'Have they got it?' and the manifest anxiety in his eyes when he asked it. More than once I found myself, like Paul Demetrius in *The Red Lamp*, murmuring, 'I wonder!'

I had taken only a cursory look at the man's belongings, but now I unlocked my cabinet, took out the odds and ends which he had left with me, and made a thorough examination of them. With the exception of the purse and its contents, they were worthless trifles. The paper was an *Evening Dispatch* of the previous day, unmarked in any way. I looked in the well-thumbed ready-reckoner for its owner's name, but there was no writing of any kind on it except a few pencilled jottings of figures on the title-page, faint and nearly illegible.

There remained the pocket-book. It was an ordinary cheap article, well worn, with a limp elastic band round it. It had a couple of pockets and a postage-stamp case. In the pockets I found two cigarettes, and nothing at all in the stamp-case.

I lifted the cigarettes, and was turning them round idly to find out the brand, when it struck me that one of them was unusually well packed, and heavier than the other. On examining the ends I found the outer casing was about the thickness of a paper mouthpiece such as one sees attached to Russian cigarettes. Having stuck a pin into the tobacco at one end, I felt its point touch something hard. The same thing happened when I tried the other end. To pick out the layers of tobacco was an easy matter, and when I pushed a pen-holder gently through the casing, a little brown cylinder slipped out into my hand. The shadow of a doubt arose regarding the ingenuousness of my new acquaintance.

The cylinder was a neat little roll, not much thicker than a good-sized quill. It was tightly packed, and when unrolled proved to be in two parts—one an outer covering of rice-paper, and the other a little roll of torn, stained paper, the right-hand margin and the foot of it straight, the left side zigzag. It was covered with writing, so small that I had to use a magnifying-glass to read it. Although the writing was cramped, it had been set down with scrupulous care and neatness. But it was unintelligible.

There were about a dozen lines of writing. The letters were strung together without being divided into words, and there was no sign of punctuation. I was able to pick out some letters which appeared to form English words, but most of the writing was a meaningless jumble. However, I traced, among others, the words 'drove,' 'belief,' and 'track;' and the last line interested me, for it ran thus: '*ossahumiliata* †.' Plainly this was meant for two words, '*ossa humiliata*.' The use of Latin and the little Roman cross at the end of the document struck me as curious. '*Ossa humiliata*' were words which I had read or heard somewhere, I was sure, but I could not remember the source. It was now about half-past ten, later than my usual hour for putting in an appearance at the Parliament House. I postponed a further examination of the paper, and carefully replaced it in its hiding-place in the bogus cigarette, which I put back in the pocket-book. The companion

cigarette was a real one, containing nothing but cheap tobacco. This I also replaced, and having locked the cabinet, went out, to find that the fog had left behind it a chill and depressing drizzle of rain.

The Parliament House that morning was as dull as the sky outside. The big fireplaces in the hall, for a wonder, claimed nobody except two prize bores, and after an arid five minutes with them, I fled to the reading-room and entrenched myself behind a newspaper. Almost the first thing that caught my eye was a paragraph headed, 'Tragedy in the City.' Boiled down from its journalese, the substance of it was that a dead man, supposed to be a foreign sailor, had been found early in the morning in an 'entry' in Durham Place, an obscure alley about three-quarters of a mile from Jura Street. He had been stabbed to the heart, and when his body was discovered, had probably been dead for two or three hours. The police were investigating the crime, and the account concluded with the illuminating flash of journalistic inspiration that it was evident the murder had been committed under cover of the dense fog. I laid down the paper, my thoughts back to the events of the previous night. Recalling the man's flight, his wound, and the discovery of the bogus cigarette and its contents, a sudden thought struck me. I went to the telephone and rang up Neilsons of Leith, the firm with whom the man M'Nair had said he was employed. I knew one of the partners slightly. He was in, and answered my call.

'Does the firm employ a clerk named M'Nair?' I asked.

He did not think so, but he would find out.

Presently, 'No!' came the answer.

Had there been a steamer of theirs called the *Prospero* discharging last night at Leith?

No! They neither owned nor had chartered a ship of that name. What was I getting at?

I answered that it was a matter of little consequence, purely a personal affair; and after exchanging British growls at the weather with him, I rang off, thoroughly and painfully conscious that I had been playing the Good Samaritan to a fluent and competent liar, if not something a thousand degrees worse!

I hurried out, and in a few minutes was at the police-office, where I was closeted with the authorities, and gave them a full statement of my experiences of the previous night.

'We should like to have a look at the man's belongings left with you,' said the Chief, 'and it will save time if an inspector goes to Jura Street with you, and brings them back here.'

To this I, of course, agreed, and a taxi soon set us down in Jura Street. I brought the cabinet out of my bedroom, took it to the window beside which the inspector was standing, and unlocked it. To my astonishment, it was empty. I stared blankly at him.

'I swear that I put the things into the cabinet with my own hands, and locked it,' I at length exclaimed.

(*Continued on page 70.*)

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER V.—A CANADIAN NEWSPAPER.

ONE evening I was seeking for something to read, when my eye lighted on a strange-looking newspaper with American sort of headings. I picked it up. It was *The Shack Valley Times*, a typical Canadian production, bright, brief, personal, and amusing. I got all the milk records of the Dominion, the price of wheat, the names of the mayor's last set of twins, and an obituary notice of a famous racehorse. Good, I thought, turning over the page. Lo and behold! there was a huge photo of Tosher and a full-page heading:

'SHACK VALLEY'S NEW NAPOLEON,
TOSHER JOHNSON, THE MAN-EATER,
GOES TO SCHOOL FOR FIELD-MARSHALS.
SPECIAL INTERVIEW.'

'The boys and girls in Shack Valley,' ran the editorial introduction, 'will be real glad to know that Tosher Johnson of this city is making good. When he left here in 1915 he said he was out to win the war. Since then he has been collecting scalps on the Western Front. He has sloshed no less than twenty Germans, and his name is famous from Boulogne to Verdun.

'Our correspondent, Jim Penman, at present with the Canadian Forces, was fortunate enough to secure a special interview with our gallant townsman, who thus unbosomed himself: "Tell the boys of Shack Valley that I'm pushin' real hard in the fireworks business. It isn't all beer and dollars out here. It's all mud and death by instalments. Since leavin' home I've lost my false teeth, two stones off my corporation, and my Sunday-school character. They've turned me into a white-tusked Khalifa, bent on canning Huns and catchin' curios for the Shack Valley girls.

'"All the married men of Shack Valley who want to get quit of their wives ought to book right here. There's free passes up to the Sudden Death Establishment, and a photo-man to take your chivvy when you're passin' in your checks. I've had my pants blown clean away to Berlin, my sittin'-down place peppered with shrapnel;

the beef of my legs is lyin' up in Bapaume; and there's blood from my nose around La Bassée. I've been choked with the Kaiser's lavatory gas, and got chucked to heaven one night along with a horse and an automobile. Oh my, I did want to go home!

'"Still, it ain't bad! I was made a lance-corporal for rescuin' the captain's bottle of whisky under a bombardment, and a full corporal for collarin' three pimple-headed Huns who came over to ask me the time. Why, I'm just real good at the butcherin' business. I've got a jab-knife and a bludgeon dotted with nails. When I'm bored stiff I hops over, clubs a few German waiters on the top-knot, and brings back the latest news from the Crown Prince's doss-house behind the line. Talk about pictures! Why, this is the best picture-show out of Toronto.

'"Oh, you can tell the boys they've given me the Military Medal for doin' a little job on a dark night. It was dirty work at the cross-roads. A fight for a hole—a shell-hole. They wanted it, and we wanted it. So we staked our pitch and said, 'Come on.' I cut a pound o' steak out o' a German lootenant, and made three widows in Potsdam. Had to be done! No Shack Valley boy's goin' to lie down to them fellows. Oh, it's a hellifa life!

'"Now I'm in a school for officers. They reckon Tosher is push-and-go stuff, and want to rig me out as a big gun in the fightin' business. I ain't at all keen, for you've got to be respectable, and when you're wearin' one pip, you're barred from askin' a lady, 'Is this the way to Bond Street?' There's a real first-class crowd here—remittance men, cow-punchers, log-rollers, grafters, and let-me-downs, not forgettin' sky-pilots and kids from school. But they're bright boys, and can jaw on anything from eugenics to corn cure. Why, it's just good to think o' the stuff that wants the King's commission. Some are all 'side,' and some need it. And they're all gaw-damn Tories, except one, and he's a lawyer. (I'm watchin' this fellow.)

'"They're teachin' me how to eat sardines without usin' a knife, and how to chew an orange without splashin' my dial. And you can bet your boots they show me how to do the big salaams to the Great Boss. It's a wonderful business! When I get back I'll know how to wipe my feet on the mayor's mat. They call it 'form,' and they think we wild fellows from Shack Valley are the ruddiest lot of gum-chewin' hobos that ever wore an army shirt and climbed up a gun. But I'm givin' them hot stuff, an' teachin' them that we from out West ain't one-eyed chicks from lop-brained Alabama.

'"Still, it ain't a bad institooshun, and the girls round here are prime. I can get a kiss for a maple-leaf, and a wife by givin' a nod.

'"Oh boys, it's a hellifa fine war! Give Laurier a miss and come right over. The way to heaven's cheap, and all funeral expenses paid.

'"Besides, *the beer's real good.*"'

(*Continued on page 78.*)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

FERRO-CONCRETE SHIPBUILDING.

SINCE the above subject was alluded to here in February last further developments have taken place. The six-hundred-ton ship then referred to, the *Namsen Fjord*, has completed a round voyage between Christiania and the British Isles, which involved a trip of about two thousand miles, owing to the roundabout route followed for the sake of safety. At Moss, in Norway, where this vessel was built, another ship of four thousand tons was then nearing completion, while four more of from one thousand to one thousand six hundred tons were in course of construction. Other work in hand includes two floating-docks in ferro-concrete capable of lifting vessels of seven thousand tons displacement. Progress in ferro-concrete shipbuilding is also being made in the United States of America, and a reproduction from a photograph showing a ferro-concrete ship of five thousand tons in course of construction at San Francisco recently appeared in a science paper. It is interesting to note that the cost of this vessel is estimated at slightly over one-third of that of a steel ship of similar dimensions.

A NEW FORM OF DOOR.

Owing to its obvious advantages, what is known as the 'service' door, which has been applied to the rooms of the newest and largest hotel in New York, is likely to become popular for hotels, if not for private houses, all over the world. The door itself, so far as the outside frame is concerned, differs little from one of the ordinary pattern, and may be opened and closed in the usual way. Within the frame, however, is a cupboard formed by inside and outside doors, which are curved outwards so as to give greater depth to the interior space. When the occupant of a room with a service door wishes to have his boots polished or his clothes pressed, he merely opens the inner door, places them in this space, and communicates with the hotel office by telephone, when the attendant opens the outer door, and removes them from the other side. The process, of course, is reversed when the articles are returned, except that the necessary signal is given to the guest by pushing a button instead of through the telephone. The arrangement ensures absolute

privacy, as the inside and outside doors of the cupboard are so interlocked that it is impossible to open both at the same time. In these days, when houses and flats are often left unattended, owing to the cost and the scarcity of servants, service cupboards in outside doors should prove invaluable, as, if tradesmen were supplied with keys for the external doors, parcels could be left in security, although at the moment the house or the flat was unoccupied. The service door, it may be added, is the invention of Mr Franklin J. Matchette.

COTTON CHARGE-BAGS FOR HEAVY GUNS.

Germany is the only country that uses cartridges for guns of more than six-inch calibre, the shell and the charge for impelling it being put into the breach separately in the heavy ordnance of other nations. The cordite, or whatever explosive is used for the impelling charge, must be put up in containers made of material that will be completely consumed when the gun is fired, as any smouldering substances left over might prematurely explode the next charge. Until recently silk bags have been used exclusively to contain the impelling charge, and this material has proved entirely satisfactory. It is, however, very costly compared with other textiles, while there has been a shortage in all countries owing to the war. These conditions have led the war authorities of the United States to carry out a series of experiments with a view to the use of chemically treated cotton, and so successful have these proved that it has been determined to prosecute them on a larger scale. If permanent success is achieved, the economy effected will be very considerable.

UNPUNCTURABLE TIRES FOR BICYCLES.

There are few cyclists who, when compelled to execute repairs to inner tubes by the road-side, have not longed for unpuncturable tires. This desideratum now seems to have become an accomplished fact in Sweden, where the shortage of rubber has caused great efforts to be made to find a satisfactory substitute for the pneumatic tire. The new device consists of a thin strip of hardened steel supported on the rim by springs, the combination being said to give results comparable with those obtained by the use of rubber. Skidding is prevented by the sharp edge of the steel tread, while such tires are, of course, quite unpuncturable. Whether the new device will survive when rubber again becomes plentiful is perhaps doubtful, but as a war-time measure it has proved very useful. The cost per tire is about seventeen shillings, which could, no doubt, be greatly reduced under normal conditions.

SAFETY-NETS FOR WORKMEN.

Hitherto no protection has been considered necessary in this country for the workmen engaged upon the construction of high buildings, and it has remained for California, where human life was thought to be less valued than over here, to lead the way in legislation for the lessening of risks to those who build lofty structures. In future, where the provision of temporary planked floors is impracticable, safety-nets are to be provided below the workmen employed in the construction of high buildings. This plan has been recommended by the Safety Department of the State Industrial Accident Commission. Half-inch Manila rope is used for the nets, which have a mesh of four inches each way, while the borders are of three-quarter-inch rope. The nets are made up in sections measuring thirty feet by ten feet, and the borders are provided at intervals with loops for joining them together. The cost is said to be almost negligible.

VERSATILITY OF THE AEROPLANE.

The uses to which aeroplanes can be put are constantly extending, one of the latest having been the conveyance of X-ray apparatus and operators to various points near the fighting-lines. A 'radiological aeroplane' or an 'Aerochir,' as the new machine is called, was described recently before the Academy of Medicine of Paris by Drs Nemirowski and Tilmant. In addition to the pilot, accommodation is provided for a surgeon and a radiographer; while the fuselage is fitted with a Röntgen-ray generator, an operating-table, instruments, and the necessary accessories. Another purpose for which aeroplanes were being employed before the end of the war was the evacuation of the wounded. A comparatively small machine for this purpose was described in these notes for March 1918. Later efforts in this direction included the fitting up of a Caproni aeroplane for carrying ten to twelve stretcher cases.

A NEW FERTILISER.

Fertilisers will form one of the most pressing needs of the world in future, unless new discoveries put an end to the present shortage. Hence the manufacture in Italy of a substance known as 'tetraphosphate,' of which the fertilising qualities are said to equal those of superphosphate, is of particular interest. The process of manufacture is a simple one, the natural phosphate rock being ground to powder, and roasted in a furnace for several hours at a temperature of from six hundred to eight hundred degrees centigrade. Before being roasted, however, the ground rock is mixed with 6 per cent. of a reactive agent consisting of equal parts of calcium, sodium, and magnesium carbonate, with a small proportion of sodium sulphate. After leaving the furnace the product is hydrated by cold water, and subsequently cooled. The resulting concentrate contains 15 to 21 per cent. of phosphoric acid, and is reduced in strength for practical use by

the addition of sand or dry earth. A special commission appointed by the Italian Minister of Agriculture has pronounced the fertilising qualities of tetraphosphate to be at least equal to those of superphosphate, and the substance has the additional advantages of being free from causticity, acidity, and deterioration. Moreover, the cost of the plant needed for its production is only about 15 per cent. of that required for an equal output of superphosphate, while the process can be advantageously applied to minerals containing only low percentages of phosphorus. The method of working was invented by an Italian in 1914, and the process has been patented and is being exploited by a company both in Italy and in other countries. According to the Canadian Trade Commissioner at Milan, eleven plants, with an annual output of about fifty thousand tons, are being operated in Italy, while four more are under construction. Another near Luxor, on the Nile, is turning out twenty thousand tons a year; and at Kaseir, on the Red Sea, where a plant is being erected for working a very rich local rock, the yearly output is expected to reach two hundred thousand tons.

GIGANTIC AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVES.

In these pages, on 1st June 1917, reference was made to what was then the largest locomotive in the world. Colossal as were the dimensions given, they have been exceeded recently by those of a locomotive for handling the increasing traffic on a difficult section of the Virginian Railway. Some idea of the conditions to be overcome may be gathered from the fact that at present trains of sixty cars, each weighing seventy-five tons, or a total of four thousand five hundred tons, are being hauled over this section by three enormous locomotives with a combined tractive and pushing force of nearly one hundred and fifty tons. We have nothing to compare with these figures in this country, where what seem to us huge locomotives and long trains would look diminutive indeed by the side of these American monsters. The engine and the tender we are about to describe weigh together four hundred tons, and the former has a 'drawbar pull' of nearly eighty tons. We are used nowadays to stumpy chimneys on British railways, but the one on this locomotive is a mere ring, while the boiler is practically level with the top of the cab. The smallest diameter of the boiler is close on nine feet; near the back it exceeds this figure by several inches. The furnace measures fifteen feet in length by nine feet in width, and is fed with coal by a mechanical stoker. As the boiler and the cab are together over sixty feet in length, it is quite evident that special provision must be made to enable them to pass round curves. This is done by building the supporting frame in two parts, with a ball-and-socket joint between them. Each part is carried upon five pairs of coupled driving-wheels and one pair of small idle wheels, the former being driven by a pair of cylinders, one at each side. The boiler is rigidly connected to the back part of the frame, but only rests on the front part, where it can slide across to one side or the other when passing round a curve. Steam from the boiler, at a pressure of two hundred and fifteen pounds to the square inch, is first used in the back pair of cylinders, which measure thirty inches in the bore and have a stroke of thirty-two inches. Having done its work in these cylinders, it is further expanded in those on the front part of the frame, which have a bore of no less than four feet, or as large as that of some of our older locomotive boilers. As no great speed is required, the driving-wheels are only five feet in diameter, and by comparison they look absurdly small, owing to the huge size of the boiler and the framework. Twelve tons of coal are carried in the tender, together with thirteen thousand gallons of water, and the coal is consumed at the rate of six and a half tons an hour. Considerable difficulty was experienced in sending these enormous locomotives, of which twelve have been built at Schenectady, a city of New York State, to Virginia. Eventually the boilers, bare of all excrescences, were left on the frames and hauled by a roundabout route, about a fortnight being occupied in the journey. The difficult section of the line for which these locomotives are required is fourteen miles long, with a gradient of over one in fifty for eleven and a half miles, and trains consisting of seventy-eight seventy-five-ton cars are to be hauled up this incline. Such work, however, is far beyond even the power of one of the new locomotives, two of which will push behind, while the head of each train will be hauled by an older and somewhat less powerful model.

EXHAUST GASES FROM MOTORS FOR COOKING AND HEATING.

Owing to the need for strict economy in the use of all sources of heat, any scheme whereby heat which is now wasted may be utilised is worthy of careful consideration. Included in the category of wasted heat is that contained in the exhaust gases and cooling water of gas and oil engines and the motors of cars and aeroplanes. Why the waste heat from the motors in cars is not more extensively used for warming these vehicles in winter has always been a mystery to the writer. This heat, however, can only be employed for the one purpose, whereas that from stationary engines, such as those used for lighting country houses, is capable of performing several domestic functions. When the exhaust gases leave a gas or oil engine they have a temperature of about one thousand degrees Fahrenheit, which is quite hot enough for all kinds of cooking. Again, the water used to cool the cylinders is warm enough for baths, or

even for radiators, after it has performed its functions in the engine. These facts have been taken advantage of by Mr F. A. Wilkinson, M.I.E.E., M.I.Mech.E., of Hatfield, Herts, in connection with a five-horse-power oil-engine which drives a dynamo for supplying the house with electricity. The dynamo charges a storage-battery, from which current is drawn as required, so that electricity for lighting and heating is always available. Six rooms are warmed by the exhaust gases and hot water from the engine, while a bath can be obtained in eight minutes. The engine is run for only about one and a half hours a day, even in midwinter, and although situated in an out-building, it can be started from the house by passing current from the battery through the dynamo; in fact, this operation can be done automatically, under the control of a thermostat, if desired. For cooking, an electric oven is used with a gas-container in the bottom connected with the engine exhaust-pipe. Boiling is performed by means of tubular rings, through which the exhaust gases are passed. Inside the rings are electric heating elements; hence all the apparatus can be worked by electricity when the engine is stopped. The use of cheap tar-oils for small motors in place of petrol or even paraffin, now made possible, as explained in a note in this column last month, renders such schemes as the above economical for country houses, even under existing conditions.

NEW SOURCE OF OIL IN SWEDEN.

In Scandinavia the shortage of petroleum has been even more pronounced than in this country; consequently every possible home source of substitutes is being exploited. Among these is alum schist, of which there is an almost unlimited supply. This substance, under suitable treatment, yields benzine, paraffin, and lubricating oils; and a factory has recently begun operations in Sweden which is capable of handling thirty thousand tons a year, from which twelve hundred tons of spirit and oils are derived.

SAFETY STEP-LADDER.

Most of us have trembled for our own safety or that of another when mounted upon a tall pair of steps resting on slanting or uneven ground. The risk of capsizing, however, has now been entirely overcome by the ingenious application of a leg or strut at each side. These legs are hinged to the top of the steps, and spread out at the bottom, thus giving almost as much rigidity sideways as that given in the other direction by the steps themselves and the folding portion. When the steps are folded the side legs lie along them, their lower ends being caught in suitable clips.

A GAS-CONSUMPTION RECORDING DIARY.

In these days of fuel and lighting restrictions it is imperative that a careful check should be kept upon the consumption of gas, to ensure that proper economy is being exercised. To enable the householder to do this, a very handy *Gas-Consumption Recording Diary* has recently been put upon the market at a cost of one shilling net (by post, one shilling and three-halfpence). Space is provided for weekly and monthly records of the amount of gas consumed from November of one year to December of the next year, and provision is made for the institution of weekly and monthly comparisons between the meter-readings in consecutive years. In addition, full instructions are given as to how to read a gas-meter, a simple accomplishment which so many people have never troubled to acquire, but with which the force of circumstances is likely to compel them to become familiar.

WELDED INSTEAD OF RIVETED JOINTS FOR SHIPS.

Considering the length of time that electric welding has been used for making joints in similar structures which were formerly riveted, it is surprising that the process has been applied to shipbuilding only within the last few months. A steel ship is built by joining together hundreds of pieces of steel, and if the joints can be made as strongly by welding as by riveting, and at a lower cost, the adoption of the former process is obviously a paying proposition. In order to test the advisability of welding in the building of standard ships, an experimental vessel has been constructed in a south coast shipyard entirely by this process. This vessel is one hundred and twenty-five feet in length, and has a displacement of two hundred and seventy-five tons, so that she is quite large enough to prove the effectiveness or otherwise of the system. All the joints in the skin plating were welded continuously outside, while the bottom plating was similarly dealt with inside; but up the sides the seams were only welded at intervals, or 'tack welded,' as it is called. The process of welding was explained in a note on 'Electric Welding for Damaged German Ships' which appeared in these pages for May, so that we can pass on to the results, which really form the important feature. In the first place, one thousand pounds of steel was saved, together with two hundred and forty-five man-hours, still greater economy being expected in both of these items for subsequent vessels. According to the Admiralty experts, a saving of 25 to 40 per cent. in time and about 10 per cent. in material will be realised in future welded ships of this size. The first welded ship has now been in service, carrying full cargoes, for some time without showing any signs of weakness; in fact, there is every reason to suppose welding to be even stronger than riveting, while the joints should be absolutely water-tight. Electric welding for steel ships has also been tried in the United States; but in place of a complete vessel, a forty-foot length in a large ship was welded instead

of riveted. So satisfactory has the trial proved that the United States Shipping Board have authorised the construction by this method of a number of ten-thousand-ton standard ships. In future vessels a combination of welding and riveting is to be adopted, as for some parts the latter is the less costly process.

INSTRUCTION IN FARM BOOK-KEEPING BY CORRESPONDENCE.

Those of our agricultural readers who have just begun to keep books, or who are contemplating doing so, will learn with interest that Mr D. G. Macdonald, joint-author of the little volume, *A Simple System of Book-keeping for Farmers and Smallholders*, recently referred to in these columns, has instituted a Correspondence Course of Lessons in this important subject specially intended for working farmers. All communications regarding the course should be addressed to Mr D. G. Macdonald, 103 Roslea Drive, Dennistoun, Glasgow, from whom full particulars may be obtained.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE ALLEGORY OF THE ALLIGATOR.

By HEADON HILL.

I.—1890.

TOWARDS the close of last century the garrison at Kurrachee was composed of one British and two native battalions of infantry, and a battery of the R.F.A. It was about the year 1890 when the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Musketeers was drafted there, after two years at Poona. In those days the station was far from popular. It was five days by sea from Bombay, and the railway that started at Kiamari Bundar led to no cheery stopping-place on the hither side of Delhi. The social horizon was limited, and sport, except sea-fishing, was—as was to be expected on the sandy fringe of the Sindian desert—practically non-existent.

The Musketeer officers voted Kurrachee dull, after the gaieties of the great Deccan station on the brow of the Western Ghats. The fact that the Napier barracks were the finest in India, with the best parade-ground, was small compensation for joys left behind. They grumbled that there was only one tree in the place, which, having survived its early struggles, grew in the arid patch humorously called 'The Government Gardens.'

The battalion had been six months in its new quarters when news was received that Second Lieutenant Otto von Pilsen was coming out to join from the depot in England. His foreign name caused some speculation, not to say misgivings. Though at that far-off time the German menace had not reared its ugly head, the mess was apprehensive about the table manners of a young gentleman with a name like that. So when, in due course, Von Pilsen arrived, and proved to be a fresh-looking boy, speaking English without the trace of an accent, and with a clean record at Harrow and Sandhurst to vouch for him, the Musketeers breathed more freely, and settled down to judge him on his merits without prejudice.

'K. of K.' had not reached India then, with his terrible new broom, to teach the army that they were soldiers first and last, day and night. The new subaltern, however, began to develop unpopular traits. He was keener on his profession than on the scanty amusements available. When, by the unwritten law of the station, he should have been philandering at the bandstand, he remained in his bungalow reading military history. Till privately admonished by the adjutant, he committed the unpardonable solecism of talking shop at mess. By the end of his first month he was pretty much of an outcast.

At the end of the third month the O.C. sent for Second Lieutenant Chamier, the subaltern who shared a four-roomed bungalow with Von Pilsen in the Napier lines. Colonel Daubeny was a kindly, but irascible, martinet of the old school, whose efforts to combine a genial manner with spasmodic discipline rendered him an uncertain quantity to his young officers.

'Look here, Chamier,' he began, when that youngster was ushered into his presence, 'what do you make of your stable-companion?'

Relieved to find that the summons was not due to any delinquency of his own, Chamier permitted himself to smile. 'Though we live in the same bungalow, sir, I see next to nothing of Von Pilsen,' he replied.

'That isn't an answer to my question,' snapped Colonel Daubeny. 'If you haven't made friends with him, it ought to be easier for you to let me have your unbiassed opinion.'

'Well, sir, if you want me to speak freely, I don't like the chap,' replied Chamier. 'None of us does,' he added in a burst of confidence; 'and really I see no more of him than the rest of us do. He spends all his time off duty in his own room, mugging up war-books and writing letters for the mail.'

Colonel Daubeny, who had been walking up and down the matted floor, went to the window,

and stood for a long two minutes gazing over the white level of the parade-ground.

'I don't like him either, and I don't like his name.' The colonel faced about suddenly. 'Harrow and Sandhurst, indeed! No trouble about a trifle like that. Mark my words, young fellow—you may live to see them verified, if I don't—the nation he's sprung from will try to swallow the world some day. That's neither here nor there—yet. What I want of you is to play the Good Samaritan to Von Pilsen. He is developing into a rank outsider, and I can't have one of my officers hall-marked as a pariah. Get to know him. Play with the beggar, even if it's only marbles, Chamier. Work up the social side of him. Get at the back of his mind. It will be a kindly action. This is an order, remember, and confidential.'

Chamier's efforts to cultivate intimate relations with Von Pilsen were not marked by appreciable success, probably because the task was repugnant to him. If he had been met half-way it might have been different, but the last-joined subaltern seemed to have turned sulky. Having been snubbed for talking shop, he had apparently decided to talk as little as possible. Whenever Chamier penetrated to the other side of the bungalow, his welcome was not effusive.

However, by dint of perseverance, Colonel Daubeny's delegate began to make a little headway at last. In return for generous confidences about his own people, he managed to extract the information that Von Pilsen's father was a member of the London Stock Exchange, and that, though born in Germany, he had been a naturalised Englishman for twenty years. He was a rich man, with a fine house at Surbiton, and he made his son a liberal allowance.

'You don't spend much of it,' laughed Chamier. 'You could very well lead the life you do on your pay. There isn't much scope for a flutter here, but at least you could buy a couple of ponies, and enter them for the regimental gymkhana. I would ride one of them for you with pleasure.'

'I do not care for what you call sport,' was the churlish reply.

Dick Chamier, as was proved by his after-career, was doggedly persistent, and a fortnight later he returned to the charge. There had been rather a 'wet' night at mess; and noticing that Von Pilsen had treated himself liberally, Chamier contrived to leave the mess with him, and on the way back to their joint domicile shot a bow at a venture.

'Look here, old chap—he forced a cordial note, while expecting a rebuff—'to-morrow is Sunday, and after church-parade I am going to jog out to Muggur Peer on a camel. It is one of the few local attractions, you know, and has got to be seen. I wish you'd come too, and relieve the tedium of a solitary pilgrimage.'

'Muggur Peer?' said Von Pilsen. 'I have not heard of that. What is it, anyhow?'

'A sacred shrine, twelve miles out, and just over the border of Baluchistan. The priests' trump card, I'm told, is a tank full of alligators, much venerated as deities in these parts. A *muggur* means an alligator, and *peer* is enclosed water in the vernacular.'

'The Baluchis are disaffected, are they not?' Von Pilsen asked quickly, and with seeming irrelevance.

'They don't love the *Raj*, but it's too near the frontier for any bobbery against British officers,' Chamier replied. '*Baksheesh* is more in the line of the holy men, I expect. Parties go out every Sunday, and it's only by a fluke I haven't been there before. There's no chance of any trouble.'

'I'm not afraid of trouble,' rejoined the other solemnly. 'Yes, I will come with you to this temple across the border.'

This was the first experience of both young officers in voyaging on the ship of the desert, and Chamier was not sorry that the mode of progression offered but little scope for conversation with his uncongenial companion. What with having to adjust his person to the unfamiliar gait of his camel, and listening to the weird cries of the Pathan *oont-wallah* seated in front of him, he was fully occupied, and he had no doubt that Von Pilsen was in like case. He found time to wonder a little that his brother-subaltern had accompanied him so readily; also to pat himself on the back for obeying Colonel Daubeny's order in such uncomfortable fashion.

The long jolt over the sand came to an end at last under the welcome shade of an oasis of acacias and date-palms, hedged, save at one opening, by an impenetrable barrier of prickly pears. A hanger-on of the temple—a 'sort of minor canon,' as Chamier dubbed the half-naked, furtive-eyed rascal—piloted the cavalcade to a range of whitewashed, mud-built huts, which at once gave Muggur Peer away as a commercial undertaking. The 'minor canon' volubly explained that this row of one-storeyed hutches had been specially erected for *Sahib Log* to eat tiffin in before visiting the *muggurs*.

Chamier had provided a bountiful luncheon-basket, to which two healthy appetites did justice. As if at a signal, while crumbs were being brushed away and the last drop of Bass drained, an imposing figure in flowing blue garments, surmounted by a white turban, darkened the doorless entrance. In broken but intelligible English he introduced himself as the high-priest of the temple, and expressed his eagerness to do the honours. The temple itself, he explained, deep in the heart of the wood, was not shown to non-believers; but the *peer* and the *muggurs* were entirely at the disposal of the noble *sahibs*.

So the priest conducted them to an oblong pond, surrounded by a low wall, on which they leaned, gazing expectantly down into the stagnant water, in which nothing more exciting

than a score of what looked like nearly submerged tree-trunks were floating. But suddenly one end of one of the trunks canted upwards, and Chamier caught the gleam of a wicked little round eye. It almost seemed to wink at him.

'By Jove, those are the *muggurs!*' he cried. 'Awfully sacred, no doubt, but as lazy as they make 'em.'

The Baluchi priest did not resent the blasphemy. He informed his visitors that the *muggurs* were hungry, and waiting to be fed.

'It is the usual custom for *sahibs* who honour us to sacrifice a goat,' he added. 'The price of a goat is five rupees.'

Von Pilsen, who had been singularly silent, woke up at this. 'Oh, yes, yes!' he exclaimed. 'That will be fine. Here are the five rupees. Let us sacrifice a goat, by all means.'

The reverend man pouched the money, and blew a shrill note on a silver whistle. From the recesses of the grove a couple of coolies came running, carrying a live goat, which they flung over the parapet far out into the tank. Instantly the placid surface was changed into a boiling caldron. The sluggish monsters awoke to frenzy, each seeking a morsel of the sacrifice, and churning the pool into a maelstrom. There was a vision of snapping jaws and bloody teeth, and then all was still.

The turmoil lasted no more than a minute, but while it lasted Von Pilsen was beside himself, clapping his hands and shouting ecstatic applause.

'I call it beastly,' said Chamier, turning away in disgust. 'You've had a run for your money, anyhow.'

'Beastly?' protested Von Pilsen. 'It was grand. I see more in it than a sacrifice to heathen gods, Chamier. It is an allegory of the force that moves the world. I just loved it. It illustrates the function of the strong to rend and swallow the weak. Stay; that reminds me,' he pulled up with an awkward laugh. 'I must speak with our holy friend.'

Chamier walked aside, while Von Pilsen exchanged question and answer with the guardian of the temple. It was not till long afterwards that he guessed the sinister meaning of that conference. For the moment he attributed his brother-officer's exaltation to a touch of the sun on the ride out, but he took advantage of the ten minutes' respite to charge his memory with every word spoken in the course of that weird outing. During the return journey, as on the outward, sustained conversation was impracticable, and Chamier was glad of it.

After mess that night he went over to the colonel's bungalow and gave him a graphic account of his companion's behaviour at the tank, repeating his wild utterance after the sacrificial ceremony.

'The whole thing was too silly, sir,' he concluded, 'but I thought I had better tell you.'

The Crimean veteran's frown relaxed into a kindly smile. 'You have rendered faithful service, my boy, on which I shall not fail to act,' he said. 'This will form the basis for a confidential report to the War Office for which I lacked material. "The force that moves the world," indeed! "The strong shall rend and swallow the weak!" It's our job to stop 'em, anyway; and, please God, we shall, though I may not be alive to see it. Good work, Chamier; and there'll be a good mark against your name for it.'

Confidential reports are accounted poisonous things, but this one bore fruit pleasant in the mouths of the Musketeers. A few months later Second Lieutenant von Pilsen resigned his commission, alleging the reason that his father had failed in business, and was unable to continue his allowance. For some years Chamier was curious enough to search the London Directory, and the name of the elder Von Pilsen was still there. Then he dropped the habit, and for a long while forgot all about the Sunday excursion to Muggur Peer.

II.—1917.

The boys went over the top at dawn, part of an advance on an eight-mile front. An hour later they were masters of the formidable German trench bisecting Polygon Wood. They took another hour to consolidate the captured position—a euphemism for bombing the enemy out of his dug-outs and bayoneting those who would not surrender—and then the divisional general came slowly along the hard-won trench to see that all was well.

Outside a dug-out of more imposing pretensions than its neighbours, he was stopped by a hard-bitten sergeant of his old regiment, the Royal Musketeers.

'I beg pardon, general,' said the sergeant, 'but there's a Boche orficer in here as there's nothing doing with. Fair barmy, I think he is. He won't fight, and he won't put his hands up. Says he's a *muggur*, sir.'

'You are sure of the spelling?' said General Chamier with a twinkle.

'No error, sir,' grinned the sergeant, taking the point.

The general glanced up at a big notice-board over the entrance to the dug-out, and saw that this was the headquarters of a battalion of the Prussian Guard. Followed by his aide-de-camp and the sergeant, he descended a flight of steps to an electrically lit chamber, where two British privates were standing over an elderly German officer seated in a comfortable arm-chair. It was quite a luxurious interior—the temporary home of a man who did himself well.

Chamier's eyes narrowed as they settled in stern scrutiny on the obese figure with the heavy features, and his thoughts flew back to his old colonel, long since dead and gone, and

to the vaguely wise words he had uttered on the evening after that rasping camel-ride to the Baluchi shrine. 'It's our job to stop 'em, and, please God, we shall,' Colonel Daubeny had said all those years ago. The old soldier's prayerful prophecy had come true on the Ypres-Menin front that day, whatever the future might hold.

The German battalion-commander had risen, and was staring at the English general with haunted eyes.

'Hallo, Von Pilsen!' said Chamier. 'Curious meeting, eh? How about the allegory of the alligator, and the function of the strong to rend and swallow the weak? Your All-Highest *Muggur* has taken on a goat that's a few sizes too large for his paunch, I'm thinking.'

'I have been cursing the All-Highest these last six months,' groaned the prisoner. 'Take me away and hide me out of sight.'

'You will be taken away all right,' replied General Chamier dryly. 'But first satisfy my curiosity, please. They must catch your spies very young, Von Pilsen—even breed them specially. You *were* one, weren't you, when you joined the Musketeers from Harrow and Sandhurst?'

'It was not of my free-will. It was the system—the machine,' was the passionate reply.

FIRST LEAVE.

IT was the second summer of the war, and we had not grown so well accustomed to the sight of soldiers on leave as we have done since. Perhaps that was why I noticed him, but I think I should have done so even when it became the usual thing to have a soldier on leave as one's travelling companion.

His was that tragic product of the war—the face of a boy with the experience of a man behind it, the tragedy of lost youth sacrificed to the great cause. Though, indeed, there was nothing of the tragedy about him as he alternately sat down in his corner and jumped up to look eagerly at the moving interest which a London terminus always affords, and which seems to appeal so strongly to those who come back from 'over there.'

At last the train moved out of the station, and he settled down to read. There was something curious about his tunic—he was certainly an officer, but his single star was very new, and there was still a mark where his sergeant's stripes had been. Obviously he had won his commission on the field, and had done a quick change from N.C.O. to officer, without ever having the chance of getting his uniform.

Now he was home on leave, and it was clear to see that his papers were not absorbing his mind. Every few moments he would lay them aside and feast his eyes on the wonderful panorama of an English August. It must have been his first leave after those awful, early months, and probably his first time abroad, and he had never known what England really meant to him. He was full of the joy of it, and was taking in every aspect of its beauty.

Long before we reached his destination his belongings were all put away in his pack and he was ready to get out. As we neared his home he leant out of the window, taking in all the well-known points, and while the train was yet slowing down he was out of the open door.

I could not resist looking out to see who had come to meet the boy as I saw her hurrying along the platform. There she stood—a little old lady—an expression almost of unbelief in her face that her boy had been brought back to her. In a moment she was lost in his arms, lifted off her feet—the great tenderness of his strength.

It was too sacred a moment for a stranger to see, but if I have ever seen heaven in a woman's eyes, it was there in that little old lady's.

LINES WRITTEN FOR A MOTHER'S WAR ALBUM.

MYRIADS of mothers in our dear Homeland
And in our vast Dominions have been blest
With gallant sons, who thought it shame to stay
In selfish ease at home, when ruthless foes
Conspired to hold the world in thrall, and make
Free men, to whom their liberty is more
Than life, subservient to a conqueror's will.

To bring that threatened Empire of the Sword
To naught, our sons, responsive to the call
Of duty, have, in Freedom's sacred cause,
Served and fought valiantly, dared and endured
All that men can, giving their dear young lives
For us unfalteringly—on land, at sea,
And high amid the clouds in whirring 'plane.

'We would not wish them to a fairer death.'
'God's soldiers,' their imperishable deeds
No words can fitly tell, no recompense
Man's gratitude bestows can match their worth.

Ah! what can dry a mourning mother's tears,
And ease her anguished heart, but to believe
Their service and their cause safe in His hand
Who orders all with righteousness and love?

A SOUTH AFRICAN.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

A FORTUNATE MISFORTUNE.

By Mrs HERBERT MARTIN, Author of *The Heir to Sunninghall*, &c.

PART I.

I.

A FOUR-HORSE coach was winding amongst mountains in the Highlands on a certain summer afternoon, when shadows were lengthening and the rich tints of heather and moorland growing deeper towards evening.

A young man, with the pale, keen features of a Londoner, who might easily be guessed for what he was—a barrister—and a rather shabbily dressed but sweet-faced girl, side by side on the box-seat, had been talking with increasing interest—an interest largely proceeding from a different point of view. She found him amusing, clever, a little cynical, yet kind. He had discovered in her a strangely fresh and innocent nature, a diverting ignorance of life (as he knew it), a good deal of out-of-fashion culture, and an eagerly receptive mind; no ballroom miss; no modern, smoking, free-spoken, slangy, flirtatious specimen, but one who had known the roughness of poverty, the necessity of 'doing without,' the stress of hard work.

They had slid somehow into almost intimate talk. It began with some slight politeness on his part, frankly and gratefully acknowledged—almost with surprise—and, after a couple of hours, they felt as if they were friends.

One by one the other travellers had been dropped by the way. Murray Esdaile was going to the farthest point reached by this coach, and it seemed as if his companion were also. Only a couple of quiet, sleepy bagmen remained, smoking incessant cigars. Partly to pass the time, partly because the girl pleased and interested his rather *blasé* mind, the barrister (using the faculty acquired in law-courts) was skilfully drawing out the details of the girl's life, amongst others that her name was Margaret Dale.

'They call you Maggie or Daisy, I suppose, in common life? Margaret is so stately for everyday use.'

'Mother and Ellen call me Peggy,' she answered, colouring a little.

'You have a mother?'

'Yes. She is a widow. Ellen is very delicate—quite a cripple. They live at Clapton. I don't suppose you know it. It is not a fashionable or a very nice part of London.'

He had discovered ere this that *his* London—the London of the parks, the theatres, Piccadilly, Kensington, Belgravia—was an unknown world to this brown-eyed, soft-voiced, pale girl, whose prettiness was only gradually dawning on him, for it was not at all of a *voyant* or striking kind. Art and dress had done nothing for it. Her light-brown hair, of the colour the French call *blond cendré*, had no gold in it. A fashionable girl would probably have gilded (and spoilt) such hair. It had some natural wave in it, and no curler or waver had ever touched it, so the damp air had not straightened the fluffy little bits round the ears. Modern 'beauty specialists,' doubtless, would not have been satisfied without darkening eyebrow and eyelash, and touching with rose the almost colourless complexion, which certainly would have been improved by a healthier tint. But the man had not failed to notice the sweet, firm curve of the child-like, innocent mouth; and in point of fact it is the mouth that gives the character to a face, and can make it fine or mean, kind or cruel, self-controlled or sensual.

So she spent her days in a shabby, out-of-the world northern suburb, poor little girl! He soon found out they had not been idle days. She had been nursery-governess—mother's help—whatever word glosses over the servitude which no 'general' would undertake at the starvation wage the so-called 'lady' is not ashamed to offer a real lady.

'I hadn't enough exercise, and had perhaps a little too much work,' she told him in her candid, simple fashion, 'so I broke down a bit. The doctor said I must have fresh air and change. As I couldn't afford that without earning something, I was glad to hear of a situation as companion to a lady in the Highlands. I thought myself extraordinarily lucky to hear of something like that, for, you know, it is not easy for a girl like me, who is not really clever or accomplished, to find anything. But perhaps, after all, I am

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not so *very* lucky, because—— But I beg your pardon,' her face all suddenly rosy with a blush; 'I ought not to trouble you with my affairs.'

'But please do,' he coaxed her. 'I really like so much to hear. I feel as if we knew each other, and if you will trust me I will honour your confidence.'

'You're very kind,' she said as simply as if she were a child, instead of a young person over twenty, going to a 'situation.' 'I was going to say that after I had engaged myself to the lady I happened to meet the companion who had left her. Perhaps she exaggerated—I hope she did—for she told me I should never be able to stand her; that she was purse-proud, mean, very selfish, and so spoilt that she thought everybody only created for her pleasure. It sounds as if it must be exaggeration, doesn't it?'

Esdaile laughed. 'Well, I should hope so. It is not what one would call an agreeable portrait. Who is this charming lady?'

'It is a Miss Mackenzie of Glenfaden Castle. She is a Scottish heiress, and lives with an aunt who is a very old lady. I believe Miss Mackenzie is not much more than thirty-five.'

The young man had started at the name. He said nothing, but stared steadily at the heads of the horses. Margaret Dale would have been astonished if she had had the power of reading his thoughts. Miss Mackenzie of Glenfaden! He did not wish, at any rate at the moment, to let the girl become aware how familiar the name was to him, but he wanted to know the magnificent salary the 'Scottish heiress' was going to give her companion. He managed in an artistic, guileless manner to draw this out of 'Peggy.' After all, Peggy was not such an ugly name!

In consideration of her youth and inexperience and the inestimable advantage of mountain air, it seemed she was going for her travelling expenses and twelve pounds a year. Twelve pounds a year! He had a sudden swift vision of a tall, high-nosed, red-haired lady in pale-green satin, emeralds, and pearls, who smiled on him very graciously, and reminded him of Queen Elizabeth. Then some words came back to him: 'Go in for the Scotch oof-bird, old chappie. I have it on good authority that she hasn't a penny less than ten thousand a year in her own right, and owns a castle in the Highlands with top-hole shooting and fishing. Go in and win, old son, and you'll be one of the blest.'

And she had offered Peggy Dale twelve pounds a year! This gave a man something to think of—a man who, with all his faults, was neither mean nor unchivalrous. The child had such an open, pathetic pair of soft brown eyes, such a sweet mouth! These pleaded for her far more eloquently than words. Esdaile sat thinking with uneasy doubt of the last season: of the suppers at the Carlton, the dinners, the balls, the polo at Hurlingham—all in the company of that smiling, gracious, beautifully dressed, red-haired lady of the fortune and the castle, whose invitation to visit her he had accepted, and accepted, too, with a pretty fixed resolve as to the outcome and ending of his visit. 'Purse-proud, mean, very selfish; so spoilt that she thinks every one created for her pleasure.'

Great Heaven! If *half* this indictment were true, a man would pay dear even for ten thousand a year, a castle, shooting, and fishing! Almost he wished he were not bound for Glenfaden.

II.

A rude termination was put to Esdaile's uneasy meditations. The coach had reached a sharp curve in the winding, uphill road. On one side was a steep, rocky hillside; on the other the narrow road shelved abruptly towards a deep valley strewn with stones, clumps of gorse, bramble, and heather. Just as they turned, the leader shied suddenly, the wheel swerved on a stone. Before there was time to realise what had happened the coach was overturned; coachman, guard, and passengers were flung headlong down into the ravine. Murray Esdaile picked himself up, dazed but unhurt, from a prickly bed of whin and heath, which had saved his bones, and looked dizzily for the others. The bagmen were sitting up, evidently not much the worse, rubbing themselves; the coachman lay motionless in a crumpled heap; the guard had staggered to his feet with a bleeding head; but Esdaile could not at once see the girl who had been talking so freely to him a minute ago. A sick fear seized him. She might be dead—poor, sweet little Peggy of the confiding eyes. Yes, thus far had the stress of the moment brought him. He was thinking of her, caring for her, as if he counted acquaintance with her by months or years, instead of hours.

As he looked round him, cold with the sweat of fear, he saw her some distance off on the ground. Her eyes were shut, her face dead-white. He made his way to her, lifted her head softly to rest on his knee, drew out his flask, and poured a few drops of spirits between her pale lips. The burning stuff made her shudder, but revived her. Her eyelids fell back, and with a thrill of actual rapture he met the sweet brown eyes fixed full on his. Absurd! She might have been some one very near, very dear, to him, instead of a chance fellow-traveller. He spoke to her in a gentle, caressing voice as if she were a little child, asking how she felt, if she were hurt anywhere, if she knew where she was, who he was—a rather ridiculous question, as she did not even know his name. Her

eyes slowly lost their vague mistiness, and she tried to smile. She was hardly yet quite alive to the fact that her head rested on a young man's knee.

'I don't know whether I am hurt or not. I think my arm is, a little.' Then, as fuller consciousness came, she started up with a beautiful blush. 'Oh,' she said in a trembling voice, 'of course I remember now! I know what has happened. You are the—the gentleman who was talking to me. But what has become of the others—the coachman, the guard, the poor horses?'

'If you are sure you are really not much hurt,' he said, his own voice not quite steady, 'I will go and find out and see just what has happened. Will you stay here? We must see what can be done. I am afraid the driver is—is in a bad way.'

He could not say what he believed—that the poor fellow was dead. This was only too true. The coachman had been pitched on his head and killed on the spot. The guard had seized the terrified horses, still attached to the shattered coach. He was hurt himself, but not seriously so, and had recovered his presence of mind. He knew, he said, of a few cottages a little way farther on, a rough wayside inn, and a poor farm. He would ride one of the horses on to a village some five miles off, and fetch a doctor; though no doctor, he feared, could put breath again in the poor driver. The lady and the gentleman might be put up at the farm for the night. The other two passengers decided to lead the remaining horses towards the village. Esdaile was anxious to spare the girl the shock of the knowledge of the coachman's death and the sight of his body. He urged her, if she felt she could walk, to let him take her to the farmhouse at once. They would probably not find a luxurious resting-place, but they might possibly get some supper and a bed.

Margaret Dale was too confused and shaken for any independent thought; she only wanted to obey the owner of the quiet, kind voice, and to follow him wherever he might lead. Her ankle was a little twisted, her arm bruised and scraped. He drew the arm that was not hurt through his, and led her, almost carrying her, as quickly as he could, from the scene of the disaster. The pain of walking forced tears into her eyes, but she set her lips and was heroically uncomplaining. He caught a glimpse of her swimming eyes and compressed mouth, and stopped, penitent.

'I'm hurrying you too much, and it hurts! I am so sorry. I wanted to get you out of this. *Is the pain very sharp?*'

'*Oh, it's not much,*' she answered breathlessly. '*I can bear it quite well.* I ought to be so *thankful it is not worse.*'

'*Yes,*' he said gravely, 'there's that. It's odd to think that we might both of us be lying dead. We have come well out of a great danger.'

'Thank God!' she murmured under her breath.

The man of the world, cynical after the manner of the day, had not thought to say that.

'Yes,' he said half-mockingly, 'thank God for *us;* but what about the other poor chap?'

She stopped, looking anxiously in his face. 'The driver? Oh, I had forgotten! Is the poor man dead?'

'Stupid!' he said to himself. 'Why did I let her know?' Aloud he said, 'The guard will send a doctor. Perhaps he's only unconscious. I am sorry it hurts you so to walk. The stones are awfully rough. I'm going to carry you over this part.'

Before she could utter an eager protest he took her up gently and carried her over his shoulder. She was light and thin—sadly light, he thought, though it made his task easier.

When they reached a smoother and more level path he set her down, and she stammered a confused word of thanks.

III.

They were now in sight of a cluster of rough stone buildings, bare enough and poverty-stricken; a forlorn farm with dilapidated sheds and straw-yards, a waste before the door where some gaunt and leggy fowls were picking a scant portion. A stern-faced woman, large-framed and angular, with a shawl over her head and a rough frieze skirt, came to the door and looked at them with an air of cold, dignified aloofness, which made Peggy feel inclined to apologise for her mere existence. She showed some interest, however, when Esdaile explained what had happened, and she called the 'gude man' and an underling in a ragged worsted jacket to go down and help at the scene of the accident. But she looked very dubious when Esdaile asked in his blandest voice if she would let the lady sleep there that night.

'Eh, sir!' she said in a rough, mannish voice, but with a hint of kindliness in her eyes as she looked at the pale, dishevelled girl, 'it's a gey poor place this for the likes o' gentlefolk to bide in. A'm thinkin' yer gude leddy'll no find it to her likin'.'

Peggy, unused to the broad Scots accent, looked on bewildered. Esdaile, however, was only amused to find the farmer's wife took them for a honeymoon couple. 'Oh, anything will do for to-night—won't it, *Miss Dale?*' He turned and addressed the girl pointedly.

'Eh!' the woman said. 'So ye're no marriet. I thocht ye was. Aweel, go ben, young leddy—there's no providin' for mischances.'

It was indeed a bare, poor, comfortless place. A girl used to soft living would have turned

from it with disgust, but Peggy did not seem to notice anything when once seated on the wooden settle in the chimney-corner, warmed by the turf fire which smouldered on the bare hearth. Her chief thought was for the poor driver. She could not bear to think of him as dead—the gruff, good-natured man who had flourished his whip so gaily over the backs of his horses and cracked jokes on the way. She looked urgently at her companion.

'Please,' she said—'please go and see how the driver is! I'm all right—quite comfortable now—only for my arm. I am so anxious to know about him.'

'I will go,' he said gravely; 'but I can do nothing for him.'

He turned first to the woman of the house to ask her about supper and accommodation for the night. Both promised to be poor enough. She had a 'taste' of tea, a drop of milk, oat-cakes, and eggs. The 'young leddy' should sleep in the best chamber; he must find a place where he could. While she bustled about, he went out just in time to see the body of the driver carried past on a door to the rough wayside inn, where it could lie to await the doctor.

Peggy, meanwhile, dressed her hurt arm as well as she could with lard, no other ointment being available. And when Esdaile came back the woman had laid as good a supper as her poor means afforded on the trestle-table in front of the hearth. He had to tell the girl of the driver's fate, and see the brown eyes fill again with tears and the sweet mouth tremble with pity. He put his hand frankly on hers, with a great wish to comfort her; she looked so young, so dependent, so tender. She was utterly unself-conscious, and did not move her hand or repel the slight caress. Already they were fast friends, and had plenty to say, while he coaxed her to eat more than one egg, oatcake toasted and buttered, and to drink coarse tea sweetened with brown sugar.

It was then she suddenly discovered—and laughed at the discovery—that she did not know his name, though she had told him hers. He gravely presented his card. The dour mistress of the house unexpectedly relaxed. She contemplated them from the background with keen eyes when they were not noticing her, and decided they were 'coorting,' and, with a true feminine indulgence for sweethearts, kept the gude man and Jock out of the way, serving their supper in the back-kitchen, while the supposed lovers were allowed to enjoy theirs by themselves. A little Northern canniness also entered into her attitude. She believed this 'fine-spoken' gentleman would be good for a sovereign at least, and sovereigns were a scanty crop in that cold, desolate region.

(*Continued on page 86.*)

TRAVEL IN WAR AND PEACE.

By A. Russell Walker.

IT is one of the numerous paradoxes of the Great War that, while it has compelled one section of mankind—and even of womankind—to do more travelling than they ever expected to do in their lives, the other section, who journey mainly for pleasure and recreation, have found foreign travel completely barred to them. What may be described as the globe-trotting habit was becoming almost universal before the summer of 1914. All the principal nations of the civilised world were more or less interested up to that date in the vast and complex system of international travel, which had been gradually built up over a period of half a century. The gigantic developments of cheap international transport, which was one of the marvels of the later years of the nineteenth century, had ended, apparently for ever, the era when foreign travel was exclusively the privilege of the wealthy and cultured classes.

In the early part of 1914 it seemed the most ordinary thing in the world that Tom, Dick, and Harry should wish to see something of other countries besides their own, and in powerful quarters everything was done to help rather than to hinder them in fulfilling their desire. Not only were travelling scholarships becoming very common at our universities and larger schools, but frequent trips of an organised character were run for the definite purpose of bringing our working-men into contact with their fellow-workers of other nations. In addition to these somewhat specialised avenues of popular travel, there were innumerable opportunities for the public to go abroad. 'A week in lovely Lucerne' or a fortnight in the gay French capital was a luxury, it is true; but it was a democratic luxury, which was not only well within the means of the clerk or the artisan as the reward of a little economy, but was almost as commonplace a feature of the lives of the middle and lower middle classes as was the Grand Tour among the nobility and gentry of a hundred years ago. Correspondingly the upper classes had begun to go farther and farther afield in search of out-of-the-way and untrodden paths of travel. Cairo and the ancient Pyramids of Egypt were already regarded by many as in the same category as Nice, Biarritz, or Monte Carlo; to have been there once, or even twice, was nothing whatever to boast of in society circles when hundreds—nay,

thousands—among that class had turned the city of the Pharaohs into a gay cosmopolitan winter resort. It was even becoming common enough to meet people who had stood under the ruined walls of Nebuchadnezzar's palace at Babylon, or had spent weeks shooting big game in the jungle of tropical Africa. For those who could pay for such exotic luxuries of travel there were already tourist agencies at work, whose business it was to organise and handle the details, so that the traveller was almost as free from worry and danger as if he were journeying from London to Switzerland. Literally there was no place or country, from China to Peru, which when Germany shot her bolt in 1914 was not being exploited in the interests of the tourist. In fact, it seemed to be only a question of time before specially conducted tours would be arranged by some enterprising travel agency into the heart of Tibet, or possibly even to the North and South Poles!

The outbreak of war shattered this carefully-built-up organisation with one blow. Though it was by no means generally appreciated at the time, the placarding of notices at the London railway termini in August 1914 regarding the indefinite suspension of cross-Channel services marked the end of Continental travel for the great majority of civilians for the period of the war. Of course, these services were not long in complete suspense. Very soon they were recommenced on a new and restricted basis, and it is a matter for pride and satisfaction that they have been continued in spite of much danger and difficulty ever since. But they have carried no tourists. The limited band of civilians who have crossed the narrow seas since the summer of 1914 could in no way be brought within the ordinary meaning of that term. Many of them have gone, with sorrow and anxiety in their hearts, to see relatives sick unto death at one or other of the hospitals outwith the fighting-zone; others have gone on patriotic work to assist in some way the cause of their country or its Allies, or in specially organised groups and parties to see at first-hand what our splendid armies had done, and were doing, in the interests of freedom and liberty. None of all these can in any true sense be said to have travelled for the sake of pleasure or recreation, and in every case the necessity of having a duly authorised passport was in itself a guarantee that travel for sight-seeing purposes, or for other motives unsuited to the gravity of the hour, could not be indulged in in war-time. On the other hand, that narrow streak of water between us and France has carried on its bosom several millions of our own flesh and blood, who have gone to fight in our armies in France and Flanders, and among whom there must have been a large proportion who, but for the Great War, would never have travelled outside their native country. Large numbers have found their way across the ocean to far-off and strange lands on a similar mission. The marvellous East will henceforth live as a reality in the minds of hundreds of thousands—nay, millions—of our fellow-countrymen who have seen service in Egypt, Palestine, India, or the Balkans. The world outside these islands, and even the great dominions and colonies overseas, have been discovered for us as a nation by this war. For generations to come the tradition will linger, and it is incredible that the old spirit of insularity can have the same influence over us as it has had in the past.

For some time after peace is signed no doubt the conditions resulting from the war will tend to make travel difficult and expensive. The demands on inland and water transport for military demobilisation and for commercial purposes will inevitably be very great, and it is quite probable that a large number of those who have travelled so far and so widely during the past few eventful years in the service of their country will look forward to a quiet period of restfulness in their own home-land. But once the artificial war restrictions are removed, there will be thousands of people who will be ready and eager to set forth again on their travels. It is certain, for instance, that the numbers of those who will visit the great battlefields of Europe will be enormous. Switzerland, Italy, France will be full of tourists as soon as measures can be taken for their reception. The only places which are likely to be left severely alone are the countries of our present enemies. The bitterness of the war may die away in time, but for many years it is hardly probable that tourists from the Entente nations will visit either Germany or Austria in any great numbers.

Pessimists may say that there will be little extra money available in the coming years for luxuries such as foreign travel—at any rate, so far as the masses of the people are concerned. That may be largely true; but folk have a knack of finding the money somehow for things they really care for, and travel for those who love it is well worth all it costs.

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

CHAPTER V.

THE inspector took the cabinet and looked inside it, but it was absolutely empty. The thing was bewildering, and I was beginning to think that I was dreaming, when a knock came at the door, and my landlady entered.

'Were there any callers for me, Mrs Watson, or was there anybody in this room?'

'Beg pardon, sir; I hope I did no harm,' she said, seeing the uneasiness in my face, 'but a gentleman called just after you left this mornin'. He said he had an appointment to meet you here, and if you werena in he would wait. I showed him in, but he didna bide five minutes. He said you would know who he was, and that he had left his card. He had no time to spare, and would see you some day soon.'

'Some day soon!' I echoed blankly. 'Some day soon!'

'I hope there 's naething wrang, sir,' said Mrs Watson, looking at my puzzled face.

'N-no. Nothing of any consequence,' I answered mechanically. 'Was he a man with reddish hair and a stubbly chin?'

''Deed, no! He was as clean as a priest—a ceevil-spoken, weel-put-on gentleman.'

'And his card?' put in the inspector.

'I looked for it after he left, but couldna find it.'

'What time was this?'

'No ten minutes after you went out, sir.'

With a sinking heart, I went to the chimney-piece. The man 'M'Nair's' address in his own writing had also vanished.

'Thank you, Mrs Watson,' I murmured feebly. 'Really, it doesn't matter. We needn't keep you longer.'

When the door hid her portly presence, I turned a crestfallen face to the inspector. He was making notes.

'More than one on the job, whatever it is,' he said grimly. 'Red-hair has a useful friend. They must have wanted the pocket-book badly. I'll wager the second man watched you going out this morning. Well, well! We had better interview the landlady again, and try to get a better description of this morning's visitor.'

But all Mrs Watson could tell us about the caller was that he was neither short nor tall; that he was dark, clean-shaven, well dressed in grayish tweeds; that he wore a light overcoat and a bowler-hat, and carried an umbrella and a pair of gloves. From the few words that passed between them, he appeared to her to be a man of education, and without any peculiarity in his speech, manner, or features. Her impression was altogether vague, almost valueless for the purposes of identification.

'There are a couple of our men watching the house by this time,' said the inspector when Mrs Watson left us again, 'but I doubt if there will be any more mysterious callers, now that the pocket-book has gone. I think we 'll get your friend of last night, though. Perhaps they have him at the office already. Now, we must make a search of the rooms.'

Both sitting-room and bedroom were examined thoroughly, but not a trace of the articles which I had locked up in the cabinet was found.

'Is it possible,' said the inspector, 'that your memory has played you a trick? You may have taken them out of the cabinet and hidden them somewhere else.'

'No. They were put in the cabinet, which was then locked and taken to my bedroom by my own hands. They have been removed this morning. However, I 'll overhaul my evening clothes again.'

I was doing this, when I heard a sharp 'Hullo!' from him. I looked up. He was holding up a dress-shirt to the light. It was the one which I had worn at dinner on the previous night, and on its starched front he showed me a red smudge.

'Looks like a blood-stain,' he said.

'I believe it is. The man clutched me when I lifted him.'

'If it is a finger-print as well as a blood-stain, we are lucky. I 'll take it with me and have it examined.'

After a final overhaul of the room, back we went to headquarters.

I was shown the dead man in the mortuary. I saw a peaceful young face, Southern in lines and colouring, olive and tanned, with a short, dark beard and moustache. Seafaring clothes marked the man's calling. A few shillings were found in his pocket, but nothing to help identification. The police thought that, in all probability, he had met his death in a commonplace brawl. One Dago less in some fo'c'sle, likely!

But I wondered if, by any curious chance, the running feet in the fog had any bearing on the man's death. I pictured the dead sailor, in possession of some dark knowledge, being lured on or followed in the fog, and in a twinkling struck out of this eager and stirring world.

The little tragedy filled my mind and depressed me. When I went out to the street, to my annoyance (for I prided myself on my nerves) the sudden bang of the time-gun on the Castle made me jump like a nervous old lady. A

decent luncheon and Tony's company would, I thought, be a welcome change from my thoughts, and I quickened my pace to keep my appointment with Keene-Leslie at the Caledonian.

CHAPTER VI.

AT the hotel I found a note from Tony telling me that he might be a few minutes late, so I got into a comfortable arm-chair by the fire in the lounge and waited. In the opposite corner a man was seated, reading a newspaper. The thoughtful, rather melancholy face, the dark, glossy hair, brushed back and contrasting sharply with the pale skin, stirred some memory. When he looked up and caught my eye, I felt that I ought to know him. The same thought must have occurred to him, for, after a glance or two at me, he laid down his newspaper and crossed the hearth-rug.

'You are Mr Neil Forbes, and I think you are wondering if you know me. Am I right?' he said with a friendly smile. 'We met for a minute at The Bield some months ago. You were just leaving to catch a train. I am your uncle's doctor. Hall is my name. I took over old Marshall's practice from his executors.'

'Of course! Now I remember. I have heard my uncle speak gratefully of you, Doctor Hall,' said I as we shook hands. 'How is he?'

'I should like to give you good news of him, but I'm afraid I cannot say that he is quite fit. He has strange fits of depression. And I am doubtful about his heart. I don't mean to say that his condition is very serious. A sudden strain, you understand, must be avoided. No more days on the hill or in the forest for him. He has grassed his last stag, unless he chooses to take unnecessary risks.'

The doctor's statement came as a complete surprise. Although the colonel had not been quite himself of late, I had put this down to his increasing years, and there had been nothing in his letters to me to cause me any anxiety.

'I must run North to see him as soon as I can,' I said. 'He may be lonely sometimes. I am his nearest relative. May I ask you to let me know, from time to time, how he is?'

'With pleasure.' He hesitated for a moment. 'I should like to ask you a question which, at first, may seem to you to be a little—shall I say?—inquisitive. But my profession and your relationship to the colonel must be my apology.'

'If I can be of any help, please do not hesitate.'

He stood looking into the fire in silence for a moment or two, as if debating with himself the form which his question would take. Then he turned a grave face to me.

'Do you know if your uncle has any private worries or anxieties?'

The question disquieted me. My impression of the colonel was that of a man exceptionally free from care, and of singularly cheerful and easy-going temperament. Apart from the stereotyped grievances born of low rents and high rates, I could not have recalled a grumble from him. My uneasiness must have been reflected in my face, for the doctor hastened to assure me that there was no reason for alarm.

'Pray do not misunderstand me,' he said. 'I may have caused you needless anxiety. I merely asked the question in case that the same thought had occurred to you, or that you knew of, or suspected, any cause for depression.'

'None!' I replied with emphasis. 'Nor have I ever found the slightest trace of it in his manner or his letters.'

'I am very glad to hear you say so. But, tell me, is it possible that he has any enemies?'

'He is the last man on earth whom I should associate with making an enemy.'

'I am sure that you will bear with me, Mr Forbes, if my questions touch on any private matters. I gathered that he lived abroad in his earlier days?'

'Yes, with his regiment in India for some years, long ago. Since his return he has lived at The Bield the ordinary contented routine of a country gentleman, fond of sport and outdoor life, taking his share of public duties; a man, as you know, popular and respected, with hosts of friends. His life has been placid and uneventful. Indeed, I have heard him congratulate himself on its freedom from vicissitudes.'

'Yes. All this tallies with what I have heard.'

'But about this depression, doctor—have you anything definite to go on? I mean, something more than your observations as a medical man.'

'Just what I was about to tell you. It is a curious business. I hardly know what to think, but the fact is that twice or thrice he has told me that a black-bearded man—a stranger—has been seen by him near The Bield. "Prowling" was the word he used, and I came to the conclusion, not so much from the colonel's words as from his abstracted, worried air, quite unlike his normal cheerfulness, that the man's appearance had been unwelcome and disquieting.'

'Strange! He is not the man to knuckle down to his nerves. Is it possible that he is the victim of a delusion?'

'Here I hesitate. I am not sure. Men of his age, of course, often develop curious little mental flaws. The word "delusion" ought not to be used lightly; and yet—and yet—no one except the colonel—I made careful inquiries—has ever seen this mysterious stranger.'

'The colonel himself has no doubt about having seen him?'

'None. He is unshakable on the point; but I must add that he was not communicative, and

I did not care to press him. All I know is that at least twice, if not thrice, he has complained to me that a dark-bearded, "foreign-looking fellow" (those were his words) was seen by him prowling about the grounds. I believe that you may get more information from him than I, and if you can make a point of seeing him soon, perhaps between us we may arrive at the cause of his moodiness.'

'I meant to run North before long, and I will start a day or two earlier than I intended. The colonel has always appeared to me to have a sane and well-balanced mind. I shall be surprised if he is under any delusion.'

'Pardon my pursuing the subject. Blackmail is not unknown, Mr Forbes.'

I shook my head. I was certain that the chivalrous old gentleman had no dark memories.

'Impossible! I am sure that he has nothing to hide.' I spoke a little stiffly, perhaps, and the doctor was prompt to notice it.

'Mr Forbes, my work is the repairing of men's minds and bodies, and I run across many curious and pitiful cases which teach me that the "impossible" and the "improbable" often mock one's preconceptions.'

'Doubtless. But blackmail! The colonel is the soul of honour.'

'There is no need for any one to tell me that,' said the doctor, with a warm ring in his voice. 'I know no man for whom I have a greater regard and, if I may say so, affection. He is without fear and without reproach. But I cannot shut my eyes to the melancholy fact that the lives of many sensitive, innocent men and women have been wrecked through *chantage*.'

Again I shook my head. 'I am inclined to disregard both the blackmail and the delusion theories. If my uncle says that he has seen a man prowling round the house, I believe him. If you put aside blackmail, what motive could any one have for coming to an out-of-the-way corner of the world like the Glen?'

'Robbery? Is it possible?'

'There is always the risk of robbery, of course. The world is full of thieves. But unless a thief happens to be a simpleton, he doesn't advertise his intentions by showing himself beforehand taking a lively interest in the crib he proposes to crack.'

'Still, it is possible. Is there anything of great value—jewels, curios, or the like—which might attract a thief or even a crazy collector? I have met a collector whose hobby for intaglios grew from an obsession to a mania, and who carried out, single-handed, a series of the most cunning thefts known to modern criminologists. His name would surprise you.'

Beyond some not very valuable pictures and the modest family plate, I knew that The Bield contained nothing worth the attention of a professional cracksman. The pantry, I imagined, would be the most attractive room in the house for the class of prowler found in a remote district like Glen Ciuin, and I said so.

'Well, well!' replied Dr Hall. 'Whatever may be the cause, I hope that you will see the colonel soon, and sound him tactfully on the subject. There may have been a temporary derangement, a mere speck of dust, so to speak, in the brain's mechanism. You can count on my letting you know any developments worth recording. Now, I must be off. I am returning to the North by the afternoon train, and I have a good deal to do before I start. I am not sorry to go, for I confess that a little of the town goes a long way with me. A city practice would soon knock me up. Indeed, the charm of the Cairngorms—I am a lover of mountains—appeals to me even in this wild weather.'

'And to me, doctor. Perhaps some day we may climb them together.'

'Let us hope so. Truth to tell, my dislike of towns and my love for the open were the chief causes of my settling in the Glen. I get my share of sport. I have a penchant for observation of wild life with a camera, and I hope soon to publish a monograph on Alpine lichens. I am often out on the mountains alone, and know almost every corrie of them by heart. Apart from my hobbies, I think of a long day in these solitary places as a—how shall I put it?—a "soul-bathe."'

I nodded. 'I know what you mean.'

'It is good to meet one who understands. *Au revoir*, then! The colonel will be interested to hear of our chance meeting.'

We shook hands cordially, and he left with me the impression (one which I never had cause to correct) of having met an interesting and capable man.

Although he had assured me that there was no cause for alarm, Dr Hall's information disturbed me. The colonel was my dead father's brother, and the most lovable of men. The thought of any real or imaginary trouble touching him weighed upon me. I made up my mind to go North in the spring vacation, and was considering uneasily the chill question of ways and means, when Keene-Leslie arrived and bore me off to the dining-room.

The cloud on my spirits would not lift, and it made me the dullest of guests. I intended to tell Tony my adventure in the fog, and to get his views on it after luncheon; but it is a bad plan, when one's mind is charged with a subject, to hold it in reserve during a meal. The result in this instance was that it induced in me a species of conversational paralysis. I count it a crime to spoil good talk, but my contribution consisted of punctuating Tony's remarks with futilities such as 'Just so' and 'I suppose so.' My thoughts wandered. I was miserably conscious of failure, and wholly glad when the luncheon came to an end and we went back to the lounge.

'You're not very lively, my friend,' said Tony. 'You haven't opened your mouth for the last half-hour except for purposes of nourishment, and (contrary to your custom) you kindly allowed me to deliver a monologue on passing affairs without comment or contradiction. Further, you are *distrait*, and you are looking a bit fagged. What is it, Neil? I shouldn't worry too much, if I were you, over your "tip-and-run" in the mining market.'

'Truth to tell, my own anxieties have been pushed into a back-seat since I left you last night. I have a story which may interest you,' I said; and then I gave him an account of my adventure in the fog and its sequel. He listened so intently that his cigar went out.

When I had finished, 'A red-haired liar, a dead sailor, and a rifled cabinet!' he exclaimed. 'This sounds promising. Let me hear it again, and I'll take some notes.'

Once more I went through the story carefully, step by step, while he took notes, now and then asking a question.

'It seems to me that you have come well out of it with nothing more than a smear of blood on your shirt. That pocket-book was wanted badly. Its present possessor isn't a beginner. The words "*ossa humiliata*," followed by the little cross at the end of the paper, are queer. I happen to remember that they occur in an antiphon in the Roman Catholic Office of the Dead. The complete sentence runs: "Exultabunt Domino ossa humiliata" ("The humbled bones shall rejoice in the Lord").'

'What do you make of it?'

He shook his head. 'Nothing as yet. But I am most interested. Do you mind taking me to your rooms and letting me have a look round? We have an hour and a half before my train starts.'

We arrived at Jura Street in a few minutes, and there I showed him the cabinet. He put me through my story again, amplified his notes, and checked them with my statement.

'I should like very much to meet the ingenious Mr "M'Nair,"' said he.

'Have you any theory?'

'None meanwhile, except that I agree with the fairly obvious conclusion come to by the police, that the man who opened your cabinet was a confederate of "M'Nair." I'll get a copy of the finger-print on your shirt-front from the police. I can arrange this through Scotland Yard—with whose chiefs, as you may guess, I have more than a bowing acquaintance—and I'll pigeon-hole the copy of the print along with my notes. But, to be quite frank, unless Mr "M'Nair" is laid by the heels, I'm not going to refer to them or think about the business, unless, of course, there are developments. Take my advice and do the same. Don't bother about murders that don't belong to you. And now I must bolt for my train.'

I saw him off from the Waverley, and returned to Jura Street, fully resolved to follow his counsel and trouble myself no further with an affair which, I thought, was no concern of mine.

(*Continued on page 83.*)

GERMANS AND NATIVES IN NEW GUINEA.

By Thomas J. McMahon.

THE world has not heard of all the cruelties of the Germans towards the natives in the early days of German New Guinea. Those cruelties have left their marks—marks of decline and disease that seem almost irremediable. The Germans' disregard of native life is evidenced in this territory as in all their other colonial possessions. Prior to the war the colony's loss in commercial value, through death and sickness among the natives, made the Germans pause, and, with that thoroughness which characterised all their doings in New Guinea, they by force and hasty measures tried to restore what they had fast been destroying—namely, the native population, which had come into baneful contact with German officials, planters, and traders. The late German governor—to his credit be it said, all speak well of him in New Guinea—seriously championed the rights of the natives. He brought in many humane regulations regarding their comfort and their protection from exploitation. Still, after all, it was a tardy and limited humanity. According to British ideals, there was much yet wanting to free the unfortunate natives from the environment of slavery. It seemingly would be an impossibility for Germans to consider any human being of black colour worthy of kindness, or to be treated in any other way than as a slave to the superior white man. To this day the average German planter looks upon concern for the health, the comfort, and the uplifting of native labourers as so much sentimental rubbish. He would kick and flog a troublesome native to death—if he dared—with as little feeling as he would abuse or shoot a dog. The German makes no secret of the fact that he considers the natives as animals, to be worked and driven in any harsh way, so long as he himself is deriving wealth from that labour.

The population, therefore, of the many islands of what was German New Guinea territory has dwindled from thousands to hundreds, and the dwindling still goes on.

This depopulation is startling the Australian administration, as it did the German just before the war—when it was too late for action. That has been left for the present more humane administration. Missionaries, in particular, and all other classes now, are alarmed at the numbers of natives that are dying of disease. The very savages, those away from general civilisation, already are tainted with the scourge of the white man (sexual diseases); whilst those brought under the direct influence of Europeans show a percentage of disease so high as to brand the native races as rotten. Every year the shortage of labour increases, and whenever the veil of inquiry is lifted, the main reason for it is found in the appalling ravages of death and disease. A wise administration, such as the present, is looking into the future with anxious eyes; for, if the native races continue to decline at the present rate, the development of the islands will be threatened with a complete stoppage. This is what the Australian régime, with laudable zeal, has set itself to check and remedy.

On the other hand, British public opinion must get a shock, when the facts come out and the numbers are known, as to some of the effects produced on the natives throughout the Pacific by 'sentimental' ideas of protecting them from slavery and harm. Such views lead to the most absurd results, and produce in great measure bad effects instead of good. Whilst there are missionaries about, their vigilant eyes will see that no slavery or exploitation of natives takes place; but it is the missionaries in many parts who are complaining that the natives are becoming more useless and idle as they become more protected. The native is not responding in bettering himself and preserving his island home in a way that might be expected from him in return for the liberal treatment which the British administration insists shall be his. This public opinion is pampering the native too much, and so spoiling him; and the greatest efforts of any British administration in its management of natives are made abortive. Natives do not recognise the quality of kindness as we understand it. They take it for weakness, and they make no effort for improvement. This is so in German New Guinea at the present time. The Australian administration has gone from the one extreme to the other, from German cruelty to British sentimental humanity. The natives, in their new freedom—a freedom that lacks any kind of effective restraint—are, to say the least of it, quite out of hand. 'Me no frighten of Government' is what you will often hear 'cheeky' natives say—and nowadays there are far too many of the natives who are 'cheeky' (an independence that galls the Germans excessively). It is very evident that, much as the Australian régime in German New Guinea would like to do—and it has the loftiest and most sensible of ideals—it is made timid by the bugbear of outside public opinion, is afraid to act as the situation demands, and is merely taking the line of least resistance in the matter of forming the character and encouraging the usefulness of the natives. Undoubtedly the management of the natives is the administration's weakest point; but in all fairness no blame can be put upon the administrator and his officers. The natives, under this benign influence, are fast becoming less energetic, whilst their powers of cunning are being developed to an extraordinary degree. In Rabaul to-day it is possible to find black 'artful dodgers' that compare very favourably—or unfavourably—with Dickens's. To give an instance of this: it is quite a common practice for a native, an old hand, sentenced to a caning, to pass the order quickly on to some new hand, raw and unsophisticated, who receives the punishment, as may be imagined, with feelings of intense surprise. Visitors to Rabaul, or, in fact, any part of the German territory, since the occupation, are pretty unanimous in their uncomplimentary references to the pampering of the natives that is going on, and in maintaining that (as in Fiji in these times) the natives are likely to become an encumbrance and not an asset.

However, if it is impossible to commend the native legislation of the new administration in German New Guinea, no praise is high enough for the magnificent attempt it has made and is making to check the decline in population and to heal the sick. Native hospitals, fully equipped, are everywhere, and nothing is left undone to promote new health in the wretched people. These hospitals are to be found on missions, on plantations—in fact, wherever there is an attempt at settlement. It is a sad sight. The hospitals are always crowded; the sufferings and the mutilations from disease and wounds are too horrible to be realised by any who have not witnessed them. These black peoples, who were strong in their ethics of morality in the days before they knew the white man, are to-day in thousands the victims of German lust. Contamination is spreading from village to village, like some awful plague, and the most appalling instances of it are always coming up for observation. Children in the most sorrowful plights are to be seen in most of the wild villages, innocent mites, their bodies stunted, shrivelled, and unnatural in every respect, covered with filthy sores. Human abominations, too horrid for description, once seen, never to be forgotten. And this it is that the Australian administration, with wonderful zeal and determination, has set itself to check; and it is succeeding in a way that will reflect everlasting credit on it, and shed an added lustre on British humanitarian ideals.

In German times the Chinaman was en-

encouraged, and it is almost impossible to go anywhere in this territory without meeting John. It does not matter how lonely the spot or how remote; there, trading with the natives, will be found a Chinaman. The unanimous opinion, especially of officials and missionaries, is that the Chinaman, with his 'ways that are deep,' is not a good model for the natives; rather, he prefers to come down to the level of the natives and be as they are. With the Chinaman's laxity of morals, and the native's power of assimilating taints of civilisation (and John Chinaman is a first-class monitor), the results may be better imagined than related. The Chinaman manages persistently to evade the law, and though he keeps out of jail, does not keep out of mischief. There is a cry out against him, and there must be some reason for it. The natives show no respect for Chinamen—'Kongkongs,' as they call them. Yet, around the Chinese trading-station there always will be found natives, especially women, and everything points to the truth of many remarkable and weird stories told of the Kongkong's conduct, and affords good arguments for putting some restraint on his increase, at any rate as a trader.

It is a debatable point with some people whether taxing natives is a wise and fair proceeding. Judging by present-day results in German New Guinea, it has uses that stay argument against it. When at first introduced by the Germans, it was accompanied with harshness and cruelty, and was not acceptable to the natives. Now they have grown accustomed to the regularity with which the time for payment comes round, and the tax, or 'throw-away money,' as they call it, of ten shillings per year is paid up promptly. In twelve months the amount collected by the Australian officials made a record never approached in the days of German collecting. The levy's uses lie in the fact that in order to have the money to pay the tax the natives must do something to earn it. That means that it suggests or keeps awake in their minds the necessity for work. If it were not for this tax (enforced by the German law), many more natives would remain idle, and recruiting would be more difficult. It also helps in the maintenance of the many roads that run through the territory, for a native who cannot find his tax-money goes off and puts in so much time on his district roads. It is in travelling round at such times as tax-collecting days that the decimation of the native population can be fully realised. Villages are to be seen with mostly old men and women—with no children. Villages that one and all were once full of life, of spirited and healthy inhabitants, now contain twenty or thirty poor, miserable beings, upon whose faces are marked plainly disease and death. When taxes are paid questions are asked and answers recorded on a printed form: 'Are you married?'—or in local parlance, 'You got Mary [wife] belonga you?' 'How many children?'—or more correctly, 'How many piccaninny, man [boy], Mary [girl], you got?' Out of every hundred adult natives, perhaps one-third may be married, and not one-half of these will have children. The dire result is, of course, evident, and it is little wonder that some of the smaller-sized islands are no longer subject to the tax; there are either no natives left or so few that it would not pay to bother about them.

Natives employed by the administration or those working for planters or others are exempt from taxation. The idea is to make the rest realise that work brings its reward in money, which not only pays the tax, but buys extra food and loin-cloths, knives, and tobacco. In other words, it is meant as an incentive to keep busy, and this makes the chiefs of each village, who are held responsible for the full amount to be paid up, round up their men on the approach of the tax-collector, and see that the money is ready. It is sometimes paid half in German marks, and half in English shillings; but the whole village must pay the amount assessed according to the latest returns, allowing for decreases of population.

One of the strangest conditions of this German territory is the 'pidgin-English' that is heard everywhere. German speaks to German, Englishman to German, and all to the natives in this absurd lingo. No one attempts to speak either pure English or pure German, and the pidgin-English may really be said to be the territory's language, so common is it. It is wrongly supposed that the natives can understand nothing else; but one has only to go to the missions, where it is forbidden, to find that the native can understand and speak pure English or pure German more easily than he can the gibberish that is constantly forced on him. On a mission boys can be found able to read English, and even set up correct English for printing; whilst on a plantation, if you want a crosscut-saw, you describe what you want in pidgin-English, in this vague style, 'Pull him, he come; push him, he go; all time kai-kai [eat] tree.' When you require hot water for a shave, you order your boy to bring hot water 'to cut em grass.' If you want a bottle of beer opened, he is instructed to 'fight em bottle.' When a boy waiting on you at table wants to know the brand of cheese you like, he requests, 'You wantem su-su [cheese] all the same good smell, or all the same stink [Stilton].' A native's impression on seeing a piano played finds language in this fashion, 'Big fella, white fella massa, he fightem teeth [notes] belonga big fella boxis [piano], and big fella boxis, my word, he plenty sing out;' and so on. The most absurd word-pictures are presented in this queer language to denote the simplest article or action. The Germans, strange to say, always have used it in dealing with their natives, and a German will speak most fluently in pidgin-English, using quite

a number of English words in so doing. Yet if these same words are put together in proper English grammatical form they become as Hebrew to him. Just before the war the German governor, already alluded to, was so impressed with the absurdity of pidgin-English that he founded a college in Rabaul where he was going to force natives to learn pure German. Quite a number of natives from various parts were enrolled, and when once these got a sufficient knowledge of the German language they were to be sent out to help their fellow-natives, and from then punishments were to begin in order to help in driving out the silly language that has taken such a remarkable hold on men, white and black. It is a pity that the German governor did not get his opportunity, for there is no college in Rabaul now for the extermination of one of the grossest absurdities extant.

Of the many tribes in the many islands of the territory, it cannot be said that one is low in the standard of intelligence or the possibility of usefulness. To judge by their lazy ways and persistent stupidity, it would be an easy matter to consider them as well-nigh hopeless as regards learning trades, incapable of becoming alert and skilful in any class of work; and yet, go to the missions, and even on to some of the plantations, and it is possible to find natives qualified for any mechanical work, and even with literary abilities sufficient to make first-class teachers and clerks. There is no doubt that the natives have not had, and are not getting, a fair trial. The Germans treated them as animals, abused them and prevented their individuality from appearing, scoffed at their intelligence, and gave them neither hope nor chance. The British, in one moment, it might be said, lifted them to a pedestal that puzzles them, that takes all their natural native spirit out of them, and that wants them to possess all the attributes of the white man, with the disadvantages of a black's skin; and the consequence is an all-round failure. When one compares them with the natives of Java, for instance, allowing for the superiority of these islanders, it does not seem that, in the initial stages, these intelligent German New Guinea natives, in any number worthy of note, are making headway as they should, or are even giving promise of so doing. With such a rich territory as is the whole of German New Guinea, and with such possibilities of development, the natives are so lacking in ambition, so far behind as an asset in the progress of their own country, that it is self-evident that some new method must be tried to arouse ambition in them, and to make them understand how essential they are to the future advancement of their country.

DOCTORING A CHINESE CREW.

THE medical supervision of a Chinese crew calls for an unusual degree of callousness, patience, and gravity of demeanour. Fortunately the mate who practises the healing art aboard our ship is a canny Scot, and is abundantly blessed with these qualifications.

One of the most common complaints we have to deal with among our 'yellow pearls' is beri-beri. This disease is caused, it is supposed, through over-indulgence in polished or, it may be, mouldy rice. Ashore there is little danger of their contracting it, their diet there consisting mainly of fresh air and an occasional banana; but immediately they come aboard a ship where rations, especially rice, abound, they develop an alarming coefficient of consumption. Officially they have three meals a day; in reality they have only one, beginning when they turn out, and ending when they turn in. It is rice, rice, curry and rice all day long. The average daily consumption of dry rice per man with us is two and a quarter pounds, this in addition to his bread, potato, and meat allowance. Moreover, when symptoms of beri-beri become apparent—a discoloration and mortification of the flesh—the victim will not give up his rice, even if we assure him that the sacrifice will save his life. He would far rather die. In fact, he is convinced that he will die. To live would be an impertinence, and wholly contrary to the fitness of things Chinese.

A typical case of this fatalistic hopelessness was that of a young quartermaster—'Smiling Morn' we called him, from his bright and sunny nature. He contracted beri-beri shortly after he joined us. We had great hopes of effecting a cure, however, as he was a robust and intelligent fellow. To this end we tried to induce him to give up rice. The mate commanded, threatened, coaxed, pleaded. But it was in vain. 'Beri-beri in ankle now,' he explained. 'By-and-by reach knee. By-and-by reach middle. By-and-by reach heart. When reach heart me die.' It might be a month; it might be six months; but it was inevitable. It was so written, and he took what the gods sent without murmur or complaint. If they sent death—why, it was nothing to make a song about. Meanwhile he would have their present gift—two and a quarter pounds of rice every day!

And under such circumstances not the whole faculty of Harley Street could save life.

'Their malady convinces the great assay of art' (*Macbeth*, iv. 3). So, very quietly and at the earliest opportunity, we discharge all beri-beri patients at our first port of call where a shore hospital will accept them.

Another common disease among our Chinese

crew is consumption. On one occasion a fireman had it unknown to the 'doctor,' himself, or his mates. These last thought he was malingering, and often belaboured him unmercifully for his laziness. They had a natural objection to doing his work as well as their own. One day the engineer-on-watch found him lying in a corner of the stokehold, moaning and coughing, and evidently in great pain. His mates had mauled and pummelled him till he was half-dead. Within a week he died. None of his fellows would touch his body; it was left to the mate and a quartermaster to sew it in canvas. The steward ventured to put in a few joss-sticks for the safe passage of his soul. We buried him at midday, stopping the ship for the ceremony. Only after great physical as well as moral persuasion would the firemen come and witness the burial of their late shipmate. 'Why trouble? He makee die proper,' they grumbled. Next day the chief fireman asked to see the captain. To him he explained what fast friends he and the dead man had been—that his (the dead man's) brother was almost as his own. Would the captain pay him what wages were due his dear departed shipmate, so that when we returned to Singapore he would be able to hand them over to the bereaved relatives? . . . The captain has a quick tongue and a heavy boot. His reply was brief and pointed.

The great majority of our celestials are inveterate opium-smokers. They can secrete only a very little on their person when they join the ship, and they cannot get supplies on the voyage. The result is that their stores quickly become exhausted. Out of charity we have occasionally to administer an opium pill to relieve the terrible agony of their craving.

Then, of course, they occasionally suffer from 'bunk-sickness,' or, as it is less popularly called, laziness. We had a perfect epidemic once. Sailor after sailor reported sick and unfit for duty—temperature and appetite normal—and the trouble was spreading to the quartermasters.

'Give them salts—generous doses at short intervals,' advised the captain, who had learned much wisdom in his sailing-ship days. His medical philosophy was simple. 'If a man feigns sick, salts will cure him. If he is sick, they may.' (And I can vouch for the truth of this unromantic criterion.) So salts it was—copious doses at short intervals. Yet their pains and aches and appetites persisted. We tried sundry wonderful concoctions of our own devising—all without result. Our vilest tasting patents they tossed off at a gulp—and looked for more. The truth is, they like medicine! The captain grew desperate.

'D' you think this ship is a —— Chinese convalescent home? I'll —— well log the next man that is ill!' And, strange to say, on the morrow there were no pains or aches complained of.

One fellow, a great, hulking Foochow trimmer, gave us a lot of trouble. He had had an abscess removed from his leg two days before we left port. Normally the wound would have been well healed in a week, but he persisted in probing it with his finger, or a pin, or his knife, or anything that came handy, just to 'catchee see,' as he explained. Eventually the mate had to lash him down to save his life.

They place implicit faith in the mate's ministrations, and that for a reason that throws an interesting sidelight on the Chinese mind. They argue that the mate will do his very best to cure them and make them well again, if only in order to get work out of them. A shore doctor has no such vital interest in their welfare. Frequently we have had some of our crew refuse to take the shore doctor's medicine (they know it by the bottle and the elaborate label), alleging that it made them worse. Yet they declared themselves much benefited by that same medicine transferred by the mate into a ship's bottle (this harmless precaution is necessary), and flavoured with peppermint to disguise the taste. Simple faith is still potent to work wonders. With its help a judicious mixture of water, cascara, cough-mixture, and grave-faced bluff will effect marvellous cures.

Every morning, immediately after breakfast, the boatswain lines up the invalids for the day. He speaks the most intelligible English, so he acts as interpreter and describes their symptoms to the mate. Moreover, he is responsible for the mate's orders being carried out. If Ah Foo has to take a bottle three times a day, the boatswain must see that Ah Foo takes his bottle three times a day.

Our medicine-chest requires to be replenished at every port, for hardly a day passes without our having an invalid of some sort. Prominent amongst our drugs is a great cask of 'Asiatic mixture,' a wonderful panacea, guaranteed invaluable in the curing of all Oriental diseases. I do not know what the ingredients are, but I can certify that it looks and tastes its name, every drop. 'When in doubt, prescribe Asiatic mixture,' we find an ideal medical maxim. The orthodox dose is a table-spoonful, but nothing less than a bumper wine-glassful will satisfy our hardened crew. Asiatic mixture, black draught, and salts are the staples of our pharmacopœia.

And, all things considered, we have very few 'casualties.' Perhaps a qualified medical man might marvel, and occasionally stand aghast, at the treatment of our 'doctor.' But it must be remembered that his sole medical education has been a compulsory course of twelve lectures on 'first aid.' He has to deal with men who cannot describe their own trouble. 'Head makee feel very pain,' is about as precise as they ever are in detailing their aches and symptoms. Fortunately there is always what the mate calls the 'statistical point of view,' according to which the population of China is constantly somewhere in the neighbourhood of four hundred millions.

JOHN BROWN.

CONFESSIONS OF A NEW ARMY CADET.

By R. W. CAMPBELL, Author of *Private Spud Tamson; Dorothy, V.A.D., and the Doctor;* &c.

CHAPTER VI.—THE MODERN GIRL.

IN peace or war we cannot do without the ladies. They brighten this weary world, cheer us when we are in the depths, and tend us 'when pain and anguish wring the brow.' Our mothers mould our characters, our sisters help to keep us clean, while other fellows' sisters provide the love and the inspiration so needful to man. And war is good for the business of Cupid. Danger gives admiration scope, and promotes the deeper affection.

Adela was my star. When drill and lectures were done, I basked in her smiles and played the old, old game. But, like all women, she loved to tease. It was, therefore, in keeping with her character to send me the following:

'MY DEAR JOHNNIE,—Don't come on Saturday, as I shall be engaged. We are having two Australians to lunch, and shall be busy all day. You will understand. Love. ADELA.'

That was all she said. Two Australians! I felt annoyed, for these Cornstalks are the deadly rivals of the British Army. One of them had stolen my little French girl in La Bassée, while another had vamosed with my V.A.D. from a Strand hotel. No, it wasn't good enough, and I loudly swore.

'What's wrong, John?' inquired Beefy.

'Adela is booked for Saturday. The Anzacs are cutting me out. I'm fed up!'

'I'm in your boat too, old chap. Her sister is apparently on the same stunt. She sent me word this morning, but I am not worrying. There's lots of girls in this world. A little change will do us good. I'm fed up being respectable. Women *are* the limit. They're getting too sure of themselves. They're like salmon—want a lot of playing before you land them. There's nothing like cold indifference to bring them round.'

'You're an authority, Beefy.'

'Well—yes. I've paid for my experience. I've loved everything from a parlour-maid to a general's daughter. They're all the same. As Kipling says:

> The colonel's lady
> And Judy O'Grady
> Are sisters under their skin.

'Pursue them, lavish the wealth of a millionaire on them, yield them your life and soul, and they'll go round the corner to—*the other fellow.*

> They're contrary
> And they're wary;
> They're devils till they die.'

'You're a cynic, Beefy. You've met the wrong sort. You can't expect barmaids and ballet-girls to have souls. They trade their charms and squander their affections, but the real decent kind are not half-bad. I've a weakness for the opposite sex.'

'Oh, you're a ruddy idealist. You're always up in the moon. You're too trusting. You can't trust a woman. If I had my way, I'd go over to the system of the Moslems.'

'You're *blasé*, Beefy. You have had such a good time that you think the world has gone wrong. What's the good of being a cynic? I'm not posing, old chap, but I do think there's a lot of goodness in modern girls if you care to search for it. Why, they're real sports! Look what they're doing to win the war. They're nursing, driving, ploughing, and cooking, without a grouse. It's a great revelation! This war has given them their opportunity. You can't put these girls into harems after the war. Your mentality is crooked, Beefy.'

'Per-haps! All the same, I'm convinced the modern girl is neurotic. I may be *blasé* and all that, but I'd much sooner have the steady old Mid-Victorian type than these short-skirted creatures who adore a naval man on Monday and elope with a soldier on Tuesday. Seems to me they only want a good time. A fellow with a Rolls-Royce has a better chance than a man with a Ford. Women judge you by your cheque-book. They want to hook the fellow who can give them everything from a pug-nosed poodle to a collar of diamonds. They're nearly all adventuresses, and the only chap they understand is the primitive one who spanks them hard when they get into their tantrums. Women are all right when they're mastered. We men are long-suffering, and much too generous to the average girl.'

'You're a jealous devil, Beefy. You want your own way. Freedom, apparently, is made for you and not for the girl. I'm no great Christian, but I do think if you trust a girl she will always play the game.'

'Oh, you're a blinkin' ass!'

'Why?'

'Adela has just told you not to come to-day, as she is busy with the Anzacs. And yet you talk about trust!'

'That's true. Still, on reflection, it would be an impertinence for us to warn all the other fellows off the track. If I'm annoyed, I'm not going to be narrow-minded about it. Besides, I'm not engaged to the girl. I've an open mind so far as a mate is concerned. I'm simply looking around, and I won't endorse

your barbarian creeds. Why, Beefy, you're almost a Hun where the other sex is concerned. Come on, you silly old ass; let's go and get some fresh air.'

'All right, John Bunyan,' mumbled Beefy, shoving on his cap and sauntering out of the camp.

We took a train to the nearest town, a manufacturing place, alive with munition-girls and other war workers. As we ambled along we had time to observe the manners and methods of the crowd. A healthy Amazon gave us 'the glad eye.'

'There, John, didn't I tell you they're as primitive as in the Bronze Age?'

'That's just the fun of the uneducated. Hang it all! I thought you rather liked that sort of thing.'

'That's not the point. What I want to prove is this. You can "pick up" almost every girl in this street. These girls are man-mad.'

'You judge by superficial things. Of course, there may be a little in what you say; but you must remember that men now and after the war will be scarce in the marriage-market. I'm sorry for all the nice girls who are being left on the perch. As for the lady who smiled, she doesn't represent her sex. You know it, too; but you are simply bent on "chewing the rag." You're a fat-headed old'——

'Excuse me,' said a sweet-faced girl at that moment, touching my arm.

'Yes?' I answered, a little abashed.

'Are you in the Cadet Battalion at Windmoor?'

'Yes,' I replied more pleasantly, observing how charming she and her companion looked. Beefy was grinning like a nigger.

'I wonder if you could give this note to your fellow-cadet—Robert Clarke.'

'Oh, Nobby Clarke?'

'I believe you call him "Nobby."'

'Certainly—delighted! May I have the pleasure of telling him the name of the sender?'

'His sister—Marjory. I do hope you will excuse my asking you, but I want him to come to-morrow for tea, and I thought I should meet somebody from the camp. I was rather nervous about stopping you, for you appeared so engrossed in some discussion.'

'Yes, we were discussing girls. My friend here is a bit of a cynic.'

'Don't believe him,' interjected Beefy.

'I think you are all very gay at the Cadet School. Now, will you excuse me? My sister and I have to go on to hospital. We're V.A.D.'s, you know.'

'Oh, don't go yet,' pleaded Beefy. 'I wonder if we may ask you to tea at the picture-house.'

'It's hardly conventional, is it?'

'But it's war-time, Miss Clarke, and of course—we know your brother. He's in our hut. He will be quite pleased, I am sure.'

'That sounds consoling to my conscience.' Then turning, she called her sister Hilda over, and away we went to the tea-rooms. They were well-educated and most charming girls, and Marjory dispensed tea like a duchess.

'Do tell me, Mr Brown, what you two were fighting about when I stopped you.'

'A simple matter. Beefy, here, was saying women are neurotic and cheap. I took a brief in defence of your sex—that's all.'

'Mr Jones is saucy, I think,' muttered Marjory, just as she was about to put her pretty teeth into a cherry-cake.

'Per-haps; but don't you think you girls get it all your own way these days?' answered Beefy.

'Yes, after thousands of years of bondage. It was surely time to break the shackles. We've been cooped up like canaries. There's a big difference between freedom and folly. I don't think the average girl makes a mess of things. Ours is not the easy path you think, Mr Jones. Why shouldn't we do things? We can't all get married, so we have to carve out our careers. If we do have our innocent pleasures, I think we work mighty hard for them, especially in war-time.'

'Yes; but aren't you girls a fickle lot?'

'That depends on the sort of girl. Many of you boys chase powdered creatures, who are as brainless as they are hopeless. They are the moths who rush at every bright candle, but they don't represent the nice girls in the provinces or away in the decent West-End homes. These girls are getting our sex a bad name. You boys are so silly—— Do have more tea,' she said, peering into Beefy's cup.

'Thanks—I will.'

'I think you boys learn a lot of nonsense when you go to public schools. Some schools have a rotten atmosphere. You dabble in pernicious literature and in matters beyond your years. What you want is fresh air and plenty of tennis or golf with real nice girls! You won't get the best of our sex at stage-doors or in saloon-bars. And that's where many boys form their views. However, we've got the vote, and we'll help you through. Have a cherry-cake.'

'Come, come, Miss Clarke! You're not all saints; you know that.'

'Granted, Mr Jones. But what about the men? Don't you think there are faults on both sides? The world was never perfect, and never will be, but it's silly to hate each other. Come now, let's be friends. You're much too nice to have those silly cynical views. I really think you're just arguing the point.'

'Not exactly. Just look at the bunch of girls around us here. They've got bags of flour on their faces, red paint all over their lips, and they *do* fancy themselves. They'll pick up anything in trousers.'

'These are the drones, not the busy bees. All the best girls, like the best boys, are helping to win the war. They haven't time to idle all day here. But the average man is a queer

creature. He doesn't want a W.A.A.C., a "Wren," or even a humbly dressed V.A.D. They haven't got enough frills or fripperies. When he gets his leave he hobnobs with the girl slackers. After a day he is disillusioned; then he turns round on the sex. You men are so inconsistent. You want the lilies, but you always grasp the deadly nightshades. Do have another cake.'

'Ah, well, you're different,' mumbled Beefy.

'Thanks—but I'm really "feeding the brute." You boys want mothering. It doesn't do to let you have it all your own way. The world, somehow, has gone mad. This war is making all of us catty. It's much nicer to be chummy, isn't it?'

'Yes, I think you are right on the chummy point.'

'Good! You're really not so pagan as I imagined. At first I thought you were a wild man of the woods.'

'I thought girls preferred that kind.'

'Perhaps; but they're not reliable. Still, I believe the average girl likes a blend of the saint and the sinner.'

'You women are certainly a mystery.'

'To a man—yes. That's our armour. You are all so fickle that we daren't put all our goods in the window. You're really better when on the end of a string and kept in suspense. It stops you chasing our rivals. Women have no use for polygamy. When we find a good thing we hang on to it.'

'We're certainly not so subtle as women.'

'That's easily explained. You are the hunters; we are the hunted. We need a lot of tricks to dodge you. For all that, a woman is quite simple. What she really craves for is affection. That's what she is here for; give her that and she'll give you the moon.'

'Well, you're a marvel.'

'No; I'm only a girl.'

'But other girls don't talk like you.'

'More's the pity! You men are so scarce that girls frequently sink opinions and principles to catch you. It's really not worth the trouble. There are more things in heaven and earth than chocolates or trousers. Why should a girl let a man be the great I-Am? It's not good for him! It makes him a Turk! Equality of intellect and opportunity is surely reasonable.'

'By Jove! I believe you're a suffragette.'

'Why not? You've had it all your own way for centuries. You've flooded the world with materialism. There *are* better things. Surely you don't want us to be German Fraus—fat frumps and housekeepers merely. You need Idealism. Girls have more of it than men. And it's your pagan code that's really upset our sex. You'd sooner have omelet than love.'

'But we must have omelets.'

'You don't want a woman simply to preside over pots and pans and jam-jars. If the German women had only asserted themselves there would never have been a war.'

'Explain.'

'You must know that German women were locked in their kitchens, trained to prostrate themselves at the feet of man, and squashed when they asserted the sweeter and more reasonable philosophy which women have been given, so as to neutralise the barbarism of the world.'

'There's something in that, I grant you,' conceded Beefy.

'Now you are really coming round.'

'You are such a good advocate, you know. But I never thought pretty girls like you could be suffragettes. You don't need to be.'

'Heavens! What a thought! Must a suffragette have flat feet and a pug-nose? It isn't really a question of votes; it's a question of broadening out our philosophy and making the world more happy. There will be no more Hohenzollerns once we take a hand in the legislation of the world.'

'I'll vote for you—by Jove, I will!'

'How nice of you!' said Marjory, smiling sweetly and collecting her umbrella, gloves, &c.

'Must you go?' I asked regretfully. The discussion had been so interesting.

'Oh yes; we're on duty at four. Now, good-bye, Mr Brown.—Good-bye, Mr Jones.'

'Good-bye. Oh, by the way'——

'What?'

'Will you come to tea again?'

'Delighted. . . . Good-bye.' And away she and her sister went—a couple of dream-pictures in the garb of the V.A.D. As they disappeared I turned to Beefy and said, 'Well, old chap, what about women now?'

'Marvellous! Marvellous!'

I thought so too, for I had been thinking hard about Adela.

Was she flirting with the Australians?

(*Continued on page 92.*)

SHADOWS.

LINES WRITTEN IN ILLNESS.

I LIE and watch the shadows on the wall—
Strange shapes of bird and beast that come and go;
They are but faery-forms of things I know—
The firelight flickers redly over all.

It is too dark to read; I lie and dream.
Without, the night has lit the first pale star;
Peace in my chamber reigns. The things that are
Are mingled strangely with the things that seem.

Life is but half a dream, wherein we see
The shadows of those things we may not know;
Yet do we trust the forms that come and go
Hold forth a promise of a world to be—

And, till the creeping darkness covers all,
We lie and watch the shadows on the wall.

ALLAN SANDERSON.

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HOW THE WAR CAME HOME.

By LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT, Late Chaplain to the Forces, Author of *The Heart of a Soldier*, &c.

WHEN the harvest was deepening into rusted gold, I was resting in the sweet repose of a Scottish glen, and my heart became like a chamber of imagery, a place of many pictures, remembering what those four full years had held for the world. I asked myself often how this thing began. And I recalled several of the ways in which the war had come home.

I.

At the outbreak of war I was living on a little rocky islet, in a wild, long arm of the Scottish western seas. On either side of the loch rise high mountains, solemn and wonderful. A great pass, cleft through the granite wall, carries the highest road in Scotland, now long unfrequented, along its steep side. Sometimes the gap is filled with dripping mist, dark, weird, and terrible; and sometimes the sunshine leaps like a cascade through it; and then cloud-shadows dance. It is as though the heroes of ancient legend were at sport on the forsaken track which long ago was dragged through the glen, as men would drag a rope over a rocky ledge. Among those peaks lies the paradise of deer, and a vast desolation stretches where the quiet sheep browse. And at night, Heaven knows what ghosts whisper and gibber by black pools that glimmer in the dark, not a ripple disturbing the wide glower of stars, shining, sky-deep, in the peat water. Out beyond the mouth of the loch stretches the Island of Mist, the home of my heart, and of my blood-folk—serrated peaks of dim, beaten silver against a sky of pearl. From that crag in the sea we look upon it all, getting out of our beds to watch the wave lift the moonlight along with it as it babbles among the stones, stealing the lambent tenderness of the night into the caverned gloom that lies about the rocky walls. And we listen to the swift feet of the fresh tide running in, over the tired shoulders of the other that crawls out wearily towards the main. There is nothing else to do there but to look and to dream. Nothing could be more remote from world-jealousies and world-strife.

The corn was yellowing towards harvest when the blast of war broke across the glens. I heard a woman singing on a hillside just the evening before it came, as the gloaming shadows trailed along the shore. I do not think that any since then have heard a woman sing all through that land. And I do not believe that any woman will sing in our generation there again. For the soul of the Highland womanhood is watching, with low, soft crooning, from which the tears are winnowed, by graves in shell-torn battlefields, forsaken, over the seas. There is not a woman stooping to-day over the binding of the sheaves in Highland fields but when she rises looks across the water as though for a returning sail.

All that war means in the offset swooped down upon us in one hour. Day and night we heard the trains on the mainland carrying southward the brave lads from the wave-swept Hebrides. The call entered every little straw-roofed cottage and every stately home alike. It touched the sportsman on the moors and the fisher out upon the deep. It brought the lad in from the croft, the father from beside his little babe new-born, the mourner from the open grave. It woke the sleeper with its urgent clutch upon the arm, saying, 'Come.' And they looked around the world that meant everything to them, and went off into the cloud that so soon was to envelop all the earth.

Then came the cry of Lovat and Lochiel for men to follow them, as of old, to the fight. When that cry went up the glens in 1745, for the sake of the ancient Stewart dynasty, outcast from its throne, hundreds of Frasers and Camerons leapt across the heather to the banners of their chiefs. But a hundred years ago began the clearing of the quiet places for sheep-runs and for deer, and the Highlands of to-day are desolate. The folks were driven out of their crofts in thousands, to the rocky shores, or oversea. So the deer heard the cry of the chiefs, and wondered. And the sheep browsed where the clansmen had been. And the nettle waved on the wall of the roofless shealing. But the men who were still left in the clachan arose, and went away to get ready for the battle. And the children of those who had been scattered far through the world left their prairie homes, returning for the Old Land in the day of stress.

What a change came over everything then! Myself, going south to the call, saw, as the train

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swept by, the old folks out in the fields, wearily and slowly at work among the stooks.

Four years ago! And now hardly a house yonder but has one dead, to remember with a sigh. And for many all the youth, which was their hope, is lying asleep under the crosses, or without a grave, in the lands of war, far remote from the quiet homes among our mountains. Alas! the old folks in the fields—the gray ones at the firesides—the little children wondering at grown-up people's tears—and the girls, loverless, looking over the sea!

That was how war came home to us in the hill places first.

II.

And then we heard how suddenly our nation had stepped into the welter, and how swiftly she had sent to the help of the outraged nations what she had to send. It was not much that we had to give, but we gave it—some seventy thousand men, the 'Contemptible' Invincibles, never to be forgotten by any to whom the remembrance of the brave is a precious thing. There never was an army like that in the world, and there scarcely can be again—representing the acme of military training, the fullness of military experience, and the deepest secret of military endurance. They found themselves immediately up against an overwhelming force, fighting divisions where they expected brigades; and they had to go back, foot by foot, mile by mile, leaving their bloody prints as their ever-thinning line retired, until at last they stood, knowing it was the final barricade of resolve their backs were up against. So their aching feet took hold on sacrifice, and they died where they stood. Their graves are their witnesses for ever.

I think I see them when they left first for the front, stealing down in the dark, through the sleeping villages of England, to the sea. One can picture the unlighted windows of the quiet cottage homes, the autumn dust deep in the highways, the gloom of roads that led through glades of woodland, where the trees met above them as they marched with their faces towards the war. That ghostly marching, which enabled our army to be in Flanders before anybody woke to hear of it, stands out as one of the most dramatic episodes of the great tragedy of our time.

I crossed the Channel in the troopship *City of Benares* on Christmas Eve 1914, and, midway, met the meaning of war face to face in the night, when slowly, illumined with lamps, like stars, the hospital-ship *Asturias* came athwart our course, with her burden of stricken men, gathered up from the Valley of the Shadow. We never forgot her, for she was no casual wayfarer, whom one passed without knowledge, on the midnight highway. She was the Sister of Mercy of the seas; and many a soldier blessed her as she passed upon the waters, and wondered, with sudden pain, when he heard how the hard-hearted enemy had sunk her in the deep. And the meaning of this war fell upon us, as with wounding, once again.

They sent our men out silently; and, save for their own songs and the scrunch of their feet on the roads of France and Flanders, silence went with them. I remember seeing them filling the streets of French towns as they silently, in the dark, moved forward; and I think there can be no more grimly doom-like thing than the great khaki lines going on, with not a note of music to hearten them. When the first band came to Havre in 1915, it was like a blast of cheer to all. There is nothing that so lifts the weary feet which have fallen out of rhythm, or awakes the heart that is drowsing towards exhaustion, on the march, like the voice of the trumpet, the beat of the drum, or the cry of the Highland bagpipe.

And, in the field, the war came home to me again and again. As I walked along the trenches, or sat and spoke with the men, or, with them, flattened myself against the muddy wall of a dirty ditch in Flanders while the trench-mortars or 'whiz-bangs' shook our little world of pain and dying; or went with them when they went to die—when they spoke to me of home and the hearts they loved; or when the deep silence of understanding lay between us, deep as the flood-tide, with tenderest thought; or when they lay beside me, broken with bloody ruin of manhood, ah, love of Christ! how the war spoke to my heart!

III.

It came again to me, its great, vast, inexhaustible meaning, when I saw the men in America, marching down Fifth Avenue, bronzed from the camps, ready to cross the seas. And the Jews enrolled to serve in Palestine touched the picture with an old-world significance. And then when I crossed with the ships that brought the thousands back to Columbus's ancient world to fight for liberty, returning in the ways Columbus went, to show the Old World that they had discovered a greater wonder than he had—the broad gladness of a vast freedom, without which assured to him no man can truly live.

IV.

Just the other day I sat in a green place, in a public garden, above the city of Edinburgh, and looked across that wonderful ancient place, over which lie such memories of a romantic past. The eye moved from ridge to ridge, from the battlemented towers that crown the Castle Rock, to the blue line that stretches off to the horizon, beyond the Bass Rock and the Isle of May, out to where the sleepless ships are watching the highways of the deep. How still it was! A gray lady in mourning wearily walked along, lost in thought. A man, with the sure touch of age upon him, passed. Then, after a long interval, a young fellow with wound-stripes on his arm, and a woman with a little child by

her side. And that garden used to have crowds in it! At intervals the sound of the laughter of children was wafted to me, breaking on the stillness, from streets somewhere, out of sight, where they played. And a distant dying march of pipers was blown in gusts across the town—the old battle-strain of Donald Dubh, that for so long has made the feet of the brave keep time together, hastening to battle.

It was like a city under a spell, a glamour of gray sadness lying over it, somehow, even in the sunshine. The tall houses seemed to be listening for some strangely hushing word—the tall houses, with so many firesides now lonely for ever; with windows that women looked from, through eyes out of which the light has faded—with hearts which the sniper in Flanders pierced with the same bullets that struck down the blue-eyed Scottish lads who were their hope and joy.

Away to my right rose the many-towered school of Fettes, which has given all its youth to the sacrifice. Seven boys who were heads of that college in the past seven years are sleeping to-day beside their comrades oversea. In front of me lay the dome of the University, from which went every life that could, so full of promise for the intellectual progress of our age, willing to die for liberty.

I looked down upon houses which I knew had been darkened, and on one home that lost in a single hour its two brave sons in the great German drive of spring. I remember their father, aged with a sudden sorrow, saying to me, as he looked upon me with eyes that could not weep, 'I am sorry for Peter. He would be so grieved to die in a retreat. He would not have grudged his life if it had been in an advance he fell.' And house upon house, besides, I saw, saddened by the loss of only sons, in whom ended the story of long and ancient lines.

V.

And then, down where the corn was ripening for the reaper beside a great Scottish river, the sigh of whose passing spoke to me day and night of peace, the war was brought home to me still. Stately woodlands grow along the lofty river-banks, and ancient homes of noted names gleam through the trees. Broad acres lie around them, and the feet of men with names familiar on the lips of history trod their rooms. But in every one of them the blinds are drawn, the hearths are cold, the homes forsaken. Grass grows in the winding avenues. The leaves fall silently, and where they fall they lie. The high-roads stretch through quiet fields into hills of silence. For the men, rich and poor, are all away; and they who lived in these old places will never come back again. Through the sunshine and the shadow of the long years, the flushing and the fading of Scottish summer-times, the glow of dreamy autumns, and the winter storms, they will come back no more, nor see the valleys that they love, the river ever precious to their soul, the home of heart's desire. Now and again the arrow overleaps the seas, sometimes all the way from the distant East, and touches a cottage roof in the village, and the children going to school whisper the name of the brave lad who is dead. And a mother flings her apron over her face, and rocks herself to and fro, in restless longing for the unreturning. In glens, where the sheep so lately filled the world with wailing for their lambs snatched from them, quiet-faced women set the lighted lamp in the window ere they remember that he of whom they thought will need it no more to guide him home.

VI.

My God! shall it ever be again? One who had been a captive in the land of the enemy since the dark day of Mons wrote the other day: 'I am weary often, but I know the dawn is coming. For I have faith in my country.' That is the spirit that kept us going on. There can be no pity for those who, of evil aforethought, have widowed the heart of the world. But our children's children, if there be any—what of them? On their day nothing like this must dawn. The clean nations of the earth must smite hands on this. To-day we face the driving back of hell into its black shame finally. We write our compact in our best-loved blood. We bind ourselves, as with cords of lives most precious. Wrong shall be buried in its grave in hell when the boys come marching home. But from that grave there must be no resurrection. The stone of completed judgment must be sealed upon the mouth of it for ever and for ever. And whoso tries to lift that stone the world shall grind into bloody dust, without pity or remede.

That is what the war has brought home to us. The hope of men looks for a dawn over the waters to-day; and, thank Heaven, it does not look in vain.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER VII.

NO light was thrown on the death of the foreign sailor, nor was he identified. I paid several visits to the police authorities, and found that no one had taken the trouble to look at the body of the murdered man. In two or three days the newspapers exploited a new sensation, forgetting the Durham Street affair as speedily as, in turn, they forgot its successor. Yet a vague uneasiness, a feeling which had its root in something deeper than curiosity, clung

to me. I could not shake myself free from the shadow of the night of the fog. Hitherto I had not believed in the theory that most men think that they possess the makings of a detective; but my vanity had been touched by my having been hoodwinked in the matter of the cabinet, and now I confess that I caught myself scrutinising every red-haired man whom I saw, and looking out warily for the next one. I do not know how many innocent citizens I must have scanned—some hundreds, I should say—but I saw nobody even remotely resembling my quarry, until one day, about dusk, a man with a short, scrubby, reddish beard gave me, as he passed, a significant and furtive glance. Instantly I turned and followed him. He threw a swift look over his shoulder and went down a quiet side-street; but, so far from quickening his pace, he came almost to a standstill at a shop window. Obviously he was in no hurry to get away. On the contrary, he was waiting for me, and with every appearance of equanimity. Our interview lasted for about ten seconds, for he proved to be a fifth-rate bookmaker's tout. Leaving him soldered to the spot by my language, I resolved to have done with amateur detective work.

There was enough anxiety to be faced in my own affairs without bothering, as Tony put it, about 'murders that didn't belong to me.' The wolf was getting nearer the door, and there were no prospects of work coming my way. But I trod my daily beat between my rooms and the Parliament House, keeping a stiff upper lip, hoping against hope that matters would somehow or other right themselves, and, if worried, was never downcast, although I had many a bad quarter of an hour and many bitter moments of self-criticism. Once I thought of applying for a vacant legal post in a fever-haunted, Godforsaken equatorial swamp; but as there was always the chance that I might get it, I hesitated. For once indecision belied its reputation and did its victim a good turn, for while I was balancing the pros and cons I received a telegram which put consideration of everything except the immediate present into the background. It was from my uncle, and ran: 'Come at once, if possible. Business urgent.' I sent off a reply, and took the first train North, wondering what the urgency was, and troubled by renewed fears regarding the colonel's health.

After Perth I got a carriage to myself in the early morning train, and had a sound sleep, waking up to the greeting of a fine Highland spring day as the train panted up the Drumochter.

Old Angus Macbain was waiting at the station with the dog-cart. Angus was 'handy-man' at The Bield, and no one ever earned the description better. He had been in my uncle's regiment, and having returned to his native glen after many years' service, was whole-heartedly devoted to his master. Angus could tie a fly with any one on Spey. He had been a fine shot and stalker in his day; and now, a benevolent despot, he looked after the lodge, helped in the stables, and, by way of recreation, 'took an interest' in the garden and tended a little croft of his own. A thirty years' war with a long succession of maids at The Bield had left him an unvanquished and grizzled bachelor.

His account of my uncle relieved me. 'The colonel iss well,' he informed me; 'yess, and ferry well. Indeed, it iss a long time since I wass seeing him so well. To pe sure, he will not pe having the long days on the hill he once wass, but him and me iss no so young now.'

'Indeed, it is a long time since you taught me the Spey cast, Angus. But I heard that my uncle had not been quite well.'

'He would pe keeping that to himself, then. Indeed, I have seen nothing wrong with him. If he hass no peen himself, he hass not troubled other folk with it. But that iss the kind of him! You will be telling me, Mr Neil, if he iss no well. It iss thirty years come Martinmas since I have been with him, and there iss no man like him.'

'I know it, Angus! Be sure that I shall tell you; but, from what you say, the colonel must be as fit as his years warrant.'

Much relieved by the thought that the state of my uncle's health was not the cause of my summons to The Bield, my spirits mounted wonderfully. Every yard of the drive was a delight. The morning was bright and serene to the zenith. The atmosphere, tingling, sparkling with the tonic quality of dry champagne, was so clear that distances seemed lessened, and familiar features of the strath stood out clean-cut and strangely near. In the windless air the Cairngorms, for once, were clear of mist to the high tops, their dark fastnesses and ramparts in abrupt contrast with the steel-blue canopy of the sky. I could pick out the bright threads of the hill-burns that are for ever running down their silver ladders, the green spires of well-remembered woods, and many a spur scaled by me when, an eager youngster, I had been out on the range in all weathers from Airgiod Meall to Ord Ban. Nearer gleamed my native river, its green haughs speckled with crofts, little blue stalks of peat-reek rising from them in the still air; above them, tier upon tier, their immemorial guardian mountains, awakening in me, as they always do, a strange inward incommunicable sense of wonder and solace. The beauty, the peace of it all was like a cool hand laid on hot, tired eyes. 'A soul-bathe.' I had almost forgotten Dr Hall's phrase; but now it was recalled, and it lingered with me until we turned into the avenue of The Bield and I was greeting its owner.

Old Angus was right. My uncle looked in his ordinary good health. He was, perhaps, a trifle more bent, and showed a few more white hairs; but his eye was undimmed, and his voice had

the same kind and mellow ring in it as of old. Any fears I had vanished at the sight of him.

'I'm heartily glad you are able to be here, my boy,' he said, running a kindly, scrutinising, blue eye over me. 'First of all, breakfast! The business I want to tell you about will keep until you have sampled Janet's eggs and bacon; and then, no doubt, you'll want to have a stroll round the old place and get rid of some of the town's cobwebs. Afterwards I'll let you hear a yarn, and ask you a favour.'

'Command me, and I will do anything in my power,' I said, with all my heart.

'I know I can count on you, Neil. The yarn I'm going to spin is a curious one. Come into my room after you have had a look round, and I'll let you hear what I have to say.'

Breakfast over, I spent a pleasant half-hour going round the old place, and renewing my youth in the process. I interviewed old Janet, most faithful of henchwomen and best of cooks. I called at the kennels with an offering of bones for the slobbering and friendly pointers, walked round the garden and the tree-fringed lochan near the house where I had caught my first trout, heard the old call of the river, and looked down the valley to the little kirk's steeple, the cluster of village roofs, and many another well-remembered ancient landmark of boyhood and home.

My uncle was waiting for me in his room when I came back to the house. 'The Laird's Room' (as it is called) demands description. It plays an important part in this chronicle.

The Bield originally had been in form a long, narrow parallelogram, its entrance facing almost due south. About thirty odd years ago some damage was caused by a fire, and my uncle, when rebuilding, carried out several alterations and improvements, the most important being an addition of a couple of wings. We are concerned with the eastern wing only. In its south-eastern corner, on the ground floor, is the drawing-room; and running along the wing, in succession from the drawing-room, their windows facing eastward, are a little-used writing-room, the library, and at the north-eastern corner 'the Laird's Room.' Branching off to the left at the end of the corridor is a small apartment used as a gunroom. The storey above consists of dressing-rooms and bedrooms, my uncle's bedroom being in a turret room immediately above the drawing-room. The wing is shaped something like a key, the south-east corner forming the end of the handle, and 'the Laird's Room' and the gunroom the other end of the key.

'The Laird's Room,' lit by a large window in the centre of its eastern wall, is a nondescript apartment, a mixture of lounge, study, and smoking-room. Its door is in the corner of an L-shaped corridor, and a few yards farther along the corridor is the gunroom door. Deer and sea-otter skins cover the floor. Half of its eastern wall is lined with book-shelves, and round the room hang two or three portraits, a few good sporting prints, and some grinning heads, trophies of the colonel's younger days.

My uncle, unlike the majority of soldiers, was never a stickler for tidiness. He had bachelor ways of his own, and the maids had strict injunctions to leave his belongings just where they were, whether the room required to be dusted or not. In consequence, one found books on the floor, papers littered in odd corners, and a mantelshelf laden with a timepiece, companionable-looking cigar-boxes, tobacco-jars, salmon and trout flies, old photographs, and odds and ends. The furniture, too, was a curious jumble. A fine old bureau was flanked by pretentious chairs of Tottenham Court Road descent—uneasy-looking vulgarians. A Jacobean arm-chair beside the big open fireplace had as *vis-à-vis* a veteran Crimean sofa, a horror in horse-hair. Exquisite pieces of old china were jostled by cheap and impudent imitations and Japanese trumperies, hideous enough to set one's teeth on edge; but with all their haphazard company of furniture and bric-à-brac, my uncle's quarters were the acme of comfort and cheerfulness.

(*Continued on page 104.*)

BUDDHIST MONASTERIES.

By David Boyle.

THERE is no more familiar sight to any who have travelled in Burma than the collection of buildings that house the devotees of Buddha. From the more pretentious and artistic structures, built of solid teak, or even brick, to be found in the towns or the flourishing agricultural or riverine villages, to the humble bamboo hut, with its straw-thatched roof, met with in the remoter parts of the country, there is scarcely a village, or even a hamlet where only a few families are gathered together, that does not support its monastery.

Primarily built by pious donors, and set apart as the abode of ascetics desirous of following in the footsteps of their great Master, the monastery yet serves several useful purposes in the social life of the people. Perhaps its chief claim on them is that it forms the village school, through which every male child of the community passes during some period of his earlier years. Here he is taught to read and to write, and when sufficiently advanced in these accomplishments, passes on to the rudiments of arithmetic. Hence we find that, whilst in India

scarcely one male in ten can read and write, in Burma the percentage of literate males is between forty and fifty—probably more if Buddhists alone are taken; this at least was true up to ten years ago.

Another useful purpose served by the monastery is that of hostel or resting-place for the stranger and the traveller, whether he be European or native, and whatever his religion. Standing in its own grounds, usually marked off by a fence, the monastery is generally situated on the outskirts of the village, and is surrounded by shade-giving and fruit-bearing trees. Should the village be a flourishing one, the superimposed roofs and gabled tower of the main building, rising high above the trees, make it the most conspicuous feature in the village landscape, and mark its situation to the weary and footsore traveller long before he reaches its hospitable precincts. There are, indeed, few sights more calculated to revive one's flagging energies towards the end of a long day's march, with the evening closing in, than suddenly to spy afar off the gilded top of some monastery spire shimmering in the last rays of the setting sun. As one approaches one is struck with the neatness and order that pervade the grounds, scattered about in which are a number of wooden or bamboo shelters, some open on all sides, with merely a roof and a raised floor, and some with partial walling thrown up—'Zayats' (literally, the place of stopping for food). It is in these shelters the traveller, without let or hindrance, finds his resting-place, and even his food, from the monastic store, should he be without the means of obtaining any.

The interior of the monastery itself gives the impression of one large room broken at the sides by a few partitions shutting off some smaller chambers. Usually a wide and covered-in veranda surrounds it on all four sides, where the monks are accustomed to take their exercise. In some conspicuous part of this interior is to be found the image of the great Buddha, of brass or soapstone, with its carved supports or fronting steps glazed by the wax of many candles. Some half-burnt, flickering candles will be found there impaled on spikes, and flowers in bunches everywhere, their petals blowing idly across the floor. Perhaps, if one waits long enough, one will see an anxious village mother come in and, placing her child on the ground, kneel a while in prayer, to rise strengthened with a part of the great peace. At early morn or at evening, just when the sun falls behind the western hills, the deep melody of a song rings out, and priests and scholars meet in weirdly rhythmic chants of prayer. The whole village life centres round the monastery, and in return fuel and water, needed labour and materials, are supplied by the villagers at the command of the headman; nor are these unpleasing tasks, for one acquires merit by working for the religious rulers. Daily at earliest dawn, just when the white mists begin to fade before the sun's first finger of gold, a little procession will leave the monastery, composed of yellow-robed priests, with big earthenware bowls, accompanied by small boys beating a little gong. They slowly pass up and down the streets, while women come out and fill the bowls with rice and vegetable foods; meat they may not eat, for Buddha forbade the taking of life.

The monastery, too, is the council-chamber of the elders, who meet there in the long hot-weather evenings, and sit in circles discussing the latest news, perhaps of village, perhaps of national, import. Little risings of discontent are sometimes fostered in the monasteries, whose rulers, if under unsympathetic magistrates (happily rare), feel their old power and influence undermined, and so, when peace and liberty are at stake, the power of the Buddhist Church and the yellow robe in all the towns and villages of Burma is a vital factor in the destinies of the people.

Now the war is over, the old half-buried peacefulness will return, and under the shaded buildings, where the gold mohur drops her crimson petals to mingle with the golden rain of the 'padouk' trees, the elders will talk with wonder of the world war that swept away so many lives into the Nirvana of peace.

A FORTUNATE MISFORTUNE.

PART II.

I.

ESDAILE and Peggy drew close to the peat fire, for, though it was summer, the evenings were chilly in this region. They had plenty to say to each other. Adventure had made them intimate, but the girl did not know how much of herself and her hard, courageous life she was unconsciously revealing. Meanwhile he let her learn little about himself.

'Couldn't you have done better than accept such a miserable berth?' he asked her. 'Couldn't you have a real holiday first, at any rate, so as to get well?'

She shook her head. 'No, I really couldn't. I expect you are rich, and know only rich people, so you will not understand what "not affording" things means.'

He laughed. 'Rich! Why, I consider myself fearfully hard-up.'

'Are you?' she cried, opening her eyes wide with surprise. 'I should never have guessed it!

You—you don't *look* like a poor man. I should have thought you went to a—perhaps a Regent Street tailor. Besides, you told me you had a flat in Kensington. They cost a lot. Unless,' she added naïvely, 'you mean *West* Kensington.'

'No,' he said, laughing still more, 'I didn't mean West Kensington.'

'And you talked of your club. I always supposed clubs were very expensive. Not that I know anybody who lives in the West End and belongs to a club.'

He was looking very much amused. 'Perhaps our standards may be a little different. Now, what do you consider a "rich" person's income would be?'

She pondered. 'Well—of course, there are people, like Miss Mackenzie, who have *enormous* fortunes; but a family who had seven or eight hundred pounds a year would be *very* well off, wouldn't they? And a bachelor—couldn't a bachelor live most comfortably on three hundred pounds? My father left mother only two hundred a year. That is not enough for her and Ellen and Bob; for Bob doesn't keep himself yet, though he earns a good deal. You see, I am obliged to do something to save my board and pay for my dress.'

'But, my dear child, you can't dress on twelve pounds a year!'

'Oh yes, in the country. My last situation was quite well-paid, and I saved some money. I know it is not much'——

'Much! It is a disgraceful sum for a rich woman to offer a lady. Do you know, Miss Peggy, I happen to be acquainted with Miss Mackenzie.'

She started, and a quick look of pleasure flashed over her face. 'Are you? Were you going there now?' Then an expression of dismay succeeded. 'Oh, but'——

'Well, what's wrong?'

'I—I should not have said what I did, what I had heard, if I had known. I told you she was selfish and mean'——

'Why shouldn't you have said it?'

'Of a friend of yours?'

'I didn't say Miss Mackenzie was a friend of mine.'

'But you were going to see her. I supposed you must be a friend.'

'There's such a thing as *les beaux yeux de la cassette*.'

'I don't know what you mean.'

'No, I dare say you don't.'

'If you didn't like her, why should you visit at her place? For shooting?'

'Perhaps—partly—let us say so. I think she likes me, rather. But I am not at all sure now that I shall go on and visit her. Perhaps I have had a warning to go back. I advise you to do the same.'

'Oh, how could I?' she said sadly. 'I told you mother is poor.'

'I do not think it would be difficult to find a situation quite as well-paid and generally desirable,' he said dryly.

'But I promised to go there.'

'You did not calculate on a spill.'

'If I go on, will you?' she asked with innocent entreaty.

'Why should you wish me?'

'It would be easier for me. I—I seem now to know you quite well.'

'It is odd. I feel the same towards you, little girl. Indeed, I fancy I know *you* a great deal better than you do me. Possibly you are not difficult to understand. You have nothing you're ashamed of showing, perhaps.'

'No. But I think you have not either.'

'Ah, you know so much about life and men, don't you?' He spoke, she thought, sadly. He kept his eyes on her. She suddenly felt shy, and looked away. 'I believe I could both shock and surprise you.'

'I suppose I don't know much about life, indeed,' she said, apparently addressing the fire; 'nothing at all of the sort of life you must lead. I have never known any men well but father. Bob is only a boy still. Father had had great disappointments and failures, and he was rather melancholy and reserved. I have never met any one like you to talk to.'

'Well, come now, I told you I was hard-up. What should you say that meant?'

She blushed. 'It's ridiculous to ask *me*, who have never been anything but poor! I dare say what seems riches to me would be poverty to you. I suppose, if you live where you say and go about a great deal, you may spend what would appear enormous to me.'

'Well, tell me, would you call a man in town living in decent rooms and going out a good deal, as you say, poor on six hundred pounds a year or so?'

She stared at him in blank surprise. 'Poor! On six hundred pounds a year? For one man? Oh, I can't think how you can spend it!'

'I assure you I don't find that difficult. Would you marry cheerfully and expect to have a comfortable home on that income? Our talk is getting rather sordid, isn't it?'

She laughed at his question. 'How strange it is that two people should think so differently! I don't suppose I shall ever marry—that does not come my way; but I know I could manage well on much less than six hundred pounds a year.'

'And live in a little house in Clapton or Kilburn?'

'Yes. I suppose that sounds dreadful to you.'

'I don't know. I could imagine a fellow might not be so very miserable—on certain conditions. It would a good deal depend on the person one lived with, eh?'

'Yes,' she admitted softly. 'It might not be

—riches. One might want a little more—some day.'

'Still, you think six hundred pounds a year, to begin with—and prospects—would be wealth to you?'

'Oh yes.'

'Suppose—suppose a fellow with ten thousand a year proposed to marry you, what then?'

'What an absurd idea!' she cried, with pink cheeks. 'Utterly impossible. I never even met such a man; and if I did, would he think of me?'

'But "suppose," as children say—if he did?'

'If I liked him'——

'Put that on one side. Think of ten thousand a year.'

'I can't put it on one side. I could not marry any one unless I—liked him.'

'You consider it would be wrong—wicked?'

'Of course,' she assented quickly. 'Of course it would be wicked to marry any one for money.'

'And would you think it wicked of *me* to marry some one for money?'

'If you disliked her—— But we are talking nonsense. You would not do it.'

'Wouldn't I? Do you know, you nice little girl, I am afraid if you really knew me you would think me wicked.'

'No, no; don't say so,' she said in a distressed voice. 'Please, don't. I know you are not.'

'How?'

'You have been very good to me.'

'I have done nothing for you yet, but I should like to be good to you, Peggy. Let me call you Peggy to-night. I have only known you a day, it is true; but we have been oddly thrown together. I am much older than you. I am thirty-five, and you are twenty. I mean no harm. You won't be angry?'

'I am sure of that,' she said gently, still looking at the fire. 'You may call me Peggy.'

'Well, Peggy, do you know, I never in all my life made friends with a girl like you.'

'How like me? I am not in the least uncommon.'

'Aren't you? Well, all I can say is, I never met a girl so candid, so good, so kind as you are. A girl who thinks first of what is right rather than of what is pleasant.'

'Oh,' she said, blushing furiously, 'I am not all that! How can you know what I really am?'

'How can I know, little girl? Why, your heart looks out of your sincere eyes and sounds in your voice. Nothing base, nothing selfish, could live in your heart. I read your character as if it were printed in an open book in a language I understand. You have told me about your life—of your mother's hard struggle—that you have done your little best to help her; how you have been always short of money, of pleasure, of luxury, of joy. Most girls I know grasp those things as their right'——

'I have had pleasures, though,' she murmured. 'I really have!'

He smiled. 'What would a society girl say to them, I wonder? The gallery of a theatre at Christmas, eh? A little suburban dance? Well, you have trusted me so far, and I feel it very, very good and friendly of you. Now, I should like, in my turn, to tell you a few things, to make a confession of a life that I am afraid will seem a poor, cowardly, selfish affair to you. I fancy it would be a help, a relief, to me. This meeting of ours has been so different from any I ever had with a girl. I can't but remember that you and I went very near death together. We might have gone out into an untried country, like that poor fellow. Somehow that's got hold of me.' He had dropped his voice; it was grave and low, and thrilled with real feeling, no longer *blasé* or cynical. His dark, tired, deep-set eyes searched the clear liquid brown of hers. They reminded him of pure, clear water which reflected sunshine. 'May I be an egoist for a little while, and tell you what a poor sort of chap I am, Peggy?'

'Oh yes,' she answered, and her voice was low and fervent too. 'I shall not find it egotistical. I do not believe you are that.'

'I am. I am indeed. I have been a spoilt child, never patient with anything going wrong. I am at the Bar; but, though I got a good start (my father was a judge), I never worked hard, and did not trouble much about briefs. If my bread had depended on it I might have done well, for I'm no fool; but my father left me six hundred pounds a year, and—though you think it riches for a bachelor, and I don't—it was enough to free me from working when I didn't want. You do think it riches?'

'Well,' she said, 'you must remember I have never been used to society. We are poor, simple people. Is it *really* not enough for you?'

'Well, when one's rooms are one hundred pounds, and there's clothes and club and food and endless other things—travelling, pleasure, smokes—it doesn't seem to go very far. Anyhow, the money goes. It's habit, like everything else, and selfish. I'm abnormally selfish. You may shake your head, little girl. It's true! I'm only not too selfish to know what I am. So I made up my mind, when I married, not to look out for just the girl I could care for—not a girl who would be sweet to me and for me—but just a woman *with money*.' He said it with grim sincerity; but when Peggy started away from him with a look of pain and shock, a wave of compunction, of shame, and of wild longing shook his soul.

'You wouldn't do *that!*' she cried.

'I *was* going to do just that,' he said fiercely, but the fierceness was not for her. 'Last season I was thrown together a great deal with this Miss Mackenzie, the heiress. Some friends of mine she was staying with started the idea.

They knew I talked of marrying money; they believed the lady liked me, and perhaps had no objection to being married. That sounds caddish; but remember this is my confession, and I'm just telling naked truth. She was pleasant to me; of course I did my best to please her. I did not dislike her. We met in a house-boat at Henley. That meant a good deal of intimacy. I won't say I didn't make a sort of love to her; but I shied at the last bald "Will you have me?" I was called away. Before I left she asked me to Glenfaden. When we were chucked off the coach I was just meditating on the oddness of things—that you were going as an employee of the woman I meant to propose to. What you said about her was the first unpleasant shock, and fell on my scheme like cold water. And now, Peggy, tell me truly just exactly what you think of a fellow who had made up his mind to ask a woman to marry him because — and only because—she has ten thousand pounds a year and he wants it. Wouldn't it be quite as praiseworthy to be a highwayman and hold a pistol to a lady's head for her jewel-case?'

'Oh,' she panted, 'but you wouldn't! You're not really in earnest. You wouldn't do it!'

'Upon my word, I was going to Glenfaden just to do that.'

'But now'—she was still breathless—'now you have thought about it—been so near death—you won't do it!'

'I will go back to London—if you will go with me'—leaning forward so that he could see her face, and thrusting his foot into the red embers to see it better. 'See here; we both have a chance of reconsidering. Give up Miss Mackenzie and her twelve pounds, and I will give up Miss Mackenzie and her ten thousand.'

'But,' she said, half-sobbing, 'I must do something.'

He got up quickly and said in a suddenly light manner, 'Oh, I know heaps of people. I promise I'll get you something better than that. Think it over to-night. We'll meet and talk about it to-morrow. You're looking worn out; you must go to bed and try if you can sleep. I'll have a stroll and a smoke. Good-night.'

He nodded and went out abruptly. Peggy wondered if he could be offended. He was odd; he never shook hands. She felt a little unhappy, too excited to sleep. She tossed on a hard bed till dawn.

II.

The low morning sun had dyed the hillsides, the waste of heather, the climbing copses of fir and birch, as it were, with rosy wine. The air was as wine too. All things were made new in the stainless purity of a late summer's dawning.

Esdaile, who had slept but little, woke with a sudden desire to see how the world looked in its awakening. He generally faced it when all things were stale and commonplace. The pungent sweetness of the air, cold as a child's fancy of love, struck on his face, and he took in a long draught of heather-flavoured nectar. Everything wore a rosy glamour, touched by the light finger-tips of Aurora. The good old earth, the beautiful old earth, seemed young as Hope. And there was Peggy. He had wanted her so much, he was sure she would be there! Peggy, sweet as the morning and touched with its rose, her eyes no longer the eyes of a child, but shyly conscious, averted from his. She had lost her childish dreams, and was afraid of a woman's dreams. In a moment Murray Esdaile flung away all his doubts, his worldly fears and hopes, and knew himself and his purpose. He was in love with this little girl. He wanted her. He must have her! She must make a man of him, give him a life better worth living than he had ever dreamed. When they met he held out both his hands, and when hers answered them, trembling, he made her look at him. She saw what was coming, but her fear and her joy were so mixed, she did not know which it was that made her shake so.

'Peggy! Dear little Peggy — darling little Peggy, will you come back with me? Will you show me how to be worth your caring for? I will not go and sell myself to that woman. God has thrown us together for life—for salvation.'

'Oh,' she said in a sob, 'but you don't know me. I'm not fit.'

'It's I that am not fit. I know you can't really care for me yet; it's too soon. But let me take you home to your mother—let me only try to make you care—let me see you—take me on trial. That's all I ask, dear—all I ask now. No, it's not all, dear little girl, who look as sweet as the morning. You will let me kiss you, for indeed I love you. It's only a day as yet we've been together, but I want it to be for life.'

Peggy's soft lips, that had never been touched by a lover, did not refuse that first kiss which carried with it the promise of a new life.

III.

The next day Miss Mackenzie found in her newspaper the reason of Esdaile's non-appearance. The accident to the coach was described, the death of the driver. The paragraph went on to say that the passengers who were on it were, it was believed, not seriously hurt. A gentleman of the name of Esdaile, from London, two other gentlemen, and a young lady were travelling by the ill-fated coach.

'I wonder if the young lady is the girl I was expecting, and when Mr Esdaile will come on to-day,' Miss Mackenzie said to her old aunt. 'I hope he was really not hurt.'

But Mr Esdaile did not come that day or the next. Nor did Miss Dale.

But in a few days there came a letter:

'My dear Miss Mackenzie,—An accident, which for me might have been, but happily was not, a serious one, interrupted my journey to Glenfaden, where I was hoping to spend the visit you kindly proposed. I fear now this visit must be indefinitely postponed, as I find I shall be detained in town for some time. It was very good of you to invite me, and I hope on some future occasion to have the pleasure of seeing you again.—Believe me, gratefully and sincerely, Murray Esdaile.'

And there was a neatly written, rather childish little letter as well:

'Dear Madam,—I was a good deal shaken and a little hurt in the coach accident. I am advised to rest a little before I undertake any work, and I must ask you to be good enough to excuse my breaking my engagement to you. Yours truly, Margaret Dale.'

Miss Mackenzie threw down both notes in a temper.

'What can be the meaning of this? He's off with me, I suppose. Can there be anything between him and this girl? I dare say she's a little wretch.'

Her doubts were solved when she saw some six months after a notice in the *Times*:

'Esdaile—Dale.—At St —— Church, Clapton, by the Rev. John Robinson, Vicar, Murray Esdaile, of the Inner Temple, to Margaret, daughter of the late Richard Dale of —— Terrace, Clapton.'

'The fool!' Miss Mackenzie said, and threw the paper violently on the floor.

But it was the wisest thing that Murray Esdaile ever did!

THE END.

ST BARTHOLOMEW—A LITTLE-KNOWN FRENCH POSSESSION.

By the Rev. Montague L. Foyle.

The traveller who looks out on the Caribbean Sea from a suitable point in the highland of the British West Indian Island of St Christopher (or St Kitt's) sees a small archipelago that must have been the glory of the pirate and the privateer in the old and prosperous days of those islands. Several isolated rocks and cays are visible, and in addition there are four small inhabited islands, none of which is in British possession. Nearest of all, to the north-west, lies St Eustatius, separated from St Kitt's by a narrow, dangerous channel, only twelve miles wide. Twenty miles to the north-west of that island, there rises gaunt and clear out of the sea the rock of Saba, fit home for the race of hardy navigators who inhabit it. Then, thirty miles to the north of Saba, there is the island of St Martin. St Eustatius and Saba are owned by Holland; St Martin is equally divided between that country and France, the Dutch portion forming with the sister-islands the leeward group of the old Netherlands colony of Curaçao. The remaining island can be seen some thirty miles to the north of St Kitt's; it is called St Barth's—or, to give it its full title, St Bartholomew. Over its ruined fortifications there waves the Tricolour, and it is included with such other little-known spots as the northern half of St Martin and Marie Galante, in the important French colony of Guadeloupe, communication with the mother-island being maintained by a fortnightly mail schooner, which serves both St Bartholomew and French St Martin. The distance from the administrative centre of the colony is well over a hundred miles. St Barth's is only eight square miles in area, and twenty-four miles in circumference, and constitutes a commune of the colony, with its own mayor and representative on the Legislative Council.

Its early history is very obscure, but in all probability the island was first sighted and named by Columbus soon after the discovery of St Kitt's in 1493. It is reasonable supposition that he first saw it on St Bartholomew's Day of that year, and that, as in the case of St Vincent, the pious explorer, sailing under a banner blessed by the Pope, gave the island the name of the saint. For many years afterwards, in consequence of its small dimensions, the island was included with its larger neighbours in the various grants and compacts made for colonisation purposes. The year 1648 is generally given as the first definite date in its history. At that time St Kitt's was held jointly by the British and the French, signs of which occupation are to be found to the present day in the fact that the southern half of that island has such foreign names as Dieppe Bay, Cayon, and Basseterre; whilst the northern part has the familiar English names of Sandy Point, Old Road, and Half-Way Tree. It was from the French side of St Kitt's that there originated the first attempt to colonise St Barth's. Shortly after their installation the population was estimated at one hundred and seventy whites and fifty slaves, their principal wealth being sixty-four thousand coco-nut trees. But disaster soon fell upon the infant colony in the shape of invasion by a large number of Caribs, the original inhabitants of the West Indian Islands, now almost extinct save for a few preserved by the

British Government in Dominica. The poisoned arrows of these invaders played havoc with the population, and the settlement was wiped out. But by the generosity of the mother-country the island was repopulated, and in 1760 it was stated that there were nine hundred people on the island, of whom about one-half were whites.

Then, as now, the great recommendation of St Barth's was its beautiful land-locked harbour, small but commodious, offering an excellent base in early days for the pirate and for the fleet in the Napoleonic wars, and affording at any time exceptional shelter from the devastating West Indian hurricane. Whilst the climate is healthy, the soil of the island is not fertile, being entirely of a light sandy nature and very strongly impregnated with salt. The rainfall, on which the island is entirely dependent for water, is very scanty, and steep, abrupt ranges of hills are a serious impediment to cultivation. But the harbour prevented St Barth's from being overlooked in the days when the Caribbean Sea was the cockpit of the navies of the world, and its usefulness brought about a most interesting change of ownership. In 1785 the island became the property of Sweden, and had the distinction of being not only the sole West Indian possession of that country, but also her only colony. At that time Sweden, under the aggressive policy of Gustavus III., was making a bid for influence in European politics. One of her captains chanced to visit the island, and was struck with the undeveloped possibilities of the harbour. France, with her hands full in India, Canada, and elsewhere, was easily persuaded to sell, and so St Barth's changed hands. The Swedes took very kindly to their new possession, sending out a European governor, building a fort to guard the harbour-mouth, maintaining European soldiers, erecting a Lutheran church, establishing schools, and despatching an occasional warship on a tour of inspection. Once for a short time the British held the island, descending from St Kitt's and capturing it in the name of George III.; but it was soon restored to the Swedes. A missionary who visited the island at the beginning of the nineteenth century refers to 'the strangely mixed population of French, English, and Swedish speaking people.' But St Barth's never became thoroughly Swedish. The French had been in possession too long; the distance from Stockholm was too great; there was nothing to attract Swedes to the island; the cost of maintenance was heavy, and the revenue very small; and Sweden's dream of a colonial empire slowly vanished. So in 1877, after a plebiscite of the inhabitants, the island was restored to the French, in whose possession it has been ever since. The transfer was keenly resented by a small minority. On some modern maps St Barth's is still marked as Swedish, the fact of the rendition having escaped the notice of the projector.

The island is most emphatically one not likely to be included in any itinerary of the West Indies, and guide-books generally dismiss it in a few words. There is nothing to induce the tourist or the business man to risk the uncomfortable sloop journey from either Basseterre, St Kitt's, or St Thomas, the nearest steamer ports of call. Occasionally a collector of old furniture, a searcher for Carib remains, or a travelling dentist will pay a passing visit; but otherwise visitors are rare. Several times, in the course of ecclesiastical duty, the writer has crossed the dangerous channel from St Eustatius. The voyage has frequently been a wearying beat up against the wind, constant tacking necessitating double the actual distance being covered; whilst on two occasions the journey of twenty odd miles has taken forty hours, an experience in an open boat far too painful to be recommended. The little town and harbour of Gustavia is not easily made by a sailing-vessel, for the entrance is only about one hundred yards wide, and is protected by a dangerous reef of rocks. The scene inside the harbour is typically tropical—still, blue water; houses with red shingled roofs and white walls; a background of coco-nut palms, behind which are high hills, surmounted with pines. The town has a population of eight hundred, and consists of two rows of houses, bordering the three sides of the harbour. Its grass-grown streets bear such ambitious names as La Rue Thiers, La Place du Port, Rue Oscar II.; and it has its *mairie*, *poste*, and *gendarmerie*. Swedish remains are naturally very interesting, and are to be found in the ruined fort, of which the sentry-boxes are well preserved; the cemetery, with its few Swedish tombs—one of which records how the deceased, having faithfully served the King of Sweden, received the title of knight; the former house of the Swedish governor, now used as a court-house; and the ruins of the church. Only the belfry of the church now stands, and the great bell is rung each night at eight. There is also a small school, endowed in the old days, and still maintained by money sent out from Stockholm. And there are to this day a few inhabitants who refuse to accept the recession. To them Sweden is still their country, Gustavus V. their king; and whenever one of them dies, the Swedish bell is tolled. Such loyalty says much for what must have been a very beneficent administration.

But the interior of the island is the interesting part. There is a sharp distinction drawn by the inhabitants themselves between the urban and the country population. The townsmen conform to the usual characteristics of West Indian life, and consist of whites, coloured, and blacks, most of whom speak French and English; whilst the religious outlook is represented by Roman

Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist places of worship. A small proportion of the town residents, chiefly officials, have come direct from France. The war has touched this isolated spot in the presence of a few wounded soldiers from the Dardanelles. But the St Barth's countryman constitutes a distinct class, unlike anything to be found elsewhere in the West Indies. By far the majority of the settlers of 1648 were drawn from Brittany and Normandy, and despite centuries under a tropical sun, their descendants have retained, almost unimpaired, the characteristics of their forefathers. The traveller who climbs the narrow sandy track leading over the hills behind the town finds himself immediately transported to northern France. The whole country-side is populated by a white people, frugal in their habits, very clannish, hardy sailors, industrious cultivators, keen fishermen, devout Roman Catholics, understanding very little English, and speaking a patois akin to the Norman French spoken in England about the Conqueror's day. The women all wear the picturesque head-dress so familiar to those who have penetrated the interior of Brittany. As the traveller passes round the little, sun-baked island from settlement to settlement—Curaçao Bay, with its fishing-boats; Flambeau, with its small yam-cultivations; L'Orient, with its groves of coco-nuts, its large Roman Catholic church and school; and Saline, with its salt pond—he realises that only people as hardy as those descended from the industrious peasantry of north France could wring a living from so unfavourable a spot.

In common with so many of the smaller West Indian Islands, Ichabod must be written over the history of St Barth's. The island probably reached its highest prosperity in the days of the Swedes, and since then has steadily declined. The abolition of slavery, with its cheap and abundant labour, the complete absence of natural resources, the lack of capital, isolation, and constant emigration to America have all had a harmful effect. At present the island is simply held by France and worked by nobody. Gustavia is a free port, so that the mother-country does not even obtain revenue to assist in defraying the cost of administration. One cannot help looking at the badly silted and neglected harbour, and wondering if prosperity could not return through that source. If the port were properly dredged, the entrance widened, and the reefs blasted, the island might have a future as a base for small steamers and large sailing-vessels. Perhaps France may now find in her small possession scope for the energies of some of her demobilised *poilus*. Then St Barth's may flourish again.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER VII.—PSYCHOLOGY.

'WHAT'S the stunt to-day?' inquired Ginger one wet morning.

'Lecture,' I answered.

'What on?'

'Psychology.'

'A precious lot of psychology we'll get in this school. They know as much about it as they do about Mars. I'm fed up with these army lecturers. They make me sick. They're parrots, and all cribbing from one another.'

'But this is a new man.'

'Oh well, we'll give him a hearing,' said Ginger, picking up his notebook and sauntering over to the lecture-room.

What Ginger said was partly true, for many of the lecturers bored us stiff. A few of them were dug-outs who got their theories of modern war from the daily papers. Others were well-meaning men, but often they lacked originality. Army training had repressed their individuality, and they were apparently afraid to break conventions. When a good man did come along the dead-heads seemed to get jealous, and the brilliant rebel quietly disappeared. The army will not be an army proper till jealousy is made bad form.

When we had assembled Captain Cheerall entered briskly, looked at us—and—smiled. A good beginning! We decided not to sleep, but to plumb his depths.

'Gentlemen, you may smoke, if you like. I find it breeds a friendly feeling.'

'Good chap!' mumbled Beefy.

'Now that all your chimneys are going, I want to have a chat with you about Psychology; but before I start, let me say to you—don't hesitate to pull me up if you disagree. Ask as many questions as you like, for I loathe the ancient method which places the lecturer on the pedestal of a mandarin, and forces facts down unwilling throats.'

'The goods!' I whispered.

'Psychology, in brief, is the science which classifies and analyses the phenomena of the human mind.' As an old army officer, I regret to say we knew precious little about it before the war. Some of the Staff College men had it as a side-line. Haking, in his somewhat rambling book on *Company Training*, struck the first intelligent notes on the subject. Colonel Fuller of the "Ox and Bucks" tried to drag it into the arena of military training. Here and there an isolated enthusiast worked out his own pet theories. But, broadly speaking, our army knew nothing about it. The French Army, however, was more progressive. Several French

officers had produced excellent books on the subject prior to 1914; and in the French military academies psychology was a term well known to every student. Germany also worked at it, but not so effectively as France. Many of the Russian generals, such as Brussiloff, the Grand Duke, and Alexeieff, were keen students of the science.

'Why, then, did we know little about it? The answer is this. We are a conservative people. We are mentally lazy. We resent new ideas, mainly because they disturb our happy old ways. Let us admit our faults, for it is the negation of all sound work to cover up errors in military training.

'Psychology is not so difficult as people think. Professors make it difficult when they ramble off into bewildering scientific phenomena instead of getting down to earth. This game is really a study of what the other fellow is thinking, how his thoughts affect his actions, and the sum total of his intellectual output. You do not require to be a university don to grip its essentials. Common-sense, ordinary intelligence, and organised study will give you the rudiments. And no man has a better opportunity to exploit the science than the army officer. He commands all types, all creeds. In his daily work he is rubbing against the efficient and the inefficient, the alert and the lethargic, the successful and the failure. If you, as future officers, will make it your duty to observe the mental meanderings of your units, you will quickly discover the road to high command. By knowing your men, you can handle them. By classifying and treating them as mere units, you will eventually cause anything from a mutiny to a disaster in face of the enemy.

'All of you, I hope, will shortly command platoons. You will then have sixty men to rule. You will find your job easy or difficult, according to your ability tactfully to enforce your orders, to create in the minds of your men the belief that you are a more powerful personality, and to get out of all ranks the maximum of work with the minimum of friction. Take an example. When I entered this room I did so in a very alert manner. That was not accidental; it was deliberate. I was determined to impress on you that I was no straggler. Next, I reached this desk, and smiled. Why? To make you feel you were not dealing with a ferocious martinet who uses his rank to enforce his orders and opinions. Finally, I said you could smoke. This suggestion removed any remaining vestige of rank or distinction, so far as this actual lecture is concerned. *I came here to get at you.*'

'You 've got us, sir,' said Ginger.

'Thank you,' he answered, amidst laughter. 'To carry this particular argument to its final conclusion, let me say I do not know the gentleman who said, "You 've got us, sir," but, from his appearance, I imagine he is an intellectual, bored stiff with military formalities, and regards me as a Heaven-sent Harry Lauder to cheer him up.' (Loud laughter.)

'Your laughter, gentlemen, I accept, not as a mere compliment, but as evidence of a mental sympathy. In brief, we now understand each other. And that is the basis of good work and military efficiency. Therefore, when you get command of your platoons, this will be your first duty—*Know your men.*

'When I say you must know your men I do not mean that you should disregard any of the regulations laid down for the personal conduct of an officer. Stupid familiarity breeds contempt. If you start addressing the sergeant as "Old Chap," the corporal as "Bill," and a man as "Tommy," your prestige will fall to zero, and your men will regard you as a priceless buffoon. On the other hand, there is absolutely no need to be a snob, a martinet, or an autocrat. A martinet is a man of limited intellect, afraid of his own inferior knowledge. An autocrat is usually a bully, like the Kaiser. My tip is, to act the part of a quiet and courteous British gentleman, with just a suggestion of reserve to frighten off a cad who desires to exploit your very good nature. But your greatest asset is knowledge. Ability engenders respect. Tact retains respect. And psychology enables you to exploit that respect in the very best interests of His Majesty's Service.

'Let us still keep to the platoon. The first man you will meet will be the platoon sergeant. Supposing you have mastered this science of the mind, your knowledge enables you, perhaps, to see that the sergeant is, by temperament, what the Scots call "dour;" he may also be quick-tempered, inclined to resent criticism—in short, "touchy." Now you are up against something. You must remember that temperament is either hereditary or the result of environment. Again, you may discover that this man is otherwise an excellent soldier. Your acquaintance with psychology will immediately suggest to you that your sergeant will have to be handled with kid gloves, even to the extent of openly conceding a point now and again to his little whims. That is common-sense. No sergeant is perfect, and no officer is perfect; and it would be the height of folly and presumption for any new subaltern to give an otherwise excellent N.C.O. a dog's life. Be patient, well-meaning, and courteous, and in a month's time the sergeant will, metaphorically, lick your boots.

'There are other N.C.O.'s in the platoon. In our present-day armies, as you know, these non-coms. are frequently men of social standing, and —more important—men of character. Degrees are as common as peas in the ranks to-day. All are open-eyed and certainly democratic. Such men are sensitive. But they are *not* Bolsheviks. They are intensely critical, but equally patriotic. They have only one standard of measurement—

BRAINS. This is an embarrassing situation to an officer who is simply "a son of his father"—nothing more. But it is not at all a bad atmosphere for a gentleman of culture, vigour, and enthusiasm. Certainly there is a demand for the higher qualities of leadership. To a keen soldier this is a most glorious incentive. You will not succeed unless your will, your personality, and your merits are predominant. *You have got to be top dog.* But you must never obtrude your rank as the badge of that right. To go on parade with the feeling that there is a guard-room behind you to enforce your whims and ill-balanced opinions is madness. The guard-room is really meant for the criminal and the hopeless fool. Knowing your job and knowing your men will really result in less crime, less discontent, and the creation of a happy and efficient unit. This aim is perfectly easy to a student of psychology, provided he has the will which springs from health and broad-based culture.

'Another important point. When your company commander desires to make new N.C.O.'s, he will, if he knows his job, consult you as to the best men in your platoon. Here you must be careful. The unthinking and brainless sub. is frequently attracted by shallow and insincere qualities. A man who soft-soaps his fads and carries tales may strike him as "a ripping chap—just the man for the stripe." On the other hand, a good officer's servant, a successful regimental policeman, or an obliging company clerk may figure high in his estimation, to the detriment of other men possessed of CHARACTER, EDUCATION, and DETERMINATION. To pass these men by is to commit a great offence against efficiency. Indeed, if ten thousand stupid subalterns selected ten thousand stupid individuals as platoon sergeants, and these N.C.O.'s were all together in a great push, what would happen? DISASTER!

'I am not here to frighten you; but I am here to kill that damnably dangerous theory that platoon drill, and nothing more, is all a soldier requires to know. We have had enough of that fetish. We are fighting the Germans. They are no fools. Unless you realise the serious responsibility of your high office, you are utterly useless for the Service.

'Again, you will have to father, guide, train, and lead the men—the glorious MEN. I hope you will not regard this as "a beastly bore," but as a privilege. The men who died at Mons, who leaped forward from the Marne, who barred the gates at Ypres, and stemmed disaster at Cambrai are no servile, cringing crew. They are cavaliers and—GENTLEMEN. Remember that! Open out your heart, but keep your head. You will find in your platoons dukes' sons and cooks' sons, aspiring generals—and some ruddy fools. Occasionally you may strike a desperado—a man who does not care twopence for officers, cells, or a firing-squad. When you run across this type you must go easy. A wrong word, and the man may spring from the ranks and strike you down. And it is here that psychology comes to your aid. Study the man from all angles, and you will discover some little thing which touches his real soul. It may be a little act of kindness. For example, I once had a man who had knifed a policeman in civil life. He was a desperado. The N.C.O.'s were afraid of him. They could do nothing with him except chuck him in the guardroom. This made him worse, and I was really afraid of his committing murder. One day when out walking I met him alone on the road. I did not expect him to salute me. But he did. So I said, "Well, Smith, are you having a walk?"

'"Yes, sir, away from the —— misery. I'm fed up and nearly off my chump. I'll desert."

'"Have a cigarette," I answered.

'"Thanks," he grunted, but a little flicker in his eyes suggested surprise. Very tactfully I led him out into the country, talking about anything and everything till we struck the top of a mound. This, as you know, was quite an unusual procedure for an officer; but I was dealing with a desperate man, and I was going to have no murder in my company.

'"Sit down, Smith," I suggested.

'"I think I will," he grunted.

'I gave him another cigarette, and in twenty minutes' time he was in a most friendly mood. His brutality—which was really superficial—was melting.

'"Now, Smith, I'm your company commander. What's the trouble? Let's have it out, man to man. They say you loathe the army and hate your officers."

'"That's a —— lie, sir. I don't hate my officers."

'"What is it, then?"

'"I hate Sergeant B——. He's a swine. He rags me. I'll murder him!" he shouted. There was an ungovernable madness in his eyes.

'"Steady, Smith," I said. "Let's talk quietly. Have another cigarette."

'He took one, and his gust of passion passed away.

'"Then you are either going to commit a murder or desert—is that it?"

'"Exactly, sir. I've nothing against you. You've been hard, but square. I've got my dues. When I'm wrong I takes my punishment. I likes my officers; but I hates the —— sergeants, specially Sergeant B——."

'Now, this Sergeant B—— was a good soldier, but he could not tell the difference between an undergraduate and a ploughman. He used men like machines, and had given me a lot of trouble. At the same time, Smith was no Christian. Yet, somehow, I felt all his offences resulted from misdirected energy. So I said, "Look here, Smith; you'll go back to barracks, and

to-night you must declare a truce between yourself and your so-called enemies. To-morrow morning you will come and see me at the company orderly-room, when I shall have an interesting proposition to put before you. Will you do so?"

'"Yes, sir," he grunted, after a long pause.

'I left him to wander back to barracks. Next morning he turned up, shaved, boots shining, and buttons cleaned. I checked my expression of surprise and opened out.

'"Now, Smith, I've been diagnosing your case. You're over-healthy and naturally mischievous. Your hatred for sergeants is really jealousy. I think in some things you are a strong-minded man. In short, you want to lead and not to be led. If I could get inside your brain-pot I might discover a lurking ambition to be an N.C.O. and throw your weight about."

'He burst out laughing, and I felt I had got him.

'"To-night you will appear in orders as lance-corporal, and you will be transferred to Sergeant Jones's platoon. I shall expect you to go to school to improve your education. And here is a week-end pass to celebrate your good fortune. Finally, Smith, I hope to God you will never be before me again, for crime in my company breaks my heart. I'm treating you as a gentleman. And I'm quite sure you will always be one. Fall out, please."

'Smith saluted like a Guardsman, turned about, and ceased to be a public nuisance.

'*Sergeant-Major Smith died at Mons.*'

When the lecturer finished this anecdote a terrific cheering burst from all the school, and there was just a suggestion of something dim about the lecturer's eyes. He was thinking of how Sergeant-Major Smith had held up a whole German battalion when all his officers were wiped out.

'I hope you will excuse my giving you this story of Smith. But, really, that is better than all the pamphlets on psychology. Smith might have ended up on the gallows. Instead of that, he died as a warrant-officer and a hero. You will now see how important it is to study the human mind. And I hold that if you can master the mental meandering of your platoons, you may rightly aspire to the General Staff. When you are a G.S.O.—*III.*, *II.*, or *I.*—you will realise what platoons, companies, regiments, and brigades *can* do, and will *never* issue orders likely to cause discontent and endanger our *moral*.

'Now, the psychology of your own army is an important thing, but the psychology of the enemy is doubly important. We are up against a most cunning, brutal, and ungentlemanly foe. Great victories can be secured only by clever reading of enemy thought, and astute counter-tactics. Take the battle of the Marne. Joffre brilliantly defeated the Germans, *not* by superior man or gun power, but by superior strategy, based on a correct reading of the enemy's power, vanity, and historical beliefs. In this work we also assisted. The Germans were stupid enough to believe that Lord French would throw the B.E.F. into Belgium. This was the German scheme and their dream. Lord French declined the bait, and the Germans lost precious days before they found out their stupid analysis of our psychology. As for Joffre, he certainly had no intention (originally) to fight it out at the Marne, but the blunder of a French general before Namur compelled him to select this field. His retirement was a glorious trick in which he pandered to the Paris dream of Von Kluck, tickled the enveloping theories of the Crown Prince, and drugged the whole German nation—Kaiser and all—into the belief that the end of France was near. Time and again he resisted tempting opportunities for a general action, till the Marne was reached. Then, when the German General Staff was drunk with victory, when their line was lengthened, their munitionment and rationing tedious and difficult, their troops tired with their hitherto magnificent marching, he launched his blow—faulty in parts—but staggering and effective as a whole. With a *crash* he killed the Paris dream. With a *bound* he swept corps after corps of the hardest-trained troops in the world into a tragic rout and irredeemable disaster. The Marne was the defeat of Germany. Since then they have simply been fighting for terms. And this glorious victory, for which we ought to thank our God, was helped immensely by the ability to read the enemy's mind, and the refusal to accept his preconceived theories of the Allies' action in such a war.

'Since the Marne we have improved. Take Byng's thrust at Cambrai. For three years we used preliminary bombardments before making a great assault. And at Cambrai the enemy *knew* of our coming attack. *But he waited for our bombardment.* Instead of that, Byng's men took up their beds—and walked for miles into the enemy's lines. This was entirely unexpected, and therefore successful. Byng, I say, is a most excellent student of psychology.

'But we must also admit that the enemy has improved. At Cambrai we massed our reserves *in the centre* to meet the counter-attack which would be launched in accordance with *known* German tactics. The Germans, however, discovered the weakness of both of our flanks, and struck sledge-hammer blows. Had it not been for the supreme courage of the Guards, of London and Highland Territorials, Cambrai might have been the funeral of our High Command. This proves that we have no monopoly of psychology.

'While I ask you to respect and never underrate the power of the enemy, do not fear the enemy. And do not believe he is superior. The German clings with frenzied energy to trench warfare. He is afraid of the open—

afraid of the British and the French in open manœuvre. He remembers the Marne. He remembers the Russian push into north Germany, the success of Brussiloff in Galicia, the brilliant strategy of Maude, and the glorious work of Allenby and Smuts. In open warfare we can beat the German to a frazzle because of our mental alacrity, willingness to scrap original orders, and to adapt ourselves to sudden and unexpected onslaughts. The German is a worker, a thruster, and a courageous fellow; but a mere handful of troops, with only shrapnel and bayonets, held up one million Huns at Ypres. Lord French outmanœuvred the enemy there. Ypres was the grave of German Push-and-Go.

'*The German is helpless in open warfare.*

'The enemy is not afraid of shells or bayonet, but he *is* afraid of superior intelligence. The camouflage of Allied military thought is more distressing to Germany than lyddite or gas. Our naval policy in refusing to disclose the facts about the number of German submarines sunk, and *how* we have sunk them, is destroying the *moral* of the German Navy. Our counter-propaganda is smashing his propaganda. While he may console himself with the Russian Revolution, he is suffering the fires of hell from the intervention of America. This suffering is easily explained. The American brain is the most resourceful, the most subtle, the most deadly in the world. I am speaking commercially, of course. No Von Kühlmann, Ballin, Hindenburg, or Von Boy-ed can master it. The American discovery and exposure of the German plot in Mexico was a masterly feat in intelligence. The use of German ships to transport American troops to France is a business-like answer to Germany's submarine campaign. The subtle distinction which President Wilson makes between the German Government and the German people is equally sound. The prompt organisation of an American Propaganda Department in Switzerland, to inform the enemy—*free of charge*—about his impending doom, is excellent. Ford's creation of anti-submarine boats, which are being turned out like sausages, will stagger the gentlemen of Kiel. In short, the American knows the German. American aid is the death of Germany, in the military, political, and commercial sense of the term. And the entry of America, like our own entry into this war, was due to faulty German psychology, a stupid reading of the national mind, failure to understand the spirit and soul of America—as of Britain—as well as blind reliance on bluff, bombast, rapine, terror, corruption, and assassination for the intimidation of neutrals.

'*The Allies are more intelligent than the Germans.*

'Now, gentlemen, I have shown you the tremendous importance of psychology, in the work of platoons, regiments, armies, and embassies. You must study the subject. You don't need to go to Oxford. You can do it in your own hut. Look at your neighbour! Study his face, his eyes, his talk, his facial expressions and physical actions. Watch him at work. See whether he slacks or pulls, fights or funks, tells the truth or dodges the truth. You will feel at sea for a long time, but in the end your eye and brain will enable you to see the hero and the fool, and instinctively to sense the coming thought or action of an opponent. Psychology gives you the wisdom of the old, the touch of the blind, the sense of the tried, and a general strength which is irresistible. This gift will enable you to create an uncomfortable apprehension in the mind of the enemy—a sense of something tragic; a feeling that there are bombs under the earth and above the earth; that *something* which destroys the nerves of the German nation and the German High Command.

'That's all, gentlemen,' he concluded.

We gave him a mighty cheer.

'Oh, by the way, any questions?' he ejaculated.

No one got up. All seemed satisfied; but just as he was turning away, Ginger Thomson jumped to his feet.

'Sir.'

'Yes?'

'I want to tell you something. Before we came in here we were arguing the point about rotten lectures and rotten lecturers. But I feel we owe you much. You have helped us a lot. We all hope you will come again, sir.'

'Delighted! Oh, by the way, I missed a most important point. You can never apply this science—to a woman.'

'What about a girl, sir?' we all asked.

'Hopeless! Good-afternoon.'

We burst out laughing as he turned away. Thus he left us as he met us—smiling.

There's something in psychology.

(*Continued on page 111.*)

YOUTH.

TRAMPING on the highroad,
Racing o'er the mead,
Taking every little path
To see where it would lead;
Plucking sheaves of blossoms
To drop them by the way;
Talking for the sake of talking,
Laughing all the day,
Youth is fair and youth is free,
Youth is made for you and me.

Age may shake his solemn head,
Walk his sober pace,
Think his great experience
Judge in every case.
Age is bound by tape and rule;
Age is but a slave.
Laugh we then our gayest laughter,
Leaving age the grave.
Youth is fair and youth is free;
Age can wait for you and me.

J. D. HESSEY.

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SEVENTH SERIES

MR SWEETBREAD'S SURPLICE.

By PAT SUNDAY.

PART I.

I.

THE missionary garden-party was at its height. The bishop had reached the last spoonful of his ice-cream, which, like himself, was extremely pink and good.

'This sweetmeat is most delicious,' he remarked, with a sigh.

'All profits from the ice-cream are going to be given to missionary work in the Arctic regions,' declared the archdeacon.

'That being so,' said the bishop, 'I shall, without hesitation, consume another portion.'

When he had finished he leaned back in his comfortable canvas chair, smiling blandly at the throng of guests moving about among the clumps of rhododendrons or seated underneath the elms. It was towards the end of that incredibly happy June before the war. The sky was like blue satin, a band was playing light music, and his lordship had not been afflicted by a single twinge of gout all day.

'With regard to the rectory of Tittlebury,' said the sharp-looking little archdeacon, bending forward, 'I had hoped you would offer it to my curate, young Sweetbread.'

The prelate looked vexed. 'It has oftentimes been reported to me by others,' he replied, 'and I have myself noticed with much grief, that Sweetbread is extremely addicted to—ah—flirtation. My presence here even does not cause him to desist. It is at least twenty minutes since he entered yonder summer-house across the lawn, accompanied by a gaily dressed young lady, and he has not as yet emerged. Now, when I was a curate, it was my inflexible rule never to engage in conversation with an unmarried lady for more than three or, at the very outside, four consecutive minutes. This course obviated jealousy, and quenched unfounded hopes. Though oftentimes entreated to do so, never—no, not on one solitary occasion—did I diverge from that, my golden rule.'

He smiled happily, as if innumerable exquisite memories were presenting themselves to his mind, then exclaimed, to turn the conversation, 'How beauteous are the hues of yonder rhododendrons by the pond!'

But the archdeacon persisted. He was a most pertinacious little parson, and it was believed in clerical circles that no bishop—no archbishop even—had ever refused him any request whatever.

'My lord,' he urged, 'Sweetbread's an exceedingly eloquent preacher. He can make even the newspaper reporters weep by his sermons. With my own eyes I've seen a whole pewful of them crying like infants. You must reward his great gifts somehow. And I'm sure your lordship somewhat misunderstands his attitude of innocent amiability towards young women. I'm convinced that the sole reason of his extreme affability towards them is his desire to attract them to church. Indeed, he has often assured me so himself. Since he became my curate the number of young ladies attending my church has more than quadrupled. Why, last Sunday morning the offertory-plates were so laden with threepenny-bits that old Simmonds, my churchwarden, dropped them down the chancel-steps. You must really give Sweetbread the rectory.'

'Must? Must?' said the bishop heatedly, crushing a daisy beneath his heel. 'No mortal man says "must" to me. And I must confess my disappointment—nay, my chagrin—at your championship of so frivolous a youth. He's very young, you plead. Why, twenty years hence people will remember his frivolity.'

'You're right there,' agreed the archdeacon—'about people remembering a curate's frivolity for twenty years, I mean. Why, the duchess told me the other day she remembered quite distinctly that one evening more than twenty years ago, when you were in your first curacy, you persuaded her to come home from church by a roundabout way, saying you wanted to show her the reflection of the sunset in the pond, and you brought her to a very high and slippery stile—on purpose, she was sure. Then you tried to kiss her, but the slippery'——

His lordship turned as red as the rhododendrons, and flicked his handkerchief at a wasp which was aeroplaning round him, allured by the melted remnants of ice-cream in the episcopal saucer.

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'I have often observed,' he interposed hurriedly—'and in this I am corroborated by the testimony of a host of other bishops—that a wasp invariably selects the most exalted prelate in any assembly as his first victim.'

'I 've noticed that myself,' said the archdeacon. 'Her grace says she thinks you are even more frivolous now than you were then, because last Sunday'——

'A wasp,' interrupted the bishop, again hurriedly, 'would rather sting one bishop than a thousand archdeacons'——

'Very probably, my lord, and very naturally. Her grace said that if she were asked who was the greatest flirt at the present time on the bench of bishops—in a dignified way, of course—she would certainly say'——

'The father of that young lady in the summer-house,' interjected the bishop, still struggling to turn the conversation, 'is shamefully neglecting his duty. Who is she?'

'My daughter Christabel,' answered the archdeacon slowly.

The bishop beamed again all over his face. This sudden triumph over the archdeacon reminded him, somehow, of the fight in which he gave that little dignitary a black eye—though he himself had simultaneously lost a tooth—when they were boys together at Eton. What a splendid combat that was, and how much more friendly they had been afterwards; and how remarkable that every encounter they had had since had the same effect of strengthening their friendship!

'Are they engaged?' inquired the bishop, leaning forward confidentially.

'Not yet,' whispered the archdeacon, 'but I intend'——

'You intend to make him propose, whether he wants to or not,' interposed the bishop, waving his forefinger at him happily, and gazing into the lesser dignitary's face with an air of inexpressible sagacity.

A very young curate in spectacles, sauntering by alone across the grass, noticed the look of wisdom on the bishop's face. 'Oh, how wise and good he is!' he thought. 'I wish I could hear what he is saying. It would be so profitable—so helpful.'

He drew near the chairs, hoping to catch some of the crumbs of knowledge that fell from the dignitaries' table.

'Hey!' called the archdeacon to him sharply. 'Don't you see there's a wasp annoying his lordship? Take it away!'

The loyal young fellow, overjoyed at the prospect of doing his bishop a service, attacked the insect with exemplary zeal.

'Don't use more cruelty, pray, than is absolutely necessary,' enjoined the bishop humanely.

The curate pirouetted about for a few seconds, then uttered a cry of anguish, and applied his handkerchief to the tip of his nose.

'How careless of you!' said the archdeacon reprovingly. 'Run off to a chemist's, and get him to put some ammonia on your nose. It 's a capital thing for stings.'

'You should have been more careful, young sir,' said the bishop. 'However,' he added forgivingly, 'I am not unmindful that the pain you are now enduring was caused by zeal in my service, albeit reckless and misdirected.'

The poor young fellow hurried off towards the park gates, and at that moment a red-faced footman came to clear away the crockery.

'That there harchdeacon and bishop seem to be hextraordinary hamiable old noblemen,' he opined in the kitchen afterwards. 'When I took their hice-cream saucers away they was a-laughin' and a-gigglin' fit to bu'st theirselves.'

When they were alone the bishop once more took the offensive. 'How many of your curates have you succeeded in marrying to your daughters?' he murmured slyly.

'There 's the duchess—beside that big monkey-puzzle,' answered his fellow-dignitary quickly. 'Look—she 's coming this way fast—she 's caught sight of you—she 's waving her parasol at you'——

'I must hie me home at once,' said the bishop, getting up hurriedly. 'Much toil awaits me at the palace.'

'Stay! What about that rectory for Sweetbread?' asked the archdeacon, seizing his arm.

'Oh, I 'll give him it,' answered the bishop, glancing apprehensively in the direction of the fast-approaching duchess.

II.

It would have been possible for the archdeacon to advance towards the summer-house which concealed his daughter in a perfectly straight line. However, he preferred to proceed strategically towards it in a series of zigzags, stopping once or twice to invite to a tennis-party several handsome young curates—three of his daughters were still unmarried. Skirting the pond, he advanced cautiously upon the trellised summer-house from the rear. It was a tumble-down old edifice, its defects being partly concealed, however, by masses of roses and honeysuckle. The indefatigable little dignitary bent down, as if to examine the flowers more closely, found a tiny chink between two boards, and peeped in.

'The dear archdeacon must be passionately fond of flowers,' remarked one old lady to another, as they were passing by. 'How pleased and interested he looks! Perhaps he 's composing a sermon on flowers.'

'Hush!' whispered her companion in awe-struck tones. 'Don't you see the look of celestial happiness on his face?'

They tiptoed away along the gravel walk very reverently and fearfully, lest the crunching of their footsteps should disturb the saintly old man's devotions.

What he saw through the hole was indeed exquisitely gratifying to him as a match-making parent. Three of his curates had in succession been married to three of his daughters, more or less willingly, and Sweetbread, in spite of his frivolity, was an exceptionally eloquent man, and much more likely to win a distinguished place in the Church than any of his predecessors.

'Bless them!' murmured the archdeacon.

Then a doubt assailed him—he remembered Sweetbread's unfortunate propensity to flirtation.

'If he hasn't proposed already, I'll make him,' he thought.

He slipped cautiously round to the front of the arbour, burst in upon them suddenly—and caught him kissing her.

'How dare you, Sweetbread?' he thundered with terrifying ferocity. 'A curate has the presumption to kiss his vicar's daughter without first obtaining his permission! Unheard-of insubordination!'

The young couple rose to their feet. Sweetbread's eloquence, for the first time in his career, failed him; while little Christabel wrung her pretty hands and screamed.

'The bishop saw you going into the summer-house,' said the archdeacon to him sternly, 'and is taking steps which will necessitate your ceasing to be my curate any longer.'

'If I have to leave you, I'll take your daughter with me,' retorted Sweetbread.—'You'll marry me, won't you, Christabel, poor as I am?'

'Of course I will, darling,' she answered fervently.

'Eleven hundred a year isn't what I should call extreme poverty,' said the archdeacon in a curious voice.

'Whatever do you mean, father?' cried Christabel.

'I've just persuaded the bishop to appoint you to the rectory of Tittlebury,' he explained to the young man. 'That's what I meant by saying you'd have to leave me. I wanted to break the news of your promotion to you gently. I know a man who broke a blood-vessel when offered a fat living unexpectedly. Gently, my boy; don't be so demonstrative. Remember you're a rector-elect. Suppose a young curate happened to look in at this moment, what a shock it would be to him to see a rector, perhaps his own future rector, kissing eighty to the minute!'

The rector-elect desisted, and shook the archdeacon's hand with effusion.

'I want a word with you in private, Sweetbread,' said the archdeacon. 'You must leave us now, Christabel.'

'I won't leave him now—or ever,' she answered, pouting.

The archdeacon peeped out of the door of the arbour. 'Miss Webber has just gone past, Christabel,' he said persuasively. 'She spoke to the duchess about you in a very nasty way this afternoon—about me too. I overheard her. She seems to dislike you?'

'She hates me,' said Christabel, her eyes flashing.

'Overtake her, then,' suggested the archdeacon vindictively, 'and tell her of your engagement. She's been trying hard to capture Sweetbread for herself, so I'm told. Point out to her the many attractions of your future home at Tittlebury; tell her you'll have the finest vineries in the county—heavenly views of the river—nineteen bedrooms—up-to-date sanitation—and a viscount residing in the parish.'

Christabel tripped off, smiling.

'The bishop has been exceptionally trying this afternoon,' said the archdeacon, 'and I feel my nerves really need a cigar.'

They sat down on the little rustic bench in the arbour, and began puffing. 'It is my duty to warn you, Sweetbread,' said the archdeacon gravely, 'that Christabel has one extremely serious failing.'

'What is it?' inquired Sweetbread with apprehension.

'Jealousy!' answered the archdeacon.

'That's nothing,' said Sweetbread, enormously relieved, picking up his cigar again, which he had dropped in his alarm. 'All women are jealous.'

'Alas! that is only too true,' admitted the archdeacon sadly. 'But she is even more jealous than the average woman; she inherits the tendency from her Spanish grandmother. She is as jealous as—as'——

'As the bishop's wife?' asked Sweetbread in alarm.

'Quite—perhaps even more so, if that were possible,' admitted the archdeacon sorrowfully, with a compassionate glance at his companion's troubled face. 'Everybody has heard the tale of how you kissed nine vicars' daughters in one week. You'll have to give up that sort of thing.'

'I will,' promised Sweetbread. 'I'd give up any enjoyment for Christabel's sake.'

'And you must be careful not to praise any lady in her hearing,' resumed the archdeacon. 'If you encounter any good-looking lady when out visiting, you must say afterwards that her nose is too long or too short or too red—to please Christabel.'

'I will,' promised Sweetbread.

'And if she ever accuses you of having kissed, or of wanting to kiss, any lady, say in tones of disgust that you'd rather eat your surplice, or something of that sort.'

(*Continued on page 120.*)

THE WAR AND THE UNITED STATES.

By Captain H. W. Yoxall (Late British Military Mission to the United States).

I.

NOW that the Great War is, so far as the fighting is concerned, a thing past and done with, it is natural that statisticians and publicists of the various countries should begin to strike the balance-sheets of their national achievements. It is, moreover, right for them to do so, for all of the allied nations may well be proud of their efforts in the cause of Freedom. Only let us avoid invidious comparisons in assessing the respective contributions to the credit side of victory's ledger. Such telling of counts might lead to recriminations and bad feeling, and the great alliance will have been formed and have conquered to no avail if it is to fall in pieces as soon as the compelling ties of association in war are loosed.

Let it be granted, then, that the allied countries—each in its way to the limit of its peculiar capacity—all strove their utmost for the common cause. If I write here particularly of the effort of America, its effect on the war, and the reaction on that country itself, it is not with the desire to magnify that effort in comparison with the general sum of our exertions (indeed, the United States, through its late entry into the war, was of necessity spared much of the stress and many of the sacrifices which the Allies have borne), but rather to interpret it and to point its importance, which is far more than a question of facts and figures.

But first it will be well to recapitulate some of the difficulties under which the United States has laboured in the matter of its participation in the war. In the first place, the country had been long wedded to a tradition of pacifism, which involved a policy of isolation from the tangled skein of European diplomacy, in which it saw the causes of all wars. For a considerable time the mass of uninformed American opinion simply looked on the war as another quarrel of the European chancelleries. To detach the country from this frame of mind needed a considerable quality of command on the part of the American leaders, and time was necessary for the diffusion of the correct view. Again, they had to deal with a heteroclite population which made combined national action difficult of accomplishment. Not only did America nourish the German viper in her bosom, but large sections of the foreign-born population added to the apathy of the uneducated native a measure of hostility, more or less deep, towards one or other of the Allies—in particular Russia in the case of the Jews, and Britain in the case of the Irishmen. In every way these feelings were exaggerated and worked upon by those in America—especially the countless German agents—who for one reason or another wished to keep the country out of the war. Even when war had been declared, they checked the progress of the national effort by damping the fires of enthusiasm for the allied cause, with which America had associated herself.

Again, it must be remembered that America entered into the war considerably less prepared even than did this country. I have heard Americans complain because the Government, knowing the inevitability of war, did not start their preparations until the actual declaration of hostilities. But it was the deliberate policy of President Wilson to abstain from any act of provocation, that the responsibility of Germany might be demonstrated to the last degree; and the moral importance of America's subsequent declaration of war was greatly enhanced thereby.

Then, having declared war, the country was brought up against two other great difficulties arising from the physical facts of geography. The first and most obvious was that all the naval and military operations and much of the political consultation had to take place at a distance of three thousand miles from their base of government, with an exceedingly vulnerable line of communications in between. The second was the size of the country itself, which, though of inestimable advantage in the marshalling of natural resources, greatly increased the problems of transportation, and at the same time made the spread of information and the circulation of the proper patriotic spirit a matter of great difficulty in the outlying communities. Farmers and country-people, living far from the sources of news and the centres of political discussion, grudged to spare their men and money for a war which they did not understand.

Such were the disadvantages which America had to meet when she went to war. On the other hand, she had the assets of an enormous and unprecedented accumulation of wealth obtained, though in no way to her discredit, from the misfortunes of others; of vast man-power and natural resources still almost intact; and of the ability to make her preparations undisturbed behind the protection of the allied armies and the British fleet.

In spite of this, the American effort was undoubtedly disappointing at first to the Allies. We did not understand the American method, obvious though it was to all who understood their industrial system, of concentrating at first on elaborating the means of production, and of deferring production itself until it can be undertaken in quantity. When the American effort

had matured, it burst upon the world in a magnitude which amazed every one—most of all, the Germans.

II.

What, then, did our associates do? (The Americans were never officially our allies, much to the chagrin of a large section of their people.) It is difficult to summarise such a wealth of achievement in a few pages, and the figures, in any case, are so vast that it is difficult to realise their meaning. But we may set down some of the capital items of their war effort.

By the time hostilities had ceased the United States had sent over two million soldiers to Europe, and was prepared to double that number by the summer of this year. The feeding of that vast host was being conducted entirely from America, its equipment and its arming (the notable exception in this case being that of tanks) almost entirely so. (In no particular was such supply as America drew from the allied countries reacting detrimentally on them. When for any reason the Americans borrowed, it was of our surplus, not of our scarcity. They lent in the same manner; it was an economic arrangement for the pooling of resources.) And this feeding, equipping, and arming, be it said, was being done on a scale never before attempted in military history. The American lines of communication in France were a marvellous example of what energy, initiative, and wealth can do. Docks, railways, freight-yards, warehouses, locomotive and motor depots, salvage-shops, gas and electricity plants, camps, hospitals, schools of instruction, and training-centres were erected on an unprecedented scale. As a sample of what was done we may take a certain French port where before the Americans came it was possible to land twenty thousand troops and six thousand tons of freight a month. On one day last summer forty-two thousand American soldiers were landed at the same port, and on another single day five thousand tons of freight.

Secondly, we may consider the naval side of the American effort. Naval construction was immensely accelerated, and the number of ships in the navy was increased from the pre-war figure of three hundred to about one thousand. During the war the Americans have concentrated mainly on small anti-submarine craft, from destroyers downwards; but for the next three years a large building programme of capital ships is contemplated pending any international compact of disarmament. To man this increment the personnel of the navy has been increased fourfold. About three hundred American vessels, regular or auxiliary, were operating in European waters when the armistice was signed. American ships conveyed 46 per cent. of their army to France, and did a great amount of the escorting of these forces. The increase in production of American merchant shipping was phenomenal. Before America came into the war her flag flew over a total tonnage of two million four hundred thousand tons, but 80 per cent. of that was engaged in lake and coastwise trade. In America's nineteen months of war two thousand nine hundred and eighty-five merchant-vessels were built, and there was a total increase, including commandeered enemy ships and bottoms requisitioned from neutrals, of five million tons. Incredible feats of rapid construction were performed, such as the launching of a ship of twelve thousand tons twenty-four days after the laying down of her keel.

This shipping was employed, first, in the transportation of men and material for the American forces; secondly, of raw material and finished products required by the Allies for war purposes; and, finally, of food for the Allies and indigent neutrals. The value of the contribution of the United States to the solution of the European food problem cannot be over-estimated. In one month of last year the United States exported more than three times as much beef to Europe as in any previous year (seventy-three million as against twenty million tons). In 1917 there was an export increase over the figures of the previous year of eight hundred and fifty million tons of meat and eighty-one million bushels of grain, and the increase was maintained last year. These huge increments were derived partly from a great increase of production, partly from economy on the part of the American people. In the last twelve months of the war they saved one hundred and twenty-five million bushels of wheat by rationing. And it was all voluntary rationing, we must remember. Of course, no one pretends that the food-producers and the shipping-owners did not make great profits out of the European shortage, but the general American public displayed admirable powers of self-abnegation in this respect.

To turn to the purely financial contribution to the cause, at the conclusion of the armistice the United States had given credits to the Allies and Russia to the total value of £1,600,000,000. That this assistance is not to be terminated by the passing of hostilities is shown by the advance of £53,000,000 to the various Allies as 'reconstruction loans.' The total American war bill amounted to about £4,400,000,000, and their daily expenditure on their own war-machine by the end of the fighting exceeded even that of Great Britain. To meet this, taxation to the extent of over £1,500,000,000 was levied for the past financial year, representing a *per capita* contribution of about fifteen pounds, as against seven pounds in 1917 and twenty-eight shillings before the war. This is a heavy burden in a country which pays indirect taxation through the tariff, has over-subscribed four enormous loans (the last amounted to £1,397,809,400), and has given munificently to its own and the allied war charities—not waiting, in many cases, for

America's declaration of war to subscribe to the latter. One typical city in the Middle West raised a consolidated fund for war charities for 1918 amounting to a sum of two guineas per head of its population.

In addition to this, we must reckon all the reconstruction work undertaken in France, the succour given to Belgium in the days of American neutrality, the splendid efforts on behalf of our prisoners, and the lavish contributions of ambulances, doctors, nurses, and medical stores to the allied countries. As an example of this kind of aid we may quote a shipment of seven hundred and fifty thousand sweaters sent over at the end of last year by the Red Cross for the destitute inhabitants of the reoccupied portions of allied territory.

Meanwhile in the United States, to support the vast undertaking, there has been such a period of industrial activity and production as is unprecedented. The increased supply of natural products of all kinds, particularly meat, grain, coal, and metals; the exportation of raw and semi-raw materials and finished products; the mobilisation of men, money, and material for the auxiliary services; the creation by the Government of a vast new shipbuilding industry, their taking over of the railways, telephones, telegraphs, and cable systems—all of this represents an effort such as has not been surpassed even by Great Britain, and has brought about, in spite of high prices and heavy taxation, an unequalled condition of general prosperity.

III.

But, great as it was, this material achievement is overshadowed in importance by the other results of America's participation in the war—even as, in the spring of 1917, it was the moral effect of her declaration of war, more than the prospects of actual assistance, that nerved the Allies to yet greater efforts.

In the first place, the United States declaration of war, as has been said, put a moral seal, if any were still lacking, on the allied cause for all the world to see. That a nation by tradition pacific, by policy opposed to intervention in European affairs, by temperament idealistic, by situation sufficiently distant to be able to obtain the proper perspective, and at the same time making enormous profits out of neutrality, should join us, justifies our cause for all peoples for all time. Secondly, the coming to our ranks of the United States, free from dynastic or territorial ambitions, and unconcerned with the old European game of aggressive imperialism, undoubtedly elevated the moral tenor of our war aims. Not that the responsible leaders of the British Empire, France, and the other Allies were pursuing aims of a low moral value; it needed no fourteen points of Mr Wilson to direct the allied cause to the principles of liberty and justice. But there undoubtedly were in all the European countries militarists and junkers who desired a 'strong' peace rather than a permanent peace, the humiliation of Germany and the advancement of their own particular national ambitions rather than a just settlement calculated on the basis of the general welfare of mankind. The accession of the mass of American opinion, directed by such a master-mind as that of the President, to the cause of an equitable and disinterested peace finally weighed down the balance in Europe to the same side.

In saying this I do not wish to elevate the moral tone of American statesmanship above that of the Allies. If the United States was disinterested, it has lost less in lives, property, and money, and gained more in increase of wealth and shipping, from the war than any other combatant. But the outcome of the war means more for America than her elevation to the position of chief creditor of the world, the accumulation of more wealth in that country than has ever been in the hands of a single nation before, and the creation of an American mercantile fleet. It has widened the horizons of the people of the United States, broken down their policy of isolation, and called them to their proper place in the council-chamber of the world.

I was in America for ten months in 1917 and 1918, and visited Washington, New York, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and several other great cities, saw their naval and military academies, and spent much time in closest touch with army opinion at one of the great military cantonments of the National Army. In that period I saw a remarkable change come over the face of the country. It was not merely that a great acceleration of the war programme took place, and that, in this way, the war was brought home to many people to whom it had before been just copy for their newspapers and scenario for their cinemas. The whole mental attitude of the country seemed to change from one of a rather self-satisfied parochialism to a proper realisation of the spirit and the aims of other nations, and the fitting attitude of the United States in relation to them. They came to see that the mental separation which they had imagined between the Old World and the New was figmentary; that under the menace of German imperialism, if in no other way, they became vitally interested in the affairs of the smallest state in Europe. They acquired what the theologians call the synoptic vision; obtained a world-sense in exchange for their old continent sense; deserted the position of impartial spectator, and came down into the arena to fight—to fight with fresher thews and clearer vision than we, tired by three years of combat and blinded by the dust of turmoil, could hope to maintain.

This change of American political mentality is going to do more for the world in the end than all the splendid fighting of the American

soldiers and sailors, than all the output of their army of labour, than all their lavish expenditure of money. It has bound the New World to the Old, and from the resultant co-operation and exchange of ideas there will come a peace of more permanence and a world policy of greater liberality than could have been attained by any purely European settlement.

IV.

Particularly is this *rapprochement* valuable as regards our own relations with the United States. No true American voice to-day speaks of the British Empire in terms other than those of gratitude and praise. On the anniversary of Trafalgar mass meetings of thirty million Americans passed resolutions of thanks to the British Navy. On the 8th December last, 'Britain's Day,' three hundred mass meetings were held in the great cities, and fourteen hundred other celebrations in the smaller towns, voicing American friendship for the British Empire. American universities, with the assistance of professors from Oxford and Cambridge, are holding courses of British studies. The speakers whom we sent over, from the highest political and clerical dignitaries to the humblest propagandist, were eagerly listened to and enthusiastically applauded. Our soldiers who went to advise the American Army (I speak from experience) were welcomed with an almost overwhelming hospitality.

One of the things which have helped the British cause most in America has been the action of the Sinn Feiners and other Irish extremists. The example of their movements in the cause of freedom during the war has taught Americans what value to set on the liberty-loving professions of these people and their execrations of Britain as an imperialistic tyrant. The old poison of Anglophobia which the disaffected Irish instilled into the minds of true Americans has lost its efficacy; and the future generations of the United States will be taught in their homes and their schools a lesson of friendship for, not dislike of, Britain.

The only divergence of views which has emerged between America and Britain, that on the question of the Freedom of the Seas, is apparent rather than real. Americans understand the justice of our view-point when it is explained to them; and we have misinterpreted their opinion by careless reading of the President's statements, and by our fatal habit of jumping to conclusions of hostility whenever we see expressed any opinion apparently differing from our own. It has always been so between Britain and America. Disputes have generally arisen out of misunderstanding where there was no real ground for quarrel, largely because of our somewhat mixed blessing of a common language. The views of a foreigner (no American is any longer a foreigner in Britain, no Briton in America) we translate and weigh carefully; but both nations are fatally inclined to leap at each other's meaning, because their medium of communication demands no care of analysis and interpretation. Remove this carelessness and the seeds of future misunderstandings are sterilised.

Now, this reconciliation of Great Britain and the United States is of more than sentimental import, and concerns others besides the Anglo-Saxon race. It is of permanent world-importance, because here we have ready-made the basis for a League of Nations. The United States and the British Empire are the two Great Powers which have emerged unexhausted from the war. If they can agree to common action, the rest of the world must follow, if only because of their absolute economic dependence on these two Powers. Our Empire is already a League of Nations, the federated States of America yet another. If we can combine the two in permanent agreement to effective common action, we shall have a combination of the greater part of the world's wealth, energy, and political intelligence from which no other country could stand aloof if invited to join.

And more than making a League of Nations feasible, the present position between Great Britain and the United States makes the League essential. The American people have acquired a new sense of the possibilities of foreign commerce and international finance. To back this they have now a vast merchant fleet and a strong navy. America to-day is the most serious rival for the supremacy of the seas which we have ever had in all our history. If this rivalry is to be fought out in the old manner, the competition will develop into a calamity greater than that of the war. It is essential, too, that we organise, not a selfish trust to protect only our own interests (which would but rouse the sentiment of the rest of the world against us and prolong the era of international hatred), but a true and equal League of Nations. As we have the goodwill, surely we can devise the political machinery for this world-combination to defeat war.

V.

Besides these changes in the position of the United States in the world, the war has produced internal effects in America of far-reaching importance. It has allowed the Americans to put their house in order. It has enabled them to stamp out the menace of the insidious spread of *Deutschthum*. The hatred of Germany, as I saw it in America, is as great as any I have seen in Europe. This is not, as has been suggested, the mere zeal of the convert, which quickly dies down; it is the outcome of the conviction that Germany stood, and stands for, the absolute antithesis of the American ideal—a conviction strengthened by its gradual and

deliberate development, and confirmed in every way by the actions of the Germans in America as well as in the theatres of war.

Furthermore, the war has compelled all the foreign-born to abandon their hyphens and declare themselves as full Americans or as full aliens. Those who have not been for America have been against her. There will no longer be the old indiscriminating toleration of immigration. America, in the words of ex-President Roosevelt, is no longer to be a polyglot boarding-house—it is to be a nation. Two years of war have done more for the Americanisation of the population than all the years of peace since immigration on the large scale began.

The war, too, has brought a more virile meaning to their democratic faith and a sturdier advocacy of its tenets. America is still a pacific country, but it knows how to enforce peace. Its pacifism has lost the touch of Bryan and taken on that of Wilson. 'I am opposed,' said the President, 'not to the feeling of the Pacifists, but to their stupidity. Pacifists do not know how to get peace, but I do.' The same feeling is evident throughout the whole land and every class of citizen. They did not raise their boys to be soldiers, but they are very proud of them now that they are soldiers, and sailors too, and have acquitted themselves so well in these parts. The same depth of conviction that kept America pacific and neutral for so long made her at once so thorough in the prosecution of war and now so determined for an equitable peace. And in the mind of no American does an equitable peace mean an easy peace for Germany.

Finally, America's part in the war has justified her in the eyes of the world, and brought her to that place of respect to which her history and present condition entitle her. She has shown that her God is not the Almighty Dollar; that she is not a land only of sensationalism and materialism; that she is not 'too proud to fight' in the sense in which some of us—in perfect illustration of what I have said of the origin of past misunderstandings between our country and theirs—misinterpreted the phrase. The world has again seen 'a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep,' to the confusion of the enemies of justice and international concord.

It is not true, as has been loosely stated, that the centre of the world's gravity has shifted from the British Isles to America, for Great Britain has emerged from this war relatively as powerful as ever she was in her history. But the centre of gravity has been extended, if such a thing be possible in physics, from a single point to exercise its pull along a line—the chain which binds together the English-speaking nations of the world. That this extension is for the ultimate and general good of the world no one can doubt who has followed American policy during the last two years or seen the temper of the American people as proved by the test of war.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE drew our chairs closer to the brisk wood-fire, and the colonel began his story.

'You have heard me mention my younger brother Hugh,' he said. 'You never saw him, of course; but his portrait in the dining-room—painted when he was a youngster in the kilt—is his handsome image. The sunny smile which you have seen in it got him into, and out of, more scrapes before he was five-and-twenty than come to most men all their lives. Hugh was rather an enigma. None of our lot, I am sorry to say, has been over-conscious of the value of money; but Hugh had a perfect genius for melting it. What became of it no one, including himself, had the faintest idea. He was of the type people loosely call "generous to a fault," which in many cases spells blind want of thought, and often something a great deal worse. But Hugh wasn't vicious, and he wasn't lazy. Every one liked him, and I kept him from the end of his tether as long as I could. But he could settle to nothing, although he was bursting with vitality. Restlessness was in his blood, and one fine morning in '62 or '63 I saw him off from Aberdeen to Australia in one of the old clippers. He would make his fortune, he told me as we said good-bye. Poor Hugh! I have never seen him since.'

'I thought he died long ago, sir!'

'So did I. He wrote one or two letters, but I lost touch with him. Some one says that although blood is thicker than water, it's often a great deal nastier; but he and I had no quarrel, and I always cherished a warm affection for him. I often tried to trace him, but failed; and, like every one else, I had given him up as dead long ago. But what do you think? Yesterday morning comes this letter from him!' he said, as he produced it from his pocket.

'A letter from Uncle Hugh!'

'His letter, beyond doubt, although the handwriting is weak and shaky. But I'm afraid, from what he says, that he isn't long for this world. I will read it to you, Neil. The beginning deals with sad enough reflections, and is for my own eye. I need not read some of it.'

'I understand, uncle.'

'After these first few sentences, he writes:

"If I have erred, I have paid. I have never been able to 'make good' (an abominable phrase which I have picked up in my wanderings), but I have done nothing that I need be ashamed of. I have neither changed my name nor brought dishonour on it. I have worked hard enough, but I missed my luck once or twice. If I tired and turned my back on an enterprise, my successors invariably scored. Perhaps I hadn't staying-power. Perhaps I am 'a man accurst.' I'm not sure."

'That's Hugh all over,' interpolated the colonel. 'In spite of his intense vitality, he never was "sure." The letter goes on: "The years slipped past, and as I grew older the love of wandering and change and excitement grew stronger in me, becoming part of my blood, necessary as air, familiar as my skin. I have had a few kaleidoscopic experiences. I have feasted and danced at Government Houses, and I have herded with all sorts and conditions of men. I have been a guide in New Zealand; in nitrate; in diamond rushes; after copra in the Pacific; seal-poaching, for the fun of it; an understrapper in a gambling-hell on the Barbary coast (that was the limit!); steward on a China mail-boat; 'on the beach'—literally sleeping on it; a reporter on a Nebraska newspaper. These are a few of my ups and downs, principally downs. And I saw you once, Ewan.

'"When I was working my passage in a 'tramp' (heavens! how many years ago!), she called for coal at Aden. We were moored in the inner harbour, and I was at the joyous task of trimming the bunkers, naked to the waist in a temperature round about one hundred and forty degrees. A troop-ship had just cast off from her moorings near us, and was moving off to the Old Country, when I came up for a breath of fresh air. Just then the band of the trooper crashed into 'Auld Lang Syne,' and at the same moment I caught sight of you waving good-bye to some people on shore at the Union Club. I had a few minutes full of reflections, to say the least of it; but, except on that occasion, I have neither been homesick nor unhappy. A man may chloroform his nature, but he can't change it. There was always the fight for life—the glitter and the tonic of travel—and when roughing it one meets more live men in a month than in years, I fancy, in the ordered grooves of the Old Country.

'"Well, well! Now I am within sight of the end of it all, for I am going to die soon, and I have something to tell you before I am past writing. It concerns a queer incident which happened here lately. 'Here' is a little cottage in a sleepy southern Italian village called Ubriano, and thereby hangs a tale.

'"In West Africa I struck up an acquaintance with an old Banffshire man. He was illiterate, shrewd, and suspicious; but he had a soft side to Scotland, and he took to me. He had a big interest in a tin-mine out there, and gave me a post under him. I slogged at it, and earned a decent salary; and although the place was up a stinking river, and the last word in climate and loneliness, I stuck to my guns and did my job for over two years. Then it did for me. The old boy had been to England, and when he came out again, he found me a very sick man. He did his best for me, hurried me to the coast, gave me a year's salary, and paid my passage here to die in the sun, although he was kind enough to put it that I was getting leave to recuperate. A month did me some good, and I was able to crawl about a little in the open; but I'm nearly finished now. Well, to my yarn!

'"Twice lately I have had a visitor, a tall, good-looking, dark-bearded man, who speaks perfect English, but has a distinctly Southern look. I should say that he has the bearing and the speech of a gentleman, although I thought him a shade too polite. I tolerated him at our first meeting; and as for our second—well, you shall hear. His card proclaimed him to be 'Mr John Wakeford, The Omnivagants' Club, London.' He was an Englishman, he said; but I doubt it, and I count myself a decent judge of nationality. On his first call he was profuse in his apologies, but he had heard that I was ill. He had a villa near Ubriano, and wondered if he could show me any attention, as he feared that I might be lonely. His voice rang kind and honest, and as I was pleased to see a countryman, of course, I made him welcome. He spent an hour with me. He was pleasant enough, I must say; but I thought him a trifle inquisitive. Now and then there would be a reference to England. Did I know it well? Forbes was a Scottish name, was it not? And so on, until his persistence, aided by my inherent aversion from discussing my descent or my career, made me freeze. Also, I had a curious feeling that he was watching me, and keeping something back. He left without unburdening himself, after a polite request that he might call again. I assented, though without warmth, for I was ill and easily exhausted. Next day he called again, and I told him civilly, but without circumlocution, that I was unable to talk much, and therefore regretted that our interview must be a short one. He looked disconcerted for a moment, but recovered himself. His next words surprised me.

'"'Mr Forbes,' he said, 'you are a man of the world, and as I have something of importance to say to you, I do not propose to talk round it. I think that you appreciate direct speech, and in the regrettable state of your health, the less time wasted in unnecessary verbiage the better.'

'"I told him that I entirely agreed with him.

'"'To come to the root of the business, I know and you know that you have something in your possession which may be of great value, but which you cannot turn into money without my help.'

'"A lunatic! This was my first thought; but he was watching me steadily, with no trace of mental derangement in his voice or demeanour.

'"'It is news to me,' I said, 'that I possess anything of value except my life, and I have only a slight hold of that.'

'"He frowned, and there was a brusqueness in his next words which irritated me.

'"'My knowledge is accurate, and you know that I am stating a fact.'

'"I felt an inclination to snub him, but the man's anxious scrutiny of my face aroused my curiosity. A consuming earnestness shone from his dark eyes. I was interested in spite of myself, but all I said was that I wished that he would be a little more explicit, and that I was sure that I could at once convince him that he was mistaking me for some one else.

'"'My telling you what I am,' he continued, 'may help to clear the atmosphere. I am a confidential emissary. At present I cannot name my principals, but I am authorised to offer you handsome, even princely, terms. Let me be frank, Mr Forbes, and give me frankness in return.'

'"'Go on, Mr Wakeford. I promise you frankness.' Madman or crank, I would humour him. It would probably shorten the interview.

'"'We have secret information that you have certain writings. Your presence here'—he paused and repeated the words, his eyes bent on mine—'your presence here is known to my principals. The document which you possess is incomplete, and useless to you; but it is of importance to those for whom I act.'

'"I told him I had not the remotest idea of his meaning.

'"'You know full well that I am speaking of the Leopard's Eye.'

'"The Leopard's Eye! The man obviously had a delusion, but I merely said that I knew nothing and cared less about the eyes of leopards or any other beasts.

'"'You are not speaking the truth,' he replied coolly, with the result that I lost my temper, and ordered him to leave the house at once, unless he wished to be removed by the police.

'"'I put your rudeness and quixotic conduct down to your illness, Mr Forbes,' he said as he rose to go. 'Remember there is a fortune hanging on your decision. Pray think calmly over what I suggest. I shall return in a few days. You require money, and I can, in exchange for the paper, offer you'——

'"At this piece of insolence I fired up again; and, after a pause, he evidently concluded that it would, to put it mildly, be undiplomatic to press me further, at least for the present. He bowed himself out with a grave ambassadorial air, but I didn't like the look in his eye when I ordered him to 'clear.'

'"Now, I have two fixed ideas concerning him—one that he is a liar as to who he is, and the other is that he is telling the truth about the existence of a document on which he wants to lay his hands. I never saw a man who looked more in earnest than this Mr Wakeford, as he calls himself.

'"After he left I thought a good deal about the queer interview, and there gradually dawned on me a recollection, like a curious dream, of hearing when a boy a family tradition about family papers bearing on lost jewels. Am I dreaming? In all likelihood I am, but it may have been worth my while writing you. The Leopard's Eye may be a jewel; but the whole thing, I confess, seems to me to be too fantastic. However, I 'll rummage through my papers when I get back my strength.

'"Well, I have given you my story. A hundred to one there is nothing in it, but you have it for what it is worth.

'"And now I am very tired. This is a good place to die in—blue skies, and blue sea, and quiet—but I would give much for a glimpse of the Glen and a kent face or two there—before I go."

'There is more, Neil,' said the colonel sadly, 'but none of it concerns Hugh's story except the postcript, in which he says that he has given instructions for his papers to be sent to me in the event of his death. And now, what do you make of it?'

'I ought to go to him at once, uncle,' I said without hesitation.

'Just what I intended to ask you. Papers or no papers, mysterious visitors and so on are of little consequence; but Hugh is ill, alone, and among strangers.'

'I will start this afternoon.'

(*Continued on page 117.*)

THE COCAINE HABIT IN INDIA.

THE coca-plant (*Erythroxylon coca*) is a flowering shrub cultivated, in several varieties, in Peru, Bolivia, and other parts of South America, in the West Indies, and in Java. It has been grown with some success, experimentally, in Ceylon, Madras, Mysore, and Bengal. The leaves are said to have the property, when masticated, of communicating remarkable sustaining-power. On this account they are chewed by the Peruvian Indian, together with lime or tobacco, or taken in the form of various decoctions. To him they are what *betel pan* is to the Hindu, *kava* to the South Sea Islander, and tobacco to mankind in general; and he is

credited with a consumption of two to three ounces daily. Among Peruvians over-indulgence is said to be comparatively rare. When it occurs, the effect is much the same as in the case of over-indulgence in opium. The coca-eater loses his appetite, suffers from impaired digestion, and, when not under the influence of the drug, becomes phlegmatic and apathetic. Prior to the war export of coca-leaves was made chiefly to Germany and Holland, for the extraction of the alkaloid, cocaine, which they contain to the extent of ·2 per cent. Darmstadt was one of the main sources of the world's supply of this drug and its derivatives in pre-war days. The alkaloid and its salts are stimulative and restorative. Injected hypodermically or painted externally they produce local anæsthesia, and are much used in minor operations, particularly in ophthalmic and dental surgery. In excessive quantity, whether injected or eaten, the alkaloid and its salts have infinitely more serious effects than the chewing of the leaves of the plant. The drug acts on the spinal, cerebral, and nervous centres, first stimulating, then depressing, and finally paralysing the nerves. A very rapid tolerance is induced, and as much as sixty grains daily may be consumed. The cocaine maniac becomes emaciated, his skin shrunken and pallid, his eyes sunken, and appetite and digestion fail. Sleeplessness is an early and marked feature, insanity a common ending.

In view of its very deleterious effects, cocaine is in most countries recognised as a dangerous drug, and severe restrictions are placed on its sale. In most parts of the British Empire it is dealt with under the regulations relating to poisons. For the last quarter of a century the Government of India has been faced with a difficult problem in the prevention of the disastrous habit of cocaine-eating, which has taken firm hold among a considerable section of the people of our great Eastern dependency. The habit is of comparatively recent origin. The people of India, it is said, were introduced to it some thirty years ago, the place of origin being given as Bhagalpur, in Bihar. Prior to this cocaine was a drug little heard of outside the medical profession. Authentic details are wanting as to how the habit originated; but it is a recognised fact that the majority of its victims labour under the delusion that the drug acts as an aphrodisiac. The habit rapidly spread, to an alarming extent, to Bombay and other parts of the country, its devotees being found chiefly among classes to whom, either by religious tenets or caste rules, the use of stimulants in the form of alcohol and the well-known indigenous intoxicating drugs, *opium*, *charas*, *ganja*, and *bhang*, is forbidden. The necessity for restrictive action first came to notice in 1900 in Bengal, and evidence of the abuse of the drug rapidly appeared in other provinces. A few years later, in 1903, the High Court of Bombay, for the first time, decided that cocaine was an intoxicating drug within the meaning of the Bombay Abkari Act. This decision brought the drug within the competence of the excise authorities, who are responsible for the sale and the taxation of the indigenous drugs already mentioned. The existing excise laws of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras proved at the time to be adequate to deal with the evil; and restrictions of gradually increasing severity were imposed. Other provinces had to await amendment of the law, which was carried out by local Acts in 1904–6. A general outline of the existing excise regulations governing traffic in the drug is as follows. Local cultivation of the coca-plant and the manufacture of cocaine and its synthetics are absolutely prohibited. Import of these articles by post is prohibited, and their import and export by other means may be effected only by Government officers acting as such in the course of their official duties, by qualified medical practitioners and dentists, and by chemists and druggists licensed to sell the drugs, under permits granted by the authorities. Possession is rigidly restricted, in the case of medical practitioners and dentists, to half an ounce, and one ounce in the case of licensed vendors. Private possession, except under a medical prescription, is prohibited. Imprisonment up to one year or a fine up to two thousand rupees (one hundred and thirty-three pounds), or both, may be inflicted for a first offence, and the penalty may be doubled for a second conviction.

Coincident with the spread of the habit an extensive smuggling trade had arisen. The enormous profits to be earned in the illicit trade quickly induced a complete network of agencies and sub-agencies all over the country. These act as distributors of the drug to the miserable victims of the habit, and are always ready to ply their nefarious trade with new devotees. The inland agencies are in touch with agents at the ports, who are on the look-out for the smuggled drug. Agents of a certain type in Europe can always be found to act as intermediaries for the forwarding of supplies by post or otherwise. The matter of price is no deterrent to the wretched cocaine debauchee whose craving calls for satisfaction. One hundred and fifty rupees (ten pounds) per ounce for cocaine-hydrochloride of an intrinsic value of four rupees (five shillings and fourpence) is no unusual price paid by him to the smuggler. Whole families, from the oldest to the youngest members of both sexes, are known to have become victims of the drug. Crimes against property, in the frenzied efforts of hitherto respectable members of society to satisfy their craving for the drug, are by no means uncommon. The recorded legitimate sales of the drug in the financial year 1912–13 amounted to seventy pounds avoirdupois. In the same year over seven hundred pounds

of smuggled drug were seized by excise and customs officers in the course of their duty. No more striking proof of the seriousness of the evil can be adduced. It is not open to serious doubt, however, that large quantities of the drug can be smuggled into the country in many ways, notwithstanding the activities of the Customs Department.

The drastic measures adopted by Government, and the heavy penalties imposed, have, doubtless, not been without their effect in curbing the traffic. The outbreak of war cut off, to a large extent, imports of the drug from enemy countries. To this, probably more than to repressive measures, is due the large decrease noticeable in the number of convictions within the last three years. Much of the smuggled drug was seized on ships of the Austrian Lloyd and other lines trading between Adriatic ports and Bombay. Officers and men found a lucrative source of income in trading the innocent-looking white salt with the agents ashore. The records of the Bombay courts bear witness to the active efforts of the customs and excise officers to stop the nefarious traffic. In the financial year 1912–13, 1240 cocaine cases came before the courts, 539 in 1913–14, 219 in 1914–15, and 100 in 1915–16. A recrudescence of the evil may certainly be anticipated when the channels of trade are reopened, after the war, with Germany and Austria. Now that the cocaine habit has taken firm root, it seems unlikely that the illicit trade in the drug will be put a stop to unless and until some measures are devised, in concert with the Powers, for prohibiting its unauthorised export to India. Should India be represented at the peace conference, it is to be hoped that her representatives will keep this point in view. The country can be saved from a great and growing evil by obtaining the adherence of all countries to the Hague Opium Convention of 1912.

HIS OWN LANGUAGE.

By FREDERICK TILSLEY.

I.

'IT'S either Blighty or the bone-yard for me this time,' said Private Anson, as they lifted him on to the operating-table.

'Blighty,' murmured the American doctor ('attached for duty') reassuringly; 'sure thing.'

'And to think,' continued Private Anson with intense disgust, 'that it took ole Fritz over four years to do this to me. I was beginning to believe that he hadn't a shell what could find me—that I was what you might call imyune—if you understand me?'

'Got you first time,' answered the American doctor.

'But it seems he had one with me name and address on it; so, of course, I got it. Sweating on leave I was, too.'

Private Anson swore competently for a few moments.

'To get a slugging like you got just when you're expecting leave is pretty fierce luck,' said the American doctor sympathetically.

'Me and ole Bill Harris had it between us. Pore ole Bill! you couldn't find what's left of him with a magnerfying-glass. Out since Mons, too. . . . It's me leg, isn't it, doctor?'

'It is.'

'Will it have to come off, doctor?'

'Not if we can keep you this side of Hades with it on, sonny. Now be quiet for a few moments, and don't be scared. I'm just going to push you into dreamland.'

He administered the anæsthetic, and Private Anson slid into unconsciousness.

II.

When he opened his eyes again he was lying on a clean bed in a Nissen hut. Private Anson felt that he should have been comfortable in that bed, but he wasn't. His left leg was aching and burning, and he was desperately thirsty. He tried to alter the position of the troublesome leg, and found that it was fastened down. This annoyed him very much. He swore. Private Anson belonged to the regular army, and when he swore, he did it thoroughly. An angular orderly, with pale eyes, and hair that would certainly get him into trouble with the sergeant-major at an early date, appeared suddenly at the bedside.

'Gimme some water,' said Private Anson in a thick voice.

The orderly blinked at him protestingly. 'Can't,' he answered; 'really can't, you know. Quite impossible, old chap. You are just coming out of an anæsthetic, and water would make you horribly sick—disgustingly sick.' He shuddered. He was a very inexperienced orderly.

'I'll chance that. Gimme some water.'

'Absolutely daren't, old top.'

'Gimme some water, I tell you.'

'Can't—really can't, you know.'

'Well, gimme some beer.'

'It's absolutely against orders to give you anything to drink. I should be crimed—shot at sunrise, and all that sort of thing, you know.'

Private Anson began to swear, and the orderly shuddered again, only much more violently this time.

'I can see,' concluded Private Anson, 'that I shall have to get that water myself.' With a great effort he jerked himself into a sitting position.

The orderly sprang at him and laid gentle hands on his shoulders. 'No! no! no! You mustn't; you really mustn't, old thing. You'll hurt yourself, you know,' he said tragically.

'I'll hurt you if you don't clear off *toot sweet!*' bellowed Private Anson. He fell back with a groan; and then, remembering that his leg was fastened down, he cursed the hospital and everything in it with much vigour. He was a pugnacious individual at the best of times. In his present condition, dazed with chloroform and pain, a mule was a mild-mannered and thoughtful animal compared with him. It seemed to Private Anson that whoever tied his leg down had taken an unheard-of liberty, and he was not at all the sort of person to stand that kind of thing quietly. He set his teeth and dragged on the fastened leg with all his strength. The orderly uttered a horror-stricken bleat and ran for the sister. In spite of the pain caused him by every movement, Private Anson tugged again. He was very delirious by the time the sister arrived.

'You must be quiet,' said the sister in a firm voice. 'Otherwise you will never get better.'

Under the impression that some one was threatening him, Private Anson swore at her in a loud, clear voice. The orderly blushed, and tried to look as if he hadn't heard; the sister did nothing of the sort. She was a regular, and was used to being sworn at.

'Do you know whom you are talking to?' she asked grimly, and her voice somehow succeeded in penetrating to the befogged brain of Private Anson. He realised dimly that there was a woman present. He declared that he was sorry if he had said anything he should not have said, and asked her in a hoarse voice to forgive him. The sister forgave him freely. With a big sigh of relief he lay back and repeated the offending remarks all over again with great vehemence. And then he remembered that his leg was still fastened down. He started to pull on it again.

'Find the orderly officer, and ask him if he will come here at once,' commanded the sister.

III.

The orderly disappeared. Two minutes later he reappeared short of breath, with the orderly officer at his heels. The orderly officer was a surgeon, and, like all surgeons, he expected to be famous in the near future. He was very kind to Private Anson. He called him 'old boy' twice.

'You must be quiet, old boy,' he said soothingly, speaking with a pronounced democratic accent. 'For your own sake, you must be quiet. If you don't lie perfectly still we shall have to remove your leg. Do you understand me, old boy? Do you realise the importance of perfect quietness?'

Private Anson ought to have been flattered, but he was not. He told the orderly officer to go to a place which, though warmer than Flanders in February, is less muddy. The orderly officer laid his right hand on Private Anson's brow. It was a beautiful hand, slim and white, and muscular. Private Anson tried his very hardest to bite it. He jerked his head suddenly, and his gleaming teeth snapped like a vice, missing the surgeon's little finger by an inch. The orderly officer withdrew his hand with great suddenness, and the most democratic adjective he had yet used. The orderly cried out in alarm. The sister's eyes widened with horror, and her mouth twitched—probably the first outward expression of deep feeling she had indulged in since the South African War.

To offer violence to the hand of a surgeon is a crime which even delirium fails to excuse. The orderly officer wasted no more time on Private Anson after that; words were absolutely useless.

'Give him morphia, sister, and keep him as quiet as you can. Somebody had better stay with him all night. I am afraid it is useless, though. If he hasn't killed himself before morning, that leg will have to come off. It's a pity, too—remarkable operation in many ways—Captain Spencer was most anxious that it should turn out a success. G'night, sister.'

IV.

After a brief struggle, from which the orderly emerged with nothing worse than a very black eye, the sister succeeded in injecting the morphia. For all the apparent effect it had on Private Anson, the morphia might just as well have been water. The orderly was contending against an unusually vigorous attempt to get out of bed, when the padre entered the ward.

The padre was a little, round man, with a red, round face, and big, round glasses. He wore the South African ribbon and a wound-stripe, and had been 'over the top' more than once. Closing the door very gently behind him, he tiptoed down the ward until he reached Private Anson's bed.

'Good-evening, orderly. Is he one of my boys?'

'Couldn't say, sir,' said the orderly, grabbing Private Anson's wrists. 'Haven't had a chance to look yet.'

'What's the matter with him, orderly? He seems very ill.'

The orderly explained. His explanation was frequently interrupted by Private Anson's oft-repeated invitation to 'Come and have it out in a shell-hole, if yer fancy yerselves.'

'And the doctor thinks that if this poor boy can only be kept quiet there is a chance for his leg,' murmured the padre thoughtfully. 'Have you tried to reason with him in his own language, orderly?'

The orderly looked puzzled.

'His own language, sir? He's British, you know—quite British.'

'Quite so, orderly; but he's a Regular soldier, isn't he?'

'Yes, sir—out since Mons, and all the rest of it.'

The padre smiled gently.

'Old soldiers have a language of their own, orderly. Just go and tell the sister I should like to speak to her, will you, please? I'll look after your patient while you are away.'

The moment the orderly had turned his back, the padre glanced stealthily around him and bent over the patient.

Private Anson cursed him impartially, and mentioned several of the things that would happen if ever he caught the padre alone in a shell-hole.

The padre's eyes gleamed.

'Shut yer ruddy mouth,' he hissed, 'and listen to me! These people are doin' their best to save yer ruddy leg, and you, yer ruddy fool, are goin' the right way to lose it. If I was them I wouldn't take any more ruddy trouble with you. I'd cut the ruddy thing off, yer ruddy silly head as well, you ruddy ole wash-out!'

'If we was in a shell-'ole'—— began Private Anson indignantly.

'Yer know more about estaminets,' scoffed the padre. 'All this ruddy fuss over a bad leg, and there's fellows in this same ruddy ward ten times as bad as you not sayin' a word! Bits of kids just out from Blighty, too, most of 'em. Yer oughter be ruddy well ashamed of yerself. Can't stand a bit of pain.'

'Who can't stand a bit of pain?'

'You can't; yer too ruddy windy.'

'Windy? *Me!* I was out at Mons, I was.'

'So was I—got a tidy ole packet in the leg too; but I didn't make as much ruddy row about it as you're doin', either.'

'I can stand pain with any man,' said Private Anson, and added thoughtfully—'when I want to.'

'Well, I should start wantin' to pretty quick, if I was you. There's a 1918 kid down there, with a ruddy big 'ole in his stummick, laughin' at yer.'

'I'll speak to him in the morning,' said Private Anson severely.

'And what's more'——

'There's nothing more to be said,' interrupted Private Anson with dignity. 'You was out at Mons, I was out at Mons, and you have seen fit to insult me. I don't want any further conversation with you whatever, until I am recovered enough to knock yer ruddy 'ead off. And now I'm going to sleep—good-night to you.'

When the sister arrived the padre was mopping his brow with a large red handkerchief.

'You want me, padre? Good heavens! whatever have you done to him? Hypnotised him? I do believe he's asleep.'

'I've just been speaking to him,' said the padre, with a bland, Oriental smile. 'I spoke to him *in his own language*. I sincerely hope and believe that he will be all right now. By the way, sister, there's a special service at two o'clock to-morrow afternoon. I do hope your duties will not prevent you from attending. Good-night, sister—good-night.'

ASCENSION NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

ASCENSION ISLAND was discovered by a Portuguese named João da Nova Gallego on Ascension Day 1501. It remained uninhabited except for occasional visits of pirates until 1815, when the British took possession of it. The island has the unique distinction of being classed as a British warship, known as H.M.S. *Ascension*, and the routine of the island is the same as on a ship of war. The sea around the island abounds in fish. Many edible varieties are to be caught. Fishing by moonlight off the rocks is most successful, for in the day-time the sea teems with scavenger fish, locally known as blackfish. So sharp are their human-shaped teeth that, no matter how tough a bait may be used, it is nipped off without the angler's even feeling a jerk on the line. The varieties of fish caught at night are locally known as soldiers, bull's-eye, cod, cavally, conger, and crayfish. The soldier resembles a red carp, bull's-eye the John Dory. Mullet are also caught in pools by means of small nets. I have tried to catch them with various baits and flies, using fine trout-tackle, but I have never hooked any. They appear to be the ordinary gray mullet, but never scale over one and a half pounds. When the fry hatch out and come inshore, it is a wonderful sight to see the cavally dashing amongst them, followed themselves by albacore and sharks. So intent on their prey are these fish that they often get stranded on the beach as the huge waves recede. The air on such occasions is alive with innumerable screaming sea-birds, swooping and diving to gorge themselves with fish. Many giant turtle visit the island yearly to lay their eggs. They often weigh over eight hundred pounds, and numbers are caught and kept in ponds to be served out as food rations.

Sea-fowl which frequent the island are frigate-birds, boobies, gannet, and boatswain-birds. They nest on Boatswain-Bird Island, which is seldom visited by any one. It was at one time exploited for guano. Sooty terns visit Ascension periodic-

ally in myriads, and their eggs provide a welcome change of diet for the garrison. Partridges, mina-birds, and a few canaries live on the slopes of the hills. The partridge is a francolin, differing from the St Helena bird, which is of Indian origin. They are numerous, and would be more so were it not for the toll of them taken by wild-cats. These cats were at one time domesticated, but through being so long in a wild state have assumed the features of the European wild-cat, save in colour—they are usually black. Very destructive, they kill full-grown fowls, and are most difficult to trap or snare, shooting being the best method of destroying them. Herds of wild-goats likewise roam over the island —probably introduced by the Portuguese; they also are nearly all black in colour. Rabbits are found all over the island, and, strange to say, many of them also are black. It may be that, as with the cats and the goats, their hue has changed to blend with the black colour of the volcanic rocks, and so afford them greater protection from their enemies. There is a herd of donkeys which roam amongst the clinker. They are marked exactly like the wild-ass. Where they originated from I know not, but they are sturdy animals, and when tamed make useful pack-animals. Land-crabs are common on the higher reaches of the island. They are quite fearless, and cause alarm to the new-comer who sees them for the first time; for, when you rest on the hillside after a stiff climb, they sometimes steal quietly out of their holes, and have been known to pinch the leg of the unwary traveller.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE VALUE OF SPORT.

IT all started in a simple way. We were sitting about the hut smoking and reading, when Beefy blew in with the information that he had managed to get the company officer to challenge B Company (our deadly rivals) to a cross-country run next day.

'Are they taking it on?' asked Ginger.

'You bet they are! And I hope we knock lumps off them. They are a lousy lot; always swinging the lead about being top-dogs. It's up to us to squash them.'

'You ought to be pole-axed,' muttered Ginger.

'Why?'

'Haven't we got enough to do without plugging for ten miles through mud, brambles, cows' dung, and water? If you'd develop your old fat head, you'd do better. Cross-country run—confound you!' and he hit Beefy with a barrack pillow.

'Silly ass! You're a book-sucking hog. You want a run to shake your liver up. Every blessed thing that comes up, you veto it. Why can't you follow the crowd?'

'That's for you, with your Clapham instincts and shallow brain. You think Rugger and such like the be-all and end-all of existence. Sport was invented only to keep down your adipose tissue and turn you into a decent citizen. I've got beyond that. Joseph Conrad will do me to-morrow. I'm not on for your "follow the crowd" business.'

All this talk, although it sounds hostile, was not really so. It was that frank byplay so characteristic of the army. Ginger regarded Beefy as an over-healthy animal, only fit for Rugger and philandering; while Beefy held the view that Ginger's physical laziness was a menace to the company and the Empire. In short, Beefy was all sport and Ginger was all books. Each was a champion in that controversy which threatens to remodel our present public-school system.

'Come on, boys,' I said. 'Gather round the fire and let's have this out. Is Beefy right or wrong?'

'He is, and he isn't,' said Billy Greens, looking up from his beautifully kept notebook. 'When he talks about beating B Company I'm with him. But behind it all is that insane idea that games make the superman, and those who won't play are damned. Sport is all right in its own place.'

'Hear, hear, old Pieface!' commented Ginger.

'It's like this, boys,' said Nobby Clarke. 'Beefy is an ass, in the mental sense of the term. And he knows it. He's hanging on to this Games Committee job for all he's worth. His whole reasoning is this: "The company commander is an old Blue. If I (Beefy) can't pull through with my headpiece, I'll pull through with my zest for games." And he'll do it, for the old commandant believes in sportsmen. Beefy will make a jolly good sub., but a rotten general. He will carry out any order, and his rude health might even get him the V.C., but he couldn't give an intelligent order to save his life. He's a prize-fighter, not an officer. After the war you'll see him as a chucker-out at a pub., or throwing cannon-balls about the music-hall stage.'

'That's your rotten Nonconformist creed,' shouted Beefy. 'You got that in one of those suburban schools where they breed lawyers, Radicals, and Socialists. You can't see any good in the public-school system. I'm not a saint, I know; but I do things in the light, and am not afraid to talk about them. You're a measly Covenanter. You couldn't do ten miles at a trot to save your old face. But you *can* argue the point, and pose as a moralist. I know your

type. If games have made me a healthy animal, I rejoice. I can take my punishment. Nobby, you're a ruddy fool.'

'Question!' ejaculated Tosher.

'Oh! Here's this perishing materialist again,' remarked Ginger maliciously.

'These two beauties [Beefy and Ginger] are wash-outs. One's from Oxford; the other's from Cambridge. Oxford has made Ginger into a cock-eyed wowser, and Cambridge has turned Beefy into a base-ball looney. Ginger couldn't sell ham, and Beefy can't write a decent letter. One's all Homer; the other's all beef. Out there [Canada] these fellows don't cut ice. They can't work, and they won't work. You can see them with their tongues hanging out in Calgary saloons, or cow-punching on Armour's Beef-Canning Stations. They ain't soft, but they ain't wise. They're all right in dress-suits doing the fox-trot, but in dungarees—why, they just make me smile. And this prime cup of oxo [Beefy] has got a lien on sport, but I'd get a bush-whacking kid to lick him soft at wrestling, and knock him sick at running. You're all jaw and no push in this back-number island.'

'Now, I wonder if you're right,' said Billy, closing his notebook with a snap and jumping up.

'I guess so.'

'Give him fits, old Pieface!' shouted Ginger.

'What are your qualifications to act as judge?'

'I'm nootral, and they make us wise out West.'

'But you've only seen the froth of things, and not the substance. Ginger isn't Oxford, and Beefy isn't Cambridge. Ten minutes in the Old Country doesn't confer the right to shake us up and blow traditions into smithereens.'

'Tradition's all moonshine, Billy.'

'Perhaps; but all your grain-lumpers and pork-packers come here for wives and knighthoods. You'd sell your soul to sleep in Buckingham Palace, and pawn your trousers to eat with the Cecils.'

'Certainly,' said Tosher, 'if we wanted to push through a twenty-thousand dollar deal.'

'But aren't we sportsmen? That's the point.'

'Sure! But sport won't pay the rent, or win the war, old child. You can't kill Huns with hockey-sticks, or use tennis-balls in a barrage. Horse-sense and push-an'-go is a live scheme. You're real good, real kind; but it makes me tired to see the nootrals selling your grub to the Kaiser, and using your papers to get the plans of the latest push. You ain't wise over here.'

'And what's good about us? Anything?'

'Your soul. It's as clean as the brook, and true as Lincoln. You're fools; but you ain't willing fools. You're old; but yet you're green. This island is a happy hunting-ground for Jews, Germans, and assassins. But we can't see you fall. The Old Land is Our Land. It's the Old Home, Billy, and that's why I'm in. God help the Huns when I go out! I'll go "West" before this land goes "West."—But, say, I've got to go. I'm dining with a real live lord. He wants to see a bucking broncho from the West. Cheerio, boys!' and Tosher stepped out into the night.

'Well, that's the greatest artist Canada has produced,' said Ginger.

'That's the true Imperialism,' shouted Nobby, 'but you don't understand it. All the drivel you got in the Union won't wash in practical politics. Tosher can make rings round you, and'——

'Look here, boys,' I said. 'Let's choke Nobby and Ginger off. The question before the House is sport. We've got to run the other company to-morrow, and it's up to us to see Beefy through. It's a matter of *esprit de corps*, and we can't allow the other crowd to beat us. Sport is the backbone of the army. A good sportsman is usually a gentleman. All the Rugger men are either dead, wounded, fighting, or training for commissions. If they can't sell night-shirts or soap, they *can* obey orders, and there's no doubt they played the game in August 1914. Never mind about "after the war." We can leave that to Nobby's crowd. They'll be running the show. We shall be much happier ranching or hoofing it with the Lost Legion. It will be a much better thing to beat the other company to-morrow than to sit here reading all the Socialistic tripe of H. G. Wells or the maudlin political tosh of Morley. D—— it all, there's a war on! If Ginger and Nobby won't turn up to-morrow, then they are rotters, and we should out them.'

'Duck them,' muttered Beefy.

'How the blazes do you know we sha'n't be there to-morrow?' roared Ginger, getting roused.

'You've vetoed the run, haven't you?'

'Have I? Wait and see.'

(*Continued on page 127.*)

GIPSY LOVE.

HERE in the heart of the town,
Hurry and noise and glare—
Ah! give me the open down,
And the full free air!

Warm is home's glowing fire,
Closing each tiring day;
But give me my heart's desire—
The wind on its way!

Farewell to tumult and strife,
Smoke in a sullen sky—
I'll find me a sweeter life,
Where the swallows fly!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

NEVER before had the voyage of a civilian on the seas been followed with greater intensity of interest, a keener consciousness of there being something fateful, of enormous import to the peoples of the world, than when the *George Washington*—which was once a German ship—steamed east from the United States to France with President Wilson as chief passenger. He was coming to exert influence, and to give counsel for their good, for the happiness of their children, for the better future of the world, to peoples which, flushed with victory and seeming at times even to lose a full sense of ideals, may have needed such moral assistance. And never was the moral dominance of this man better demonstrated than at this time, for, though in previous weeks, the war being won, the celebrations being in progress, and the terms of the conquerors being complacently or exultingly reckoned, there was a disposition in places to ask for the first time who might be this President that he should arrogate to himself the right to make a list of fourteen points for peace, who, indeed, had appointed him to be a ruler and a judge over nations that were victorious, there was a hush when it was known that Woodrow Wilson had embarked. An argosy laden with the full volume of the treasures of civilisation could not have had its progress more closely watched than was that of the *George Washington.* Day by day were the details of the voyage to Brest reported, not in the old manner of curious detail of a personal kind, but with words that suggested the importance, the high consequence, the fatefulness of this affair. Presidents of the United States do not come to Europe during their term of office. Here was a rule broken, for a tremendous cause. Those who had murmured against what they suggested might be presidential interference with the management of their victory, experienced a strange influence again at the sailing of the Democratic head of the freest State, the one who has spoken most loudly and with the greatest reason and sincerity upon the better ordering of the world after the war for the good of mankind. It seemed to make a difference when it was known that the President was coming. He as no other man stood boldly for the banishment of war; but as he approached European shores victorious peoples, who but a few months before had been in agony with war and had pleaded for the President's assistance in all their idealistic endeavours, were heard to be murmuring of the possibilities of Conscription in permanence among them, the maintenance of grand armies such as had veritably produced the greatest and most horrible war. There seemed to be a hush among these excited peoples as the President approached. A great sincerity was advancing upon something different.

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The circumstances of this voyage were remarkable. Mr Wilson is to all appearances and knowledge a very plain and unromantic man. He is marvellously methodical. He acts upon reason and in the most modern way, and with the most modern devices for his assistance. He cannot be considered as a materialistic man, for he has a soaring idealism above that of other statesmen whom we know; but yet he deals with plain facts and circumstances in a plain and circumstantial way, takes this poor world as he finds it, and exerts himself in a manner that is appropriate to the chief of the Americans. Beyond work and the prosecution of his ideals he has few enthusiasms. He plays golf; they say he does not play it very well. He likes to walk, and to ride in an automobile. In hours of tension he loves solitude and the unhindered working of his own uninfluenced mind. There is something unusual, probably something very great, in a man who thus gives himself to solitude. I do not know what the President eats; I have not inquired when I have been at Washington; but it would not be a surprise to learn that it was plain fare such as any good and simple American might enjoy. I have, indeed, been told that he drinks no wine, and that when first he came to the White House there were certain difficulties as to his preferences in such matters and inconveniences that might be occasioned to his guests. Washington society, however, seems to have found the difficulties not insuperable. Perhaps Mr Wilson has some vices; but if he has them, their exact complexion has not yet been disclosed, even though he has twice passed the fiery ordeal of election for the presidency, and has laid him-

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self open to universal examination and criticism. Now, it is a quality of vice that in certain quantities it often makes for romance. One who is without it is apt to appear to a world that is far from good and pure as too dull and plain and insipid. Thus, when we look upon those stern and yet not ungentle features of the President—the master's mouth, the eyes that pierce beyond, the purposeful set of countenance, a touch of anxiety generally upon it—we sometimes think this is a cold, unattractive man for all his tremendous moral strength and worth. But it is not so; and even if it were, the circumstances of this voyage suddenly transformed the President to the most shining figure of all the hour's romance. The peoples of the earth were not singing songs of joy and satisfaction when he took ship, as but two months before one would have supposed they would. Instead, they were disposed to ask the wherefore and the why; they were perhaps suspicious and somewhat fearful because they engaged in new designs, and some said that they were even disposed to coquet with the principles of the peace as they had laid them down before. In his own country, the flow of American blood having ceased, and the enormously strong position that the United States has gained through the war being guaranteed, there was a disposition to challenge the conduct of the man who had clearly taken a front-line place for himself in American history alongside Washington and Lincoln. Mr Wilson is of the Democratic Party; the Republicans now broke out strongly against him; they questioned the advisability and the right of his travelling to Europe for the Peace Conference. Other American Presidents had not made such voyages during their terms; but then there had not been peace conferences like this in which the whole world —and America with it—was so much concerned. Some accused Mr Wilson of too much reticence in regard to his peace programme. But he pursued his plan in that unswerving and persistent way in which, slowly and surely, with marvellous perspicuity and adroitness, he won over in a solid block to participation in the war the whole American nation, till then a people of factions and racial prejudices, the majority of them averse to any active part in the European struggle. This conversion was in its way one of the most marvellous feats of statesmanship ever accomplished. At that time the newspapers in Britain, France, and other countries sang the praises of the President loudly and with no restraint of epithet. . . . The war went on.

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Some time later a political offensive, as these things have been called, was begun. Germany and her friends, feeling distress, appealed to the United States; the Allies looked in the same direction for a lead. There had been things that had not worked well and wisely in their own statesmanship, which had been halting and sometimes lacking in moral force. It was feared only that Mr Wilson, when he answered the appeals of the enemy, might not be strong enough, that he might be disposed too much to temper justice with mercy. But among all the statements, the documents, the speeches of the war, the things that men of importance said in that period, for clarity, exactness, force, and a peculiar directness that is distinctly fascinating, there are none like those of this man, who is such a master of plain words. When Germany cringed and pleaded, he told her cold truth. His Note of October 23, simple, sharp statement as it is, has some of the elements of full drama, for there is a gradual rise to a pointed climax, and a final tremendous crash with the word 'surrender,' which had not been used before. The Note opened softly, it increased in volume and in force, and it ended with a passage which will be for ever famous: 'Feeling that the whole peace of the world depends now on plain speaking and straightforward action, the President deems it his duty to say, without any attempt to soften what may seem harsh words, that the nations of the world do not and cannot trust the word of those who have hitherto been the masters of German policy, and to point out once more that, in concluding peace, and attempting to undo the infinite injuries and injustices of this war, the Government of the United States cannot deal with any but veritable representatives of the German people, who have been assured of a genuine constitutional standing as the real rulers of Germany. If it must deal with the military masters and the monarchical autocrats of Germany now, or if it is likely to have to deal with them later, in regard to the international obligations of the German Empire, it must demand not peace negotiations, but surrender. Nothing can be gained by leaving this essential thing unsaid.' That was the end of it. Without a doubt, that influenced strongly the speedy conversion of Germany to democracy. Not many days passed before the Kaiser and his son were refugees in Holland. The peoples again marvelled at the President of the fine, firm words and the clear vision and the moral strength, and they admired him. He was not like the other statesmen. When a formula for peace was needed his famous Fourteen Points were accepted, and the fourteenth was the League of Nations on which Mr Wilson had set his heart and mind as the greatest of all ideals, one that would mean a turning-point in civilisation, the beginning of a new order in a new world, the abolition of the hellish system of war that reduces men to beasts. All then said, 'Yes, a League of Nations would be splendid.' War must be ended for evermore; a further preparation for it was unthinkable. A little more time went on, and then the war was ended. The bells rang, the people made merry, and the politicians took their old tools out of the cupboard again.

And now when the war was won there came a change, as we know, in many things—mostly a happy change. The streets of town were white with light at night; it seemed a wondrous thing. Our daily bread became more palatable. Some irritating restrictions were removed. Man, still with many shackles about him, began to sniff the air of freedom, or thought he did. The war-clouds were dispersed. And then a curious thing happened in regard to Mr Wilson; some of the people, or rather their leaders, began to pick holes in the President and his policy, which now appeared to matter far less. Germany was beaten; her victors were secure; they could do as they liked. The President seemed to dwindle. Some suggested that he interfered too much. There had to be a certain manipulation of his Fourteen Points. There was a disposition, as some said, not to trouble much about the League of Nations, which was perhaps a chimerical scheme. After all, they said, was not war inevitable, had it not always been, and would it not always be? Were there not yellow races coming on that might throw out a desperate challenge to the white? And some even said that, with all its horrors we have come to know so well, war was not all bad. Some commercial elements—profiteers, as many of them are called—and certain politicians and others said so. The old enthusiasms for peace were a little less; flushed with victory, a part of the world seemed half-inclined to forget its better self. The opportunist weakness of faltering human nature—'When the devil was sick, the devil a saint would be; when the devil was well, the devil a saint was he'! The President saw the ideals languishing amidst a new indifference. Now the nations, or some of their leaders, were already whispering of the possibility of future wars, and the need for preparing for them. They considered in some cases that it might not be a good thing to get rid of militarism. There were ideas abroad that Conscription in Britain might hereafter be necessary. About this time the devil was feeling very well. In such circumstances the President, holding hard to his ideals, determined to go to Europe and further his case as best might be done. It was a momentous decision. He would plead for perpetual peace, exert his strength towards the establishment of the League of Nations, show that it was a real, a practical, scheme, and that mankind must adopt that scheme if it would be saved. It appears, on the deepest consideration, that there are only two possible ways in which war can be avoided in the future: one is by such a League of Nations as this, and the other by purely Democratic and Labour government. Failing these, wars must continue—and alas for those who must withstand the horrors of the next!

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It is curious to see how this unmilitary, unroyal civilian has exerted a remarkable moral ascendancy everywhere, how so much of the world looks towards him hopefully and with a deep respect, how he is regarded as no man has been regarded before, and that despite the fact that those who are intimate with him and associated with his affairs and his management of himself declare that he is one of the worst men in the world for the achievement of personal publicity. Those who have been connected with him since he was President of Princeton University and Governor of New Jersey say they cannot remember a single case in which he put himself out to obtain such publicity. He simply will not advertise; he hates the propaganda of self. He dislikes seeing particulars of his personality in print; and at election and other times, when such publicity is highly advantageous, he has turned down innumerable proposals for the advertising of himself. It is said that since he has been President he has seen far fewer correspondents and writers than any of his predecessors; and he himself has declared that in all the descriptions of himself, his work, and his methods that have been published during the last few years he has been able to recognise himself in only a very few. There are two standard ways of describing him. By one, the most general, he is represented as a hard, cold, highly methodical, and dull man of affairs, an up-to-date American governmental machine; by the other he is a dreamer of dreams, who in solitude sees visions and formulates impossible ideals for a new world which he lays before the peoples in impressive documents. What he does and how he does it is rarely told. Thus we find an impression that all the time of the war he was at the White House in Washington, pondering upon problems with Mr Lansing or some other, promulgating Notes to the world, and only occasionally venturing forth into the open country of the States and preaching the points of duty to an anxious but willing people. But if only a little were known of the things he has done that are not permitted to be known, romance would soon begin to glow about this strange, strong man. Upon the walls of the Capitol at Washington there are many fine and expansive pictures depicting incidents of high significance in the history of the country. They tell impressively something of its early struggles with the Indians, the case of the Dutch, the French, and others, and of stirring events by the waters of the Hudson and the Mississippi. In particular there are, among these great mural paintings which will tell to future generations how America was made and how she wrought for her own salvation in the first two centuries of her existence, a number of representations of the strife with the British showing how it established American independence. If the truth of what the President has done is permitted hereafter to be known, it must be impossible for

pictures of certain events in which he was intimately and personally concerned to be omitted from those walls of Washington where there will surely be told the story of the raising of the great American Army, its transhipment over the seas, and its gallant fights in France. Here for brief mention is one such presidential action, an account of which was not published in the newspapers, but which is coming to be known. What was reported once in the way of a very simple little paragraph was that the President had left Washington for a trip in the governmental yacht *Mayflower*. That was in the summer of 1917, when America, in the war, was laying herself hard to the great task before her. There was nothing extraordinary in the proceeding; Presidents often went for trips in the *Mayflower*. However, this was a time when the President was acting as Commander-in-Chief of the navy, as by the constitution he is, and of the army too. The American Navy was preparing for active service on 'the other side.' A few destroyers had gone in advance, but the big ships, the Dreadnoughts like the *New York*, the *Utah*, the *Wyoming*, and all the rest—a splendid fleet—were still in American waters, but ready now to go. The *Mayflower*, as she seemed so unpretentiously and tranquilly to steam down the Potomac, was going out to sea to join this prepared fleet. The appointed place was far out, away from sight of land and from the knowledge of most Americans. There the fleet was gathered together; orders for its being so had been issued by the Secretary of the Navy Department. And so on the following afternoon the officers of all the fleet were assembled on the deck of the leading battleship, and there, with no ceremony, no saluting, no form or fancy reception of any kind, the President appeared before them. There were a few things which, as the first American and their leader, he wished to say to them before they went away. He wasted no words; he talked to them simply, plainly, and very directly. He told them that the submarine had to be beaten, and that they had to do it. He wanted from the American Navy not merely a record as good as that of other navies, but a better one, if it were possible to obtain it. He called for action at its best, alike from admirals and from junior officers, and he demanded that all the wits of all the officers of the fleet should be applied with the utmost American intensity to the solution of the submarine problem. He urged upon them that all, regardless of rank or distinction, must work and fight for the common object of victory. They say that that afternoon on the deck of the Dreadnought Woodrow Wilson was on fire, and that he thrilled those naval officers. Afterwards it was suggested to him that the speech ought to be published, but he would have none of it. There were no reporters or photographers there; it was the President's desire that this should be regarded as a private, but an earnest, talk to the men upon whom he laid a great trust. The *Mayflower*, steaming west again, crept quietly up the Potomac with the President; while the American fleet with a great heart pounded away to the east where was the war. And it is known very well what a fine account it gave of itself, and how the British and American fleets have come by such an admiration and respect for each other as no man would have believed. A picture of that assembly on the battleship must surely be laid upon the walls at Washington.

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The independence, the singularity, of his manner and method are remarkable. He is a law unto himself; and his exactness, his certainty, his consequent force, are like those of no other statesman. In an age when most men seek to gain time by a system of short conversations and to dispense as much as possible with writing, the President believes intensely in the time-saving and efficiency advantages of the written word. When a problem is to be laid before him for his solution, he prefers not to see many people upon it to argue with them, but would have all the facts laid before him in writing. When men would present a case to him, declaring that they could do it so well in no other way, he demands a memorandum first, for the same thing might have been submitted to him before, and to go over old ground would be a waste of time, and nothing is so much abhorred by Mr Wilson as a waste of time. If, after he has seen the memorandum, he considers it would be profitable to see the man, the latter is told of it. When an interview is given he asks that it shall be cut as short as possible, no matter what the circumstances may be, and that conversation shall be limited to facts and nothing but facts. It is always said of the President that he has a veritable passion for facts. So the preliminary courtesies of introduction and the final perorations of farewell are cut out. He uses the telephone very much, and for one particular reason—that the telephone is not an instrument of ceremony. When he has obtained the information he needs, he can terminate the conversation more easily than if it were a personal interview. It is but a case of hanging up the receiver and the trick is done. By such and other economies of time he is able to accomplish an almost incredible amount of work. They say he was directly and personally and actively concerned with every move that was made in the war by the United States, that he studied and was in a varying degree responsible for every plan that was made, that he knew of the service rendered by every officer of high command, that he read every important cablegram that was delivered to the

Department of State. When, at a most critical moment, General Pershing unreservedly offered the services of the American Army to Marshal Foch, it was not known or appreciated that it was the President who directed this move. Europe during the war marvelled at the manner in which he so often did the right thing, said just the right word at the right time, that which others had searched for, but could not find. One reason for this is his own sure knowledge and instinct, his true and absolute statesmanship; and another is his unerring calculation of public opinion, which he studies in every possible direction with the greatest thoroughness. He has extracts from the editorials of all the newspapers laid before him or quoted to him, and he has what can best be described as a system of friends. He has hundreds of intimate friends everywhere, chosen for their sense and judgment. He has reckoned up these friends very carefully, ascertained their prejudices, their knowledge, the value of their opinions. When he appeals to them, he knows exactly the worth of their statement or suggestion. These people write to him continually, telling him their news and their views, telling them to him in the plain, succinct way that he prefers, and their assistance to him is of the highest value. Partly from a personal knowledge that has been gathered in his own country, partly from the information of those who know him, one could continue for many pages upon the characteristics of a strange, subtle, and most forceful personality. One could tell how he takes fine care of the health that enables him to do such prodigious work, of his interesting system of life, of his memory, which is the wonder of all officialdom, and all the rest of it. But always it is his force and his originality that impress the most. The other day the venerable Dr Clifford wrote thus: 'Can any one hesitate to regard President Wilson as a gift of God? How opportune his advent, backed by the unstinted resources and whole-hearted devotion of the people of the United States! How keen and sure his vision, incisive his speech, strong his devotion to Democratic principles, and sound and just the foundations he has laid for a clean and abiding peace!' Never did man set himself a grander or more difficult task. Peoples pray that he may prevail.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER IX.

'THE sooner you start the better,' said the colonel approvingly. 'But I have more to tell you. Hugh's reference to a hazy memory of a family tradition kindled a train of thought in me; for the strange thing is that there *has* existed a tradition in our line concerning lost or stolen jewels. It dates, I believe, from the sixteenth century, and I have something which bears on it. It is in a little, hidden, fireproof safe which is built into the wall opposite, behind those two rows of imitation books. I don't suppose you ever knew of the safe's existence. See!'

He went to the book-shelves, touched a spring, and the dummy books fell outwards, disclosing the door of a little safe. Having taken a bunch of keys from his pocket, he opened the safe door, and from a drawer inside it drew out a long envelope.

'I remember my father, very many years ago, reading the envelope's contents. They made no impression on me at the time, possibly because he assured me that they were valueless curiosities. He and his father before him knew no more of their history than I do—which is precious little. I had forgotten all about them, and never had occasion to look at them until yesterday, when Hugh's letter arrived. All I know is that there was a tradition in the family that a reward for faithful services, a signal favour in the shape of jewels, had been sent long ago by one of the Popes to the then Forbes of Glenciuin, and that the jewels never reached him.'

He drew from the envelope two yellow-stained papers, very thin, and so worn at the edges that they hardly held together. The first one was legible in parts, and its nature was clear. Some of the quaint, faded, spidery characters of a bygone age were not readable, but it was plain that it was an inventory of valuables. It ran thus:

Pax Christi. *Given at Saint Mark's . . . ye Fisherman His Ring . . . in Ye Fourthe Yeare . . . faithful servants . . . Glenciuin in ye Northe . . . ane Great Matter concerning our unhappie Realme of Scottland . . .* Item *Siller Galleon . . . Four and Twentie Great Black Pearles at ye Bulwarkes . . . Five Golde . . . Crucifix Carven and Sett about with Gemms . . . two Cordes . . . jeweld Rosarie to his Ladye . . . Lyon of Scottland on a Shield . . . Crosses of Emirants a lesser Brazen Casquett and ane Great Jewell of ye farthest Inde a Marvell to See Itt and None Other is ye Greate Leppard's Eye.*

'The Leopard's Eye!' I exclaimed. 'The man "Wakeford" used the same words. Can it be possible that the old story of the jewels was true?'

'True or not, there is certainly something more than a strange coincidence here.'

'Does the other paper help us?'

'I am afraid not. It looks about as promising as a dried cabbage-leaf. But my eyes are old. Take this magnifying-glass and see if you can make anything of it.'

He opened the other paper and laid it on the table, and I took the glass and bent over it, hoping to find something of interest; but I was

disappointed. The paper was covered with damp stains. A few very faint characters showed here and there, but it was plain that for any practical purpose it might as well have been a blank sheet.

'Well?' asked the colonel, after I had scrutinised it.

'The years have done for it, sir. Only the ghosts of a few of the original characters remain. No one will be able to make out a single word of it, I fear.'

I was giving it a farewell look under the glass, when a word at the foot of the paper caught my eye. I gazed so long that the colonel was moved to suggest that my sight was no better than his own.

'One moment, uncle. I don't know what to think. This is remarkable.'

I stared at the paper. My thoughts went back to the night of the fog in Edinburgh, for the words I read were '*Exultabunt Domino*,' and in front of the first word was a little Roman cross. They were in tiny, cramped, faded characters, but there was no doubt about them.

'What's the matter, my lad?' asked my uncle. 'Your eyes are jumping out of your head!'

I told him the whole story of the affair in the fog, the red-haired man, the pocket-book left in my rooms, the slip of paper in the imitation cigarette, and the murder of the foreign sailor.

'The unfortunate thing is that I did not copy the paper,' I said ruefully. 'It was not intelligible. I could make out one or two English words, but I was struck by two Latin words at the foot. These were "*ossa humiliata.*" I remember them distinctly. There is a link between that paper and this one. The words in the two papers run thus: "*Exultabunt Domino ossa humiliata,*" which sentence occurs in the Roman Catholic Office of the Dead.'

The colonel had risen and was pacing the room, his face very grave.

'That in itself does not get us very far,' I went on; 'but what impresses me is that the left side of the paper taken from my cabinet was ragged and uneven. Now, the right side of this paper is also ragged, and it may well be that the one in your possession and the one stolen from me in Edinburgh fit into each other to form an intelligible document. If this be so, the men who have the other paper in their possession are searching for the one which will fit it, and give them a key to something.'

'A key!'

'Yes; a key to a hiding-place.'

'It is possible that Hugh has some papers which may throw light on all this. But I wish'—and there was an unusually sombre note in his voice—'I wish that I had never heard a single word about the business. I hope there is no danger in your going to Italy. Don't forget that the contents of the Edinburgh pocket-book were of such importance that it was whisked away next morning as soon as you turned your back. Now, this paper which has lain peacefully for years is resurrected. I have half a mind to throw it into the fire.'

'I beg of you to let me keep it for you meanwhile. Or you can deposit it for safe custody with your bankers.'

He did not answer, but ceased his slow pace up and down the room, and stood looking down into the fire with a troubled frown.

'Neil, I have something else to tell you,' said he. 'I may be an old fool—at my age one sometimes has queer fancies—but when I read Hugh's letter about the dark visitor and his errand, I confess it gave me something to think about. My boy, I believe I am being spied upon. I swear to you that three times lately a dark-looking stranger has been seen by me prowling near the house.'

Instantly I recalled Dr Hall's conversation with me in the Caledonian Hotel. Intensely interested, I begged my uncle to tell me the full story; and I now give his statement as accurately as I can remember it.

(*Continued on page 135.*)

RUBBISH.

By Doxa Foy.

IT is often said that the waste of one generation proves the wealth of the next. One wonders how our own 'next generation' will fare, as we are leaving very little 'waste' for them to turn to account. The most unpromising materials are being made to yield products of great value, and some of these are so accessible, so easily and economically manufactured, that the development of them is likely to be continued, now the war is over.

The task of 'making bricks without straw' has not proved beyond us, and it may be that our task-masters, Scarcity and Necessity, will, unlike those of the Hebrews in Egypt, one day be the recipients of our deepest gratitude.

Our Victorian grandmothers are often referred to as examples of thrift, but we imagine they would have been somewhat surprised if they had been asked to save from the rubbish-heap their old boots, the 'combings' of their pet dogs, their plum-stones, and nut-shells!

It was considered something of an act of supererogation to save the bones of the joint for soup, instead of throwing them to the dog; and yet we are told nowadays that these bones will provide eighty different by-products, after the

cook—and perhaps the dog too!—is done with them!

It will be many years before living becomes easy again, and it may be that we shall never go back to the extravagant, wasteful methods which had grown up with this luxury-loving generation. Be that as it may, it is probable that the development of some of these newly discovered industries will do something towards providing work for the 'unemployed' after the war.

At the best of times the problem of fuel has been a source of anxiety to the poor, and one hopes that the substitute for coal, which even at this time costs under ten shillings a ton to prepare, will not be allowed to slip into abeyance. This substitute is made from pulverised ash-bin refuse, of which ten million tons a year are said to be produced in England. It burns with a good flame, emits very little smoke, and gives out a strong heat.

Straw is now being made to yield most of the substances obtained from coal. Special retorts have been invented for the distillation. The straw is pressed into cubes and heated to about 1000° F. —five times as hot as boiling water! By this means a ton of straw produces, in something less than an hour, nearly twelve thousand cubic feet of gas, six hundred pounds of lampblack, eight gallons of tar, and a large amount of ammonia for fertilising purposes.

Sawdust has hitherto been regarded as a convenient material for packing, but very little use has otherwise been made of it. In the near future, when the demand for small and cheap houses has to be met, sawdust is likely to be exalted to a high place in commercial value. Mixed with clay, it is being made into bricks and tiles, the beauty of which is that they can be cut with a saw, and nails can be driven into them with ease. Indeed, we may expect the whole house to be built of sawdust, for, when mixed with concrete and laid down moist, it makes an excellent flooring material, softer and more elastic to the tread than either ordinary concrete or tiles.

The rubbish-heap has been the source of many romances in the history of commerce. The despised but necessary 'dust-heap' has proved again and again that nothing is 'waste.'

Rubbish-heaps are like men, in that some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. Among the inherently great were the disfiguring mountains of rubbish which used to surround steelworks, composed of the old and useless linings of the vessels in which the steel was made. They were a veritable nightmare to the manufacturers, till it was suggested that the materials of which the linings were made might prove valuable on the land as fertilisers. Now the demand for 'basic slag,' as it is called, exceeds the supply!

Among the rubbish-heaps which have, in spite of many obstacles, 'achieved greatness' may be mentioned those composed of the refuse known as 'silk waste.' As all who have kept silkworms are aware, this 'waste,' consisting of old cocoons, dead silkworms, and a sticky mass of twigs and leaves, presents a most unpromising material on which to work. Nevertheless, Mr Samuel Cunliffe Lister, a woollen manufacturer, afterwards Lord Masham, succeeded in turning this loathsome mess into fabrics of great beauty and daintiness, after many trials and failures—incidentally making for himself a huge fortune thereby.

As an instance of waste which has had 'greatness thrust upon it' ('notoriety' would perhaps be a better word), hydrochloric acid, from which chlorine gas is made, may be cited.

At the end of the eighteenth century a Frenchman, M. Leblanc, invented a process for making soda from common salt. By this process hydrochloric acid was given off as a waste product. We in these days know only too well the cruel and desolating properties of this gas.

Not realising that the gas was heavier than air, the manufacturers thought to dispose of it by letting it escape through tall chimneys, with the result that all vegetation was destroyed, and life became almost impossible in large areas round the factories. Taller chimneys were built —with the consequence that larger areas were affected. Then some one hit upon the idea of dissolving the hydrochloric acid in water. This water, of course, ultimately reached the rivers, and the outcry increased.

The manufacturers were at their wits' end, when the problem was solved in a remarkable manner, and the hydrochloric acid became a valued source of wealth instead of an unmitigated nuisance.

In 1861 the duty on paper was abolished, with the result that a great demand grew up for books and newspapers. Straw, grass, nettles, wood, and other materials were used for the manufacture of paper, and these must, of necessity, be bleached in some way.

Chlorine gas was then, as now, the best and cheapest bleaching agent known, and it was not long before the hated hydrochloric acid became a valuable and valued by-product.

A present-day instance, which repeats the history of basic slag, is that of the waste-heaps surrounding the Cornish tin-mines. The metal tungsten, used for hardening steel, is obtained from wolfram, an ore which is found associated with tin. Wolfram used to be regarded as a veritable 'wolf in the fold' by the tin-miners. As it was of the same specific gravity as tin, the only means of separating it was by hand. When war broke out wolfram leapt into prominence as one of the most precious ores in the world, and the rubbish-heaps around the Cornish tin-mines became a valuable source of supply. Whereas the smelters once demanded that the tin should not contain more than 2 per cent. of wolfram, now the position is reversed, and the wolfram must not contain more than 2 per cent. of tin.

MR SWEETBREAD'S SURPLICE.

PART II.

I.

IN due course the bishop married Sweetbread and Christabel, and for three years there was naught but bliss at Tittlebury Rectory.

Then that famous young widow, Mrs Doncaster, returned to the Manor House from France, where she had been nursing the wounded. Her beautiful profile, so often depicted in the illustrated press, is familiar to us all. However, those who have actually seen her agree that none of her photographs quite does her justice.

'Do you consider her good-looking?' Christabel asked her husband anxiously at dinner.

'Her nose is at least a quarter of an inch too long,' he answered promptly. 'It's of the kind, too, that grows redder with age.'

'Then you wouldn't like to kiss her?' said Christabel, remembering her husband's notorious exploits.

'I'd rather eat my surplice,' answered Mr Sweetbread emphatically, to Christabel's great joy.

But O'Brien, Mr Sweetbread's hot-headed Irish curate, who often dined with them, was extremely annoyed at this remark. Mrs Doncaster and he had caught sticklebacks together as children in County Tipperary, and she had nursed him when suffering from the shell-shock he acquired while serving as chaplain.

'I don't think rectors should talk about kissing ladies and eating surplices,' he spluttered hotly.

'Is anything the matter with the soup?' questioned Christabel crushingly.

But O'Brien was very much upset, the shell-shock still affecting his nerves, and he repeated his rector's strictures, in confidence, to his friend Miller, curate in the next parish, who told his fiancée, who repeated them to Miss Webber, Christabel's old enemy, who told Mrs Doncaster herself, with ingenious embroideries and appalling exaggerations.

The story was a little more than a fortnight on its zigzag way to Mrs Doncaster.

'Look 'ere, Mr Sweetbread,' said the people's churchwarden, confronting him angrily in the High Street of Tittlebury as the bells were chiming eleven on a windy morning, three weeks afterwards, 'I suppose you're aware as 'ow Mrs Doncaster 'as left your church, and gone over to the Dissentin' chapel?'

'Impossible!' cried Mr Sweetbread, perfectly horrified at the suggestion.

Some time before he had quarrelled with the Dissenting minister, and the dispute between them was now at its hottest, Sweetbread having preached the tenth of a course of sermons entitled, 'Dissenting Ministers as Decoys of the Devil,' and the Dissenting minister being at the same point in his outspoken series, 'Sinners in Surplices.'

'Impossible!' repeated Mr Sweetbread, waving his umbrella indignantly. 'What on earth would Mrs Doncaster go to chapel for?'

'Because of the hawful things you keep sayin' about 'er behind 'er back,' said the churchwarden, his little eyes snapping nastily; 'and if she goes to chapel, all the village will go with 'er. Did you see what the *Tittlebury News* said about 'er this mornin'?'

'No,' answered Mr Sweetbread nervously.

'The leadin' article said that, besides 'avin' perhaps the very loveliest of the lovely faces for which the district in which the paper circulates is noted, she 'ad won for 'erself himmortal fame. It says she stayed on in the hospital-ship long after the last boat 'ad left, gettin' the wounded soldiers on to rafts, though the Germans was a-firin' at 'er no end. And she ain't conceited about it either, for, when my wife said she ought to get the V.C., she said my wife deserved it more than she did, for it took much more bravery to sit in church a-listenin' to one of your long sermons.'

'The man's intoxicated,' thought Mr Sweetbread, turning his back. Of course, if Mrs Doncaster went to chapel, it would almost ruin him, most of the villagers being her servants or tenants. But surely Mrs Doncaster would never insult her pretty ears, he thought, by listening to the brain-rotting balderdash of that windy word-bag!

However, on his way home he had to pass the Nonconformist minister's garden, where, over the wall, he caught a glimpse of that white-whiskered and usually very dignified gentleman performing a Highland-fling on the lawn, all by himself, evidently in a state of ineffable jubilation.

From that moment Mr Sweetbread began to fear the worst.

Then, as he passed the 'Doncaster Arms,' he imagined he heard a husky voice growl, 'Surplice-eatin' hog!' But perhaps his ears deceived him.

However, as he entered his large, luxurious study, where O'Brien was waiting for him, a suspicion struck him. 'Oh, by the way, O'Brien,' he said, 'do you remember how, in innocent badinage one evening, I made a joke about eating my surplice rather than kiss Mrs Doncaster? It annoyed you, I remember. You weren't mad enough to repeat it to anybody?'

'I was,' admitted O'Brien. 'But it was only one of my friends I told, in confidence.'

'And now it's in every mouth in the parish!

Tell me, sir, what was your text last Sunday morning?'

'"The Tongue is a Fire,"' quoted the curate.

'And didn't it occur to you,' said the rector, with moving gesticulations and most pathetic eloquence—'didn't it strike you that, at that very moment, within the sacred edifice itself, there was a tongue to which the designation of the text might most properly, most appropriately, be applied?'

'Yes, rector, it did.'

'And whose was that tongue?' Mr Sweetbread went on, bringing his reproachful forefinger round so that it bore directly upon the curate.

'Your own, rector,' answered the young man, gazing at him firmly.

'Mine?' cried Mr Sweetbread with a start. 'Mine?'

'Yes. Was it not your tongue that started this scandal about surplice-eating? I wrote that sermon specially for your benefit. I hoped it might do you good.'

Mr Sweetbread's knees almost gave way. 'A curate thinking that one of his sermons might do his rector good!' he gasped, leaning against the mantelpiece. 'Oh Modesty, Modesty, whither hast thou fled?'

For a moment he thought of giving his curate notice; then he remembered Mrs Doncaster's intimacy with him. Perhaps she would come back to church for O'Brien's sake. So he made up his mind, magnanimously, to let the young man off with a reprimand.

'O'Brien,' he said, 'when the bishop sent you here, he warned me that you had a fiery temper, and said I was to teach you to overcome it. I must, therefore, ask you to preach on meekness next Sunday morning. Meekness is the loveliest of all the virtues, especially in a curate. And, by the way, if I catch any of the villagers spreading their vile tittle-tattle about my surplice-eating, I'll thrash them till they yell—yes, till they yell!'

II.

If Mr Sweetbread had carried out his threat, he would have been obliged to castigate the whole of his congregation. The most shocking, fearful, incredible versions of his remark about the surplice were in circulation. If questioned, O'Brien heatedly declined to give details, and every day saw the tale more exaggerated and the villagers more incensed at the affront to their idolised lady. She didn't attend Mr Sweetbread's church next Sunday, or the Sunday following. Nor did any of the parishioners, except half-a-dozen or so. The rest followed Mrs Doncaster to chapel, the prestige of which looked up to such an extent that the minister, at the suggestion of the deacons, started wearing a silk hat on week-days.

On hearing this Mr Sweetbread sent a letter of apology to Mrs Doncaster, but it was returned to him unopened. They met one evening outside the chapel, and she cut him dead; and the gesticulations accompanying his animated, not to say frantic, endeavours being misunderstood by the dispersing Dissenters, he was followed as far as the rectory by a hooting crowd. Next Sunday, besides the occupants of the rectory pew and the still faithful sexton, the congregation consisted of the village idiot—who was also deaf and dumb. A reporter, however—one of those who used to pen ecstatic descriptions of the rector's eloquence—looked in for a moment, and then went out again.

A few mornings after, Mr Sweetbread saw an article in the *Tittlebury News*, with the following large black headlines: 'THE PARIAH PARSON OF TITTLEBURY. WHY DOESN'T THE BISHOP DISMISS HIM?'

Only six weeks before, the same journal had alluded to him as 'our own eloquent and dearly loved rector.'

'Everybody's against me now,' ruminated Mr Sweetbread mournfully, as he sat over his poached eggs with Christabel—'curate, churchwarden, parishioners, press; everybody except our dear, faithful old sexton, and . . . Christabel . . . Christabel?' Here the rector wasn't quite so sure, for his wife's manner towards him lately had been very odd, especially in the early mornings. 'Christabel,' he asked reproachfully, laying down his fork, 'why do you never kiss me now?'

'Because you love Mrs Doncaster in secret,' she cried, bursting wildly into tears.

'What under heaven makes you think that?' cried Mr Sweetbread.

'Because of the way you rave about her in your sleep. You keep plunging up and down the bed for hours every night, crying out that you're going to eat your surplice for her sake.'

'But, darling,' said her husband, trying to smile, 'that's only this worry acting on my nerves. All great orators are highly strung'——

But she rushed out of the room, in strong hysterics.

The rector collapsed helplessly into his chair. 'Everybody's abandoned me now,' he thought, 'except my dear, loyal old sexton, faithful among the faithless.'

There was a rap at the door, and that faithful man appeared, cap in hand. 'I wants you to do somethin', sir,' he said.

'I'd do anything in the world *you* want, old friend,' said the rector, with affectionate moisture in his eyes. 'What is it?'

'I want you to 'eat your surplice,' replied the man.

. . . . . .

'Rector's a-goin' off 'is chump,' the sexton narrated afterwards over his beer in the 'Doncaster Arms.' 'I found some damp 'ad got into the surplice cupboard, and I tells rector that afore 'e puts 'is 'n on, it ought to be well 'eated

to get the damp out, and then he lets out a yell like a Red Hindian and jumps up, and I bolts into the coal-'ole pretty sharp, I can tell you.'

III.

After lunch the rector screwed up his courage, and determined to make one more effort to appease Mrs Doncaster. He put on his topcoat, and looking round to be sure that his wife was not following him, he took the road leading to the Manor House. As he walked up the long drive the sun was setting in a sea of pale gold, lighting up the bare branches of the ancient trees. Near the house he turned off from the drive, taking the footpath through the shrubbery, the one to the right that leads you past the library windows—it is a little nearer, as is well known. The level rays of the sun struck directly against the panes, and he thought he caught a glimpse of Mrs Doncaster within the room.

'Tell your mistress I want to see her on most urgent business—on a matter of life and death,' he told the butler.

She received him in the library. 'Oh, my dear Mrs Doncaster,' cried the rector, 'this is heart-rending; this is agonising. . . . I must explain.'

He began, and never, even when preaching on occasions when bishops or other patrons of livings happened to be present, had the anguished orator pleaded so eloquently or gesticulated so pathetically as he did then.

Mrs Doncaster commenced to soften—to melt.

'The story I heard must have been exaggerated,' she said, and Mr Sweetbread noticed that there was now a much less angry look in the lovely eyes. 'But what you did say was bad enough. Is it true you said you 'd rather eat your surplice than kiss me?'

'Yes,' confessed the rector, stammering. 'But I didn't mean it. In fact, I—I meant I 'd—I 'd like to do just the opposite, really.'

'But if you didn't mean what you said then, how can you prove you mean what you 're saying now? What could you do to prove it?'

'I 'd do anything in the world to prove to you that I didn't mean it,' protested Mr Sweetbread passionately.

'Words—only words,' she answered, shaking her head.

'Mrs Doncaster,' cried Mr Sweetbread, more passionately still, 'deeds speak louder than words. Why, at this very moment, if you would allow me, I 'd—I 'd '——

She smiled provokingly. 'What would you do?' she whispered.

It was the week after Christmas, and now for the first time he perceived that a tiny sprig of mistletoe still hung from the antique chandelier, and that Mrs Doncaster was standing directly under it with the most alluring, the most inviting, smile that he had ever seen curving feminine lips—and he had seen a good many in his day.

He went a step nearer, and the nearer he came the more entrancingly she smiled, and the more beautifully shone her lips, and the more dazzlingly gleamed her complexion. She seemed to sway towards him. . . . .

'Oh Christabel, forgive me!' said Mr Sweetbread in his heart. 'This is extremely wicked, but it 's for your sake, and for the good of my congregation, and not for any mere personal selfish gratification that I 'm doing this.'

He kissed her.

As he did so great waves of relief and joy swept through his soul. 'This 'll bring her back to church again. . . . This will dish the Dissenting minister. . . . This horrible surplice-eating nightmare is settled at last.'

But, alas! it wasn't. Far from it.

For his lips had not receded more than half-an-inch from hers when there was a terrific, splintering, clattering crash. One of the windows was shivered to pieces.

'It 's an air-raid!' exclaimed Mrs Doncaster.

The rector was staring with horror at a longish, black object that lay on the floor, just beneath the smashed window.

'Is it a bomb?' asked Mrs Doncaster a little fearfully.

'It 's something worse—oh, much worse,' said the rector, waving both his hands in horror.

'Is it poison-gas?' said Mrs Doncaster, recoiling.

'Oh, something a million times worse than that—it 's my wife's umbrella! She must have followed me, and has been watching us through the pane, and has driven the umbrella clean through the glass in her jealousy.'

'Are you all right, mum?' interrupted the alarmed butler, who had been vainly rapping at the door for some time, and now opened it unbidden—he had a poker in his hand. ''As 'e been hattacking of you?'

'No, no! Go away,' said his mistress.

The man withdrew, doubtfully.

'Oh, Mrs Doncaster,' cried poor Mr Sweetbread reproachfully, after a long silence, 'I 'm ruined! Why did you tempt me so?'

'I never gave you the least encouragement, sir!' she exclaimed, in accents of anger and surprise. 'Why, so strongly do I object to your conduct of this afternoon that I intend to report it to the bishop.'

Then Mr Sweetbread picked up his hat and fled.

IV.

It was growing dark outside, and an owl was hooting dismally.

As Mr Sweetbread passed a clump of laurels a man sprang out and confronted him.

It was a clergyman. It was his own curate, O'Brien.

'You traitor! You wouldn't have enjoyed that kiss so much if you had known I was watching you,' said the curate grimly.

'What! was it you who pushed the umbrella through the window?' gasped the rector.

'Yes, of course. Who else would it be?'

'Oh, thank Heaven!' said Mr Sweetbread most fervently. 'Then there is still hope. But what did you do it for? And what were you doing with my wife's umbrella?'

'I didn't know it was hers,' said O'Brien. 'I found it in the post-office this morning. The postmistress said she was sure it was Mrs Doncaster's, as she had just been in. So I brought it along with me. I proposed to Mrs Doncaster yesterday, and she told me to come for a definite answer this afternoon. I was absolutely certain the answer would be "Yes," and I was bursting with happiness. Then I caught sight of you kissing one another—you, of all people! Talk about shell-shock!'

'O'Brien,' said the rector passionately, 'this is heart-rending. . . . This is agonising. . . . I will—I must explain.'

He started, and, with a persuasive eloquence that Demosthenes might have envied, he explained that the kiss had been purely one of formal withdrawal, humiliation, and apology, not one of gratification.

O'Brien was at last convinced and pacified by his rector's eloquence.

'And, O'Brien,' continued the rector earnestly, 'you remember the bishop says in one of his little books that it is a curate's duty, when selecting a wife, to choose not so much one that will be acceptable to himself as one that will be acceptable to his rector and congregation. Oh, my dear colleague, as regards your present proposal, you have my most cordial, official approval. If she became engaged to you, Mrs Doncaster could not, as an Anglican clergyman's future bride, attend that awful Dissenting chapel any longer. She would have to attend her parish church—my church—again. Now, O'Brien, propose to her again, for my sake!'

Without saying a word, O'Brien set off for the Manor House. The rector waited anxiously among the laurels, while the sky gradually filled with stars. An hour passed.

'Acceptances take more time than rejections,' thought the rector hopefully.

Another hour passed; the moon began to rise. Then O'Brien came running down the drive. 'The answer was "Yes,"' he said exultantly.

'My dear O'Brien,' said the rector, almost weeping for joy, 'I thank you from the bottom of my heart. And she's going to come back to my church again?'

'Yes; but she says you must make friends with the Dissenting minister first. She says your quarrel with him is a shocking bad example to the villagers. She says you and he must walk up and down the High Street arm-in-arm some market-day, smiling on one another all the time.'

'Suppose he refuses?'

'He'll not. She's going to give a thumping big donation to his chapel if he makes friends with you.'

'Then I'll make friends with him,' agreed Mr Sweetbread.

When he reached home he found his wife in bed, still weeping.

'Then you don't love her even a little bit?' she said when he had told her jubilantly of the engagement.

'Not a bit, darling.'

'And you have never felt at any time—and don't feel now—the faintest, smallest shadow of a desire to kiss her?'

'I'd rather eat my surplice,' he declared passionately.

I believe that this time he spoke the truth.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AN ELECTRIC-LAMP COOKER.

MOST of us have heard of the hay-box for completing the cooking of food once it has been sufficiently heated over a gas-ring or on a coal-fire; in fact, this device was described in the pages of *Chambers's Journal* for October 1918. Mr Leoline Edwards, the inventor of a specially prepared cork which gives marvellous buoyancy to life-saving devices, has improved this useful appliance in two directions, so that it not only keeps things warm and completes the process of cooking, but, if so desired, cooks them from the beginning. In the first place, he uses his special cork instead of hay as a heat insulator; in the second, his box has provision for an electric lamp, which acts as a source of heat at an almost negligible cost. Ordinary granulated cork has hitherto been considered the best heat insulator, but Mr Edwards claims even better results from his specially prepared variety. The box is in the form of a cylinder, open at the top, but closed at the bottom, and measuring eighteen inches in diameter and twenty inches in height. It is made of sheet-iron, and inside of it is another and smaller sheet-iron cylinder, also closed at the bottom, but open at the top. The space between the inner and outer cylinders (two inches everywhere) is filled with the specially prepared cork, and the tightly fitting lid is really a circular box, two inches deep, filled with the cork. On the inside of the inner cylinder, near the bottom, is the opening to a short pipe leading to the outside of the box. This pipe will just pass an ordinary electric-lamp holder, in which a carbon lamp can be inserted

after the holder has been pushed through the pipe, current being supplied from the nearest lamp-socket by a flexible cord. A carbon lamp is used because in it nearly four times as much electricity is turned into heat as in a metallic filament lamp. What may be called the 'cork-box' can be used without the lamp, if desired, and, so used, is more efficient than the hay-box; or the lamp may be inserted to maintain the heat, thus enabling large joints and considerable quantities of other foods to be cooked in a comparatively short time, as the original temperature is maintained, instead of being gradually reduced. Again, the food, if not too great in quantity, may be put into the box quite uncooked, and the lamp will perform the complete operation of cooking. The lamp rests upon an earthenware plate, the bright surface of which reflects the heat upwards; while a steel disc, supported on legs, serves as a rest for the meat-pan or other cooking-utensil, and protects the lamp. The main features of the appliance are low working-cost and simplicity. If a thirty-two-candle-power lamp is used, only a trifle over one-eighth of a unit per hour is consumed, the cost of which, at one penny a unit (the price charged in many towns for cooking and heating current), is almost negligible, even when cooking goes on for several hours. The lamps are procurable anywhere and at any time; whereas, whenever it is out of order, ordinary electrical cooking apparatus has to be taken to a shop and repaired by a skilled man at considerable expense. Mr Edwards's device should prove very useful in flats and small houses, especially in those where a cooker is required that will do its work without being watched.

MACHINE FOR PICKING COTTON.

One of the latest labour-saving devices hailing from America is a machine for picking cotton. Hitherto cotton has been picked by hand; and when one remembers that many of the pods, or 'bolls,' as they are called, grow near the ground, where the picking of them involves much stooping in a temperature of one hundred degrees in the shade or over, it is easy to understand how valuable is a machine which greatly lightens the toil. The apparatus works on the principle of the well-known vacuum-cleaner, nozzles having a powerful suction being applied to the bolls, which they completely clear of their cotton and seeds. A high-speed centrifugal fan creates the suction in the hose-pipes leading to the nozzles, of which there are five. The cotton, together with leaves, twigs, and other foreign matter sucked up by the nozzles, is drawn into the centre of the fan, and expelled at the periphery into a large pipe, which starts in an upward direction and curves round to the back of the machine, where the cotton is discharged into bags, the heavier foreign matter having been thrown out *en route* through perforations in the pipe. According to the *Scientific American*, cleaner cotton is turned out by this machine than that picked by hand, while the amount picked per man is at least four or five times as great. Moreover, no cotton is left on the pods, as compared with an amount ranging up to 50 per cent. when the crop is hand-picked. The suction-fan is driven by a sixteen-horse-power petrol-engine through suitable multiplying gear, the complete apparatus being mounted on a light three-wheeled frame, which can be easily moved about the cotton-fields by the gang of pickers who handle the nozzles.

INGENIOUS COAL-SAVER FOR OPEN FIRES.

When coal is burnt in an open fire most of the heat goes to waste, a large proportion passing up the chimney. If the fireplace is next to an outside wall, some of the heat is lost because it is conducted away to the outer air by the brickwork; in fact, by fixing a boiler at the back of any ordinary grate, another room may be warmed by means of a hot-water radiator without affecting the heating of the first. This system, however, involves structural alterations that can only be carried out with difficulty and at great expense under existing conditions. In order to trap some of the wasted heat in the easiest possible manner, Professor C. Vernon Boys, F.R.S., has devised the apparatus we are about to describe. At each side of the hearth is a vertical cylinder, supported on three legs, and containing a smaller cylinder inside it, the space between the inner and outer tubes being closed at the top and bottom. A steel chamber, fitted into the fireplace above the fire, has a horizontal diaphragm dividing it into an upper and a lower part, this diaphragm being so closely adjusted as to be smoke-tight. From the lower part of the chamber a pipe is led to each cylinder, and the hot gases from the fire, being unable to go straight up the chimney owing to the diaphragm, are compelled to traverse one or other of the two pipes leading into the cylinders. Here they are forced to circulate through the space between the inner and outer tubes by means of suitable baffles, and are finally returned through a pipe to the upper part of the chamber, and thence into the chimney. The main feature of the apparatus is that the cheerful appearance of the open fire is not in any way interfered with; while the temperature of the room, especially in the parts more remote from the fire, is materially increased. It should be noted that the inner tubes of the upright cylinders are open at the top and bottom; hence, when they become heated, a constant current of warmed air issues from the top of each, while cold air enters at the bottom. In like manner, the outsides of the outer tubes also produce ascending currents of warmed air. One advantage of the apparatus, apart from the heat saved, is the fact that it can be easily fitted to almost any fire-

place. Again, the passages being more or less constricted compared with the open chimney, less warm air is drawn out of the room and less cold air sucked into it through the cracks in doors and windows. The top covers of the cylinders, together with the inner tubes, lift upward to facilitate cleaning. Recently a series of accurate tests was made under the exclusive supervision of officials of H.M. Office of Works at 29 Abingdon Street, London. Two rooms of the same size, fitted with similar grates, were set apart, the one, No. 22, being equipped with the apparatus, and the other, No. 23, being without it. The quantity of coal used in the two rooms was weighed each day, and the temperature of both was taken at half-hourly intervals. Both were at the same temperature when the fires were simultaneously lighted. It was found in the room containing the apparatus that the increase of temperature was from twice to fully thrice as much as in the other room. Another obvious result was that in Room No. 22 the air was of an almost even temperature, and the parts remotest from the fire were thoroughly warmed. Finally, when the amount of coal apportioned for the tests had been completely consumed in Room No. 23, a steady glowing fire continued long after in Room No. 22. Less accurately observed, but no less satisfactory, results have been obtained in other cases where the apparatus has been installed, as in the offices of the Prime Minister at No. 10 Downing Street, in the National Liberal Club, &c.; and eminent engineers who have seen the device have immediately ordered it for their private use. The cost of the apparatus, it may be added, is very moderate.

COAL AND IRON IN SPITSBERGEN.

A glowing account of the value of the mineral deposits in Spitsbergen was given recently by Mr A. G. Ponting, who was a member of the Scott Antarctic Expedition, and who has lately visited Spitsbergen for the Northern Exploration Company. Seams of coal may be seen at the surface over great areas; while a mountain, fifteen hundred feet in height, and having a length of several miles, appears to be entirely composed of particularly rich iron ore. Indeed, it contains so high a percentage (sixty-five) of iron that small pieces adhere to a magnet. This ore can be mined at the surface and transported direct to ships, and there is said to be enough of it to supply this country for centuries. These conditions easily account for the clause in the Brest-Litovsk Treaty giving the Germans facilities to develop Spitsbergen. Sir Martin Conway, who gave an address on 'The Political Status of Spitsbergen' at the same meeting of the Royal Geographical Society at which Mr Ponting spoke, said that the area containing the mineral wealth of Spitsbergen was recognised as belonging to England throughout the seventeenth century. He also suggested the establishment of reindeer ranches, the protection of the eider duck and the fox, and a close time for walruses extending for fifty years.

DRIED VEGETABLES FOR THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

One of the results of the war, so far as America was concerned, was the establishment on a firm foundation of the dried-vegetable industry, primarily for supplying the troops in France with vegetables in a form that could be easily shipped. The drying-plants consist of machines for peeling or slicing the vegetables, and of drying-rooms in which trays containing the products from the machines are stacked in such a way as to allow of the free circulation of warm, dry air all round them, the air being supplied by huge revolving fans working in conjunction with steam heating-apparatus. Some of the factories are on a very large scale, one concern having ten drying-plants, which, with the growing of the vegetables on adjacent land, involve the employment of thousands of men and women. The vegetables are thoroughly washed before being sent to the machines on endless belt conveyers; in fact, all operations, so far as is possible, are carried out by machinery. Some 65 to 95 per cent. of green vegetables consists of water, which is dried out, leaving light products that will keep for any length of time when packed in cartons of waxed paper or in tin cans. It is claimed for the process that neither the flavour nor the nourishing-power of the vegetables is impaired, while they are far easier and cleaner to handle than garden produce in its natural state. The loss of weight is astonishing, one pound of dried tomatoes, for instance, being equal to twenty pounds of freshly picked tomatoes. It may be added that nothing is wasted at the drying-plants, all parings, tops, and damaged parts being fed to pigs.

OIL-FUEL FOR THE KITCHEN-RANGE.

Towards the end of the war coal was practically unobtainable in Egypt by private individuals, and serious difficulties would have arisen had not the discovery and development of Egyptian oilfields synchronised with the growing shortage of coal. So far as domestic purposes were concerned, however, the petroleum available afforded little relief, owing to the limited quantities of paraffin that could be obtained from it; while attempts to use in lamps and stoves the heavy, thick liquid forming the bulk of the crude oil from the wells were for a time consistently unsuccessful. Fortunately Mr E. C. Bowden-Smith, M.I.Mech.E., of Cairo, has devised a burner for consuming this thick product which can be applied to an ordinary kitchen-range, the heat from the oil-flame taking the place of that from a coal-fire. Moreover, it involves no structural alterations; in fact, the use of coal can be reverted to at any time, or it can even

be consumed at the same time as the oil. Compressed air is needed, but this requirement presents no difficulty in Cairo, where there is a system of compressed-air mains for draining the city. According to the description of the burner in *The Engineer*, the oil flows by gravity to a compressed-air nozzle, where the jet catches it up and atomises it, the result, when the oil is ignited, being a fierce, white, smokeless flame, that is capable of maintaining the full activities of the largest range. The oil gravitates to the burner from a reservoir on the range, where it is kept at a temperature of about one hundred and eighty degrees Fahrenheit. Much less oil is used than coal, the daily records at the Kasr-el-Eini Hospital showing that thirty-two kilos of oil were equal to eighty kilos of coal, while at the Turf Club the relative figures were forty-eight and one hundred and seven. Some allowance must be made for the cost of the compressed air, but the quantity used amounts to only about eighteen cubic feet an hour for a large range, and the cost is said to be only threepence a thousand feet when the air is compressed on a large scale, as it is at Cairo. When it is added that the war prices of coal and oil in Egypt were £E15 and £E6 respectively, it is easy to understand how great a saving was effected by the use of the latter. Whether the system is likely to extend to places where coal is less costly than oil, and where no public compressed-air service exists, is doubtful. It must be remembered, however, that oil-fuel is very clean and easily regulated; hence certain economies can be effected apart from the cost of the fuel. Moreover, even in some parts of this country the type of oil used could be bought before the war for less than double the price of coal.

WATER-POWER IN INDIA.

Coal has been always very costly in parts of India remote from the native coalfields. This applies especially to Bombay, whither it has to be carried by rail from mines more than a thousand miles away. It is not surprising, therefore, that close attention has been given to the possibilities of utilising the heavy rainfall in the adjacent hills for supplying power to the city in the form of electricity. A scheme for this purpose has now been undertaken, and an account of it was given recently in a paper read before the Institution of Civil Engineers by Mr R. B. Joyner. The water is taken from the Western Ghats at a point about forty miles from Bombay and some two thousand feet above it, where a rainfall has been recorded of no less than five hundred and forty-six inches in the year. Any approach to this figure is, however, exceptional, the average being very much lower; while the minimum rainfall recorded in any one year was as low as eighty-two inches. Provision for a continuous supply of water-power all the year round was rendered particularly difficult owing to the fact that the rainy season lasts for only three months; hence enough water has to be stored to maintain the supply for the other nine. Three lakes have been formed by building masonry dams, one of which is close on a hundred feet in height, and extends for one and a half miles. One of the lakes maintains the supply of water during 'breaks' in the monsoon, while the other two have a capacity of ten thousand million cubic feet, or approximately 50 per cent. in excess of the quantity needed to keep the power-station running at its full output during the dry season. These two lakes are joined together by a tunnel a mile long, and the water from them and from the monsoon lake is led through two ducts to a forebay at the top of the great precipitous scarp forming the western boundary of the Deccan plateau. At this point the water enters two steel pipes, each nearly seven feet in diameter, which carry it down some twelve hundred feet, where they deliver it into eight pipes, three and a half feet in diameter, leading to the power-house almost six hundred feet below. The total 'head' of water is seventeen hundred and fifty feet; consequently at the power-house the pressure is enormous, and the pipes have to be one and a quarter inches thick to withstand it. Each pipe supplies water to a Pelton-wheel turbine (a type of water-motor in which one or more jets at high pressure impinge upon specially formed buckets on the periphery of the wheel) capable of developing thirteen thousand five hundred horse-power, making a total of one hundred and eight thousand horse-power for the eight. The Pelton wheels are coupled to huge dynamos for generating electricity for transmission to Bombay, there to be used for lighting the city and working the numerous mills and factories. Power derived from this source will cost less than that from coal, oil, or vegetable spirit; while, after doing its work at the power-house, the water will still be available for irrigation

AN EASILY MADE FIRELESS COOKER.

One objection to the hay-box is the difficulty of preparing it, as both the hay and a box of the correct size must be procured, neither being a standard article in a small home. Then a certain amount of carpentering has to be done before a really satisfactory contrivance can be produced. These objections are entirely eliminated in the fireless cooker recently described by Mr Cornwell Round, M.R.C.S., in *Popular Science Siftings*, all the materials used being available in nearly every household. Instead of a box, Mr Round uses an ordinary galvanised iron pail as an outer container; while the cooking-utensil consists of an enamelled 'billy-can,' or camp-kettle, having a hinged swing-over handle. The five-pint size is recommended for use with a twelve-inch pail. These portions of the outfit having been procured, fold a number of

newspapers into strips having a width equal to the depth of the pail. Wind these strips loosely round the billy-can, and fasten the ends with pins, thus forming a paper tube into which the can will pass easily. This tube should be about a quarter of an inch in thickness, and it need not necessarily be made of paper. Lino or floor-cloth, for instance, forms an excellent alternative, and in that case the ends could be secured by tacks with their points hammered over. Stand the tube upright in the pail, when the top should come level with the rim. Into the bottom of the tube pour sifted ashes until the lid of the billy-can, when the can is resting on them, comes almost to the top of the pail; then cut out a number of paper discs to fit the inside of the tube, and lay them on the ashes. Here, again, lino or floor-cloth would do equally well. The space between the outside of the tube and the inside of the pail is now filled with sifted ashes, paper, lino, or floorcloth rings being laid over the ashes to give a tidy appearance. A cover is prepared by making up in newspapers a circular parcel of sifted ashes of the same diameter as the top of the pail, and three or four inches thick. Although not suggested by Mr Round, either cork, sawdust, or slag-wool, if now obtainable at a low cost, would make excellent alternatives to the ashes. This form of fireless cooker is in every way equal to the hay-box, while being more easily constructed.

Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER VIII.—*continued.*

IT was a cold, crisp day, with a keen, but healthy, breeze. The ground, not too hard, was excellent for the show. We were delighted, for there's nothing like a glorious scramble across God's green acres. It cleans the lungs, refreshes the brain, and gives one a zest for the things that matter. I am no marvel at the business, yet in pitting one's strength against a fellow-man in friendly rivalry one does acquire the sporting instinct, which is a fair instinct. And to an officer it *does* give a sense of values, a ready appreciation of all that is good in human nature.

Our company officer, Captain Bloggs, was delighted with the weather prospect. He was an old Blue, and he *did* want his 'boys' to knock spots off the other company. And, strange to say, when we turned out in running attire, we found Ginger, Nobby, and Tosher already there. There was a suspicion of malicious fun in Ginger's eyes. I scented something, and said, 'Look here, Beefy, there's some move on. These fellows are grinning like cats.'

'Oh, d—— them! they won't be in my way. They're soft, and out of training'——

Bang! went the pistol just then. We went off. Two hundred men in running-kit make a pretty show. Our school, I may rightly say, were the cream of manhood, chosen Spartans, and a sight for the gods. This was no preparatory-school scramble. These fellows were all in splendid condition, and it was a treat to slog along and watch them. How easily they ambled, limbs and will working in perfect harmony! Hurdles and dikes were taken with an easy bound; no puffing, no exertion, no ungainly slithering on the other side. Just a leap and over. I am quite sure that two hundred Hun cadets could not have done so well. Then we reached the open, the crowd spread out, and the stragglers were more easily marked. These were the elderly men, but right merrily they did their best. *They wanted to win.* Wasn't that a perfect spirit? And isn't it the basis of our true nature? We may love to be top-dog, but we *do* prefer to get it off our own bat. If we have been very foolish in worshipping cups, caps, and blazers before the war, still it helped us at Mons, and certainly at Ypres. As I watched these fine fellows sprint by my side something welled into my heart; it was the pride of school, the pride of race, the mysterious something which makes us give our all to keep the old flag flying. I may be no Christian, but I do love my fellow-men and my country.

'Hello! the game's opening,' I muttered on looking ahead. I was a bit behind, for I had been dreaming. Away in the front was Beefy. He was heavy, but a splendid athlete. His staying-power was good, and he had no nerves. With all his faults, Beefy was a sportsman, and if there was one man consumed with the craving for victory, it was he. I saw a long figure slogging steadily by his side. The style caught my fancy, so I pushed on, and found it was Ginger. Close behind was Billy Greens, the parson; and gently dodging by him was Nobby. Where was Tosher? I looked behind. He was dogging me. I smiled, but inwardly. I was just a bit cut. These men were out for 'blood.'

I spurted out of my stride, hell for leather, took a good-sized dike, then pushed hard across a wide meadow. It was good going, and my nerves were all out. This was unwise, but I didn't want Tosher to head me off. On reaching a wood I looked back. He was just behind. With a curse I dashed on, but my foot went

plump into a rabbit-hole, and I was violently thrown, wrenching my ankle.

'Are you hurt, old boy?' asked Tosher.

'Yes,' I grunted.

'Looks bad. Wait and I'll get you a bandage.'

He ran to a stream, tore the two arms off his running-shirt, soaked them, came back, and bandaged the now swollen foot.

'You had better go on now, Tosher. I'll hobble home.'

'No, child. I reckon I'll carry you.'

'Get off, man. I'll manage somehow.'

However, it was useless. I was hoisted on his back and carried through the ranks of the grinning stragglers, who shouted, 'Did ums do it—John Brown?'

I did feel an ass.

. . . . . .

Beefy, however, was keeping the flag flying. He saw Ginger, but paid no attention to him. His eye was on Corporal Jason, the leading man of the other company, and a magnificent harrier. This fellow had to be beaten at all costs. He was not 'all out'—his pace was too steady; so Beefy plugged a couple of yards behind him. For four miles this went on, and all the while Ginger ambled as easily as a deer. He was one of those who are natural athletes, and who do not need to train. Nature endows them with amazing reserve power. All the time Ginger was studying the bulldog tenacity of Beefy, the steady plod, the quick eye and brain following Corporal Jason's every move. It was like dog tracking dog; and yet it wasn't. Above the cunning byplay was the soul of *esprit de corps*. Both were out to win. *And both meant to.*

They reached a wide stretch of pasture-land. Jason stretched himself and pushed on. Beefy followed, a little blown, yet able to hold. The supreme test was near. Ginger saw Beefy clench his jaws, raise his head, and point out the toes to get the fullest stride on the green-sward. Jason was undoubtedly the better man, but there was that *something* which kept his rival fighting on.

Ginger commenced to admire Beefy.

At last they reached the open track near the camp. Ahead was the winning-post. There an excited crowd had gathered, including Captain Bloggs, who was fearfully anxious as he watched the struggle between Jason and Beefy.

'Go on, Jason!'

'Stick it, Beefy!'

These cries rent the air, and for a second threw Beefy off guard. Jason made a terrific spurt. With an almost superhuman effort Beefy recovered and levelled up. Close behind was that amazing devil, Ginger, *ambling easily*. Somehow, no one counted Ginger as being in the piece. He simply looked like a runner-up—nothing more.

'Hell for leather, Jason!'

'Come on, Beefy!'

These were the last cries. Jason made another magnificent leap; the prize seemed his, but his foot slipped on the wet soil, and Beefy shot past.

'You're winning, Beefy! Go hard!'

It looked like that. *Then*, just ten yards from the tape, all were dumbfounded to see Ginger leap forward like a deer and breast the line three yards ahead of Beefy Jones.

A terrific cheering burst from the spectators, but my heart was sick for poor old Beefy. However, as he burst through the tape he collided with Ginger, and shouted, 'Good, Ginger—we've won—and I'm happy!'

'Yes—the Oxford finish.'

'All right, old cock; come and have a Cambridge bath.'

Ginger used up a whole cake of Sunlight soap.

. . . . . .

That night Billy Greens found Beefy reading a serious-looking book.

'What are you swotting?'

'Oh, one of Ginger's books.'

'What's the subject?'

'"How to be Happy though Intelligent."'

(Continued on page 139.)

THE OLD YEW-TREE.

I STOOD beneath the old yew-tree,
Within the silent shade,
And twilight in its hoary boughs
Dark purple shadows made.

I heard the rustle of its leaves
Above me and around,
And over all the summer air
I heard no other sound.

It sang to me the old, old song
Of ages long ago;
Of life and death and endless love
It whispered soft and low.

'I see the lilies bloom and fade,'
It murmured unto me,
'And many noble rivers flow
To join the distant sea.

'No wonder I am old and sad,
I see so many weep;
Their tears fall on the grass beneath,
Where their beloved sleep.

'I see the glory of the dawn,
The moonbeam's silver ray,
And I alone with time will watch
Till shadows flee away.'

N. L. WALLACE.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SEVENTH SERIES

LADY HELEN'S NEURALGIA.

By ROSALINE MASSON.

PART I.

I.

THE telegram came while they were at dinner. Sir Henry held out his hand for it, but the old butler, with a deferential bending of the head, passed him, and presented the salver to Mona.

Sir Henry jerked his eyeglasses off and smiled at his daughter as she took it. 'Really, my dear, you are become the public man of the family.'

Mona Ralston was looking particularly charming that night. Indeed, she was more than pretty; she was an exceptionally beautiful young woman. Her dusky black hair rippled amazingly, and broke into little soft tendrils about her ears, below the gold riband that held it tight to her small head. Her eyes, set wide apart, were of a wonderful amber-brown; and she was dressed in green chiffon, and wore a string of pearls. But the irresistible thing about her was her amazing vitality. She conveyed a sense of mastery over life and all its incidents, including the incident of her own beauty. She relegated that so decidedly to its proper position that one took it at her own estimation, and looked for what was beyond it. And one was not disappointed.

'Daddy,' she said, cocking her head sideways to read the telegram by the shaded light of a candle, 'they want me to go down and speak at Tonborough.'

'Well, my dear?' her father commented placidly.

'I propose to go.'

'Then, I suppose, you will go.'

'They have a big meeting of the Women's Association, it says'—she took up the telegram—'on Wednesday, and both speakers—a woman and a man—have failed them. They've wired to me, and to the candidate. Daddy, it's rather a compliment!' She glowed at him.

'A great compliment, my child; but since your triumphal stumping of the country on my behalf last summer, not to speak of your brilliant organising of your women's'——

'Now, daddy, don't you tease me! I argue quite sensibly when I am on a platform, and I've acquired all my political keenness from you.'

Sir Henry opened the big silver box at his side, and selected a cigar.

'You're a clever little witch, Mona,' he told her; 'but don't overdo it. You'll be very useful at Tonborough, no doubt, and you may go—though, by-the-by, you did not ask my permission. Certainly, you are of age'——

'I am five-and-twenty, dear. In five years I'll have a vote. But I'm always glad of your permission.'

'And generally have it—always have had it, you know. But you also have the family brains.'

'Talking of brains, you know Major Stanhope, don't you? What is he like? Is he a good candidate?'

'Oh, excellent! Stanhope is the sort we need badly. He'll be a real help to the Party—and Heaven knows we need help! He is a man we shall all work for, if the election comes on.'

'*I* work for principles, not men,' said Mona.

'Quite so. Nevertheless, I foresee that your destiny is shaping itself. When I apply for the Chiltern Hundreds, and settle down to write my reminiscences, you will have to marry a politician, and *run* him, have a *salon*, and, if necessary, write his speeches.'

Mona drank her coffee thoughtfully.

'It is a poor look-out for Charlie,' her father added regretfully.

Mona, who had risen, went to meet him as he rose too.

'Darling,' she told him, 'that idea of yours is quite, quite wrong! How often am I to explain to you that Charlie and I are only cousins, and good friends?'

'So you say. And I'm afraid you are to remain so, so far as Charlie is concerned, for the poor chap is the sort of honourable duffer who will never say a word while he has only his pay, and'——

'And neither shall I,' she assured him; and she held up her face to be kissed as he opened the door for her.

Sir Henry followed her out, putting his arm over her shoulder. 'Well, my little girl, it must be as you like; but I wish it *were* true. I'm sure he's fond of you.'

'Of course he's fond of me! And I'm very fond of him. But not in *that* way. He is a mere boy! Two years younger than I am! Oh, we shouldn't suit each other at all! How can

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you think we should? I'll find a wife for Charlie, and I'll be awfully nice to her. Besides, I don't want to marry. I have you.'

'Indeed you have,' he agreed; 'entirely!' And he turned back to finish his cigar.

II.

Charlie dropped in to lunch next day, and volunteered to see his cousin off at Paddington. He seemed rather subdued.

'I have some news,' he said to Mona; 'but it can wait,' he added, as the servants came in.

'You shall tell me in the taxi,' she announced.

She wasn't very much pleased at his coming, for she wanted to think out her speech—she had a list of headings in a notebook in her bag-purse. But what she had told her father was quite true. Her cousin and she were good friends, and she noticed his preoccupied and serious manner, and as soon as the taxi had started she turned to him. 'Well, Charlie dear?'

'My aunt—Rachel Spencer, you know—is dead.'

'I'm sorry,' she said gently.

It was nice of Charlie to feel so much the death of an aunt he hardly knew. She put her hand on his.

'And she has left me eighteen thousand pounds, and her house and all the stuff in it—pictures and things.'

He clasped her hand in his and held it tight.

'Oh!' said Mona. 'But that's very nice, isn't it, Charlie?'

'It makes a great difference.'

'Yes—it will.'

'You see, there's something I've been always wanting, and—and this may make it—at least, I hope'——

Then Mona remembered what her father had said, and quickly drew her hand away, growing hot and very miserable. For could it be true, after all? Never for a moment had she supposed the idea existed save in her father's imagination.

'Of course it will make a difference; but you won't throw up your profession, will you? It is very sad—her dying, I mean,' she said, rather jerkily.

'Well, I was ten when I saw her last,' he answered honestly. 'You don't mind my telling you what I have been thinking about? It is something that—that is more important to me than anything—my profession or anything else in the world! It is difficult to speak of it. Mona, do you think—you know me so well—that I'm too ordinary a chap for a girl to'——

'Here's Paddington!' she cried. 'Here's my purse. Take my ticket, Charlie!'

When he rejoined her he was looking a little dignified and hurt.

'I don't approve of this sort of thing,' he said gruffly. 'I wonder uncle allows it. Most unwomanly!'

'Dear boy!'

'Jawing on a platform to a crowd of gaping strangers.'

'How rude!'

'Woman's place is'——

'Home,' she finished sweetly.

'Well, so it is! Talking of which, where are you going to stay?'

'With the president of the Women's Association probably.'

'*Probably?* Don't you even know?'

'They said "hospitality arranged." And a note came this morning to say a motor will meet this train. I know Miss Hammond, the secretary, quite well; she sees to it. Now, get me some papers, like a good boy.'

And then, at the last moment, feeling that, if her dreadful supposition were really true, and her father were right, she had been hard-hearted to the verge of cruelty, she put her head out of the window, and said gently, 'You shall tell me all your—plans—when I return, Charlie, and we can have a nice chat.'

His whole face lit up, and he laid his hand on hers as it rested on the window-sill.

'I will! You're a good soul, Mona darling!'

She sat down in her corner seat, rather agitated. It didn't sound like love. Still, one never knows. Then she took out the notes for her speech, and read them. They came under two headings—'Woman in the Factories' and 'Woman in the Field.' She bit the end of her pencil, and then added a third heading, 'Man in the Home.' It was going to be very telling.

III.

The scenery sped past, little villages and church steeples flashed by, and the telegraph-wires chased each other up and down. Mona watched them, whilst committing several impromptus to memory. It was nearly dark when she reached Tonborough. Mona had expected Miss Hammond, the secretary, to meet her; but there was no one on the platform. Beyond the little entrance, however, she espied a big car standing. She gave up her ticket and went out. The chauffeur touched his hat.

'Is this sent for me—Miss Ralston?' Mona asked, realising she did not know the name of her hostess.

'Yes, miss.'

He opened the door, and she got in. The porter brought her suit-case, and it was put in behind.

'That's all,' said Mona.

'I was to wait for the five-forty-three up-train, miss.'

Mona glanced at the watch on her wrist. It was five-twenty-five.

'Very well,' she said resignedly, and closed her eyes.

She was roused by the approach of the next train. First of all the passengers to come through the gate was a tall man, distinctly seen as he passed the station lamps, and at once

recognised by the chauffeur. Mona leaned still farther back as the car door was opened.

The man paused to give an order about his luggage; then, turning to get into the car, gave a slight start of surprise to find Mona in it. He peered into the dark interior, took off his hat, and, on pretence of seeing the luggage carried out, stepped back as if to speak about it to the chauffeur. Mona saw them glance in her direction, and the chauffeur say something, whereat the man nodded comprehension. Then he entered.

'I 'm sorry you 've been kept waiting,' he said, as the car glided out into the soft dark.

'I did not mind in the least,' she assured him.

There was silence for a little.

'He must know who I am,' she thought, 'as he asked the chauffeur. But he doesn't like to betray that he asked.'

The silence continued. It became oppressive.

'I should like the window open, please,' Mona observed.

The man muttered an apology, and opened it.

The silence was resumed.

'*I* shall have to begin,' Mona said to herself. She began.

'Are you by any chance the prospective candidate?' she inquired.

He gave a quite perceptible start.

'Er—yes—I am.' His tone was formal, and he said no more.

'He 's like Charlie—doesn't approve of women speakers,' Mona thought.

'Is it a long way we have to drive?'

'Seven miles, I believe.'

Mona smiled. Even in a motor, seven miles gives opportunity. She turned to him and began to talk.

He was distinctly irresponsive at first, stiff and prohibitive.

This incited Mona to effort. He melted like a guttering candle in a draught. Before they had gone three miles he was talking to her brilliantly. And all the time he was trying to see her, for her beauty seemed to conquer the darkness, and he knew it was there.

And then they were gliding among overhanging trees, and presently they were there, with lights sparkling from a big entrance, and he helped her out.

There was a moment when they stood together in the hall, while the servants took the luggage and the rug from the car. It was then that he saw her at last, and Mona smiled at him vividly.

'It has been a pleasant drive,' she said. 'I 've been so interested in all you have told me!'

'Oh—good-evening!' said a voice from within.

They both turned. A tall, gray-haired woman was standing in an archway that led to the inner hall.

Mona went towards her. She had to go all the way, for the lady remained awaiting her. She hardly touched the hand Mona gave her, looked her visitor quietly up and down, and left her to greet the man behind her.

'Ah, Reggie—glad to see you!' The hostess moved forward now. Then she glanced over her shoulder at Mona.

'Lady Helen is not well to-night, but she will see you later, Miss Dawson.'

'Ralston,' corrected Mona gently but firmly.

'Oh—ah!—Jane, show Miss—Ralston her room, and let Lady Helen know.—Well, Reggie, come into the library. It 's annoying about Helen; but she 'll be well to-morrow.'

IV.

Mona followed the maid. She did not hear Reginald Stanhope's voice, but was conscious that he was watching her, and was resenting her reception more than she did. Somehow, Mona was feeling happy. It had been, as she said, a pleasant drive. She liked the candidate—she was sure her father would like him; she must ask him to come and see them. He would like to be asked to come and see her father. She wondered who the rude woman was. Really, it was rather awkward to stay with people you didn't know, and who didn't know you. It had always been pleasant before.

She was shown into a very small room, where there was no fire, and the housemaid put down her dressing-bag on the floor and hurried away.

Mona, used to affluence and deference, looked round.

'Really!' she said to herself. She opened her dressing-bag and scattered about some of its contents.

Then the housemaid came in with her leather suit-case, and was about to vanish again, when she caught sight of the silver brushes and bottles Mona had unpacked, and the fur coat she had thrown off. The maid seemed impressed.

'Shall I—unstrap it?' she asked, looking down at the suit-case.

'Yes, please; and would you light the fire? And what time is dinner?' asked Mona, as she watched her light it, and handed her her keys. The maid looked surprised.

'*Dinner?*' she asked. She took the keys, and looked at them, and then from Mona to the suit-case, and back at the keys again.

'Yes—don't they—isn't there—dinner?'

'Oh yes!—the family dine at eight.'

The fire crackled up, and the maid deftly put away the few things Mona had brought, laid out her evening frock, and left her.

'"Pretty odd people," as Pepys would have said,' Mona told herself. 'And as it is only a quarter-past six, they might have sent me a cup of tea—they must know I couldn't have got one on the journey. And I wish I knew their name, and who they are. It is really a little unceremonious of Miss Hammond. However!'

She took off her travelling-dress, slipped on

her white-silk dressing-gown, and sat down by the fire.

'I fancy he speaks well,' she thought. 'I suppose I shall come first.'

There was a tap at the door, and an elderly maid looked in.

'Her ladyship would like you to come now,' she said.

'Oh!—but I'm afraid I'm undressed,' said Mona. The woman looked at her with marked disapproval, and said nothing. 'And I think I must ask you her ladyship's name,' said Mona, smiling.

'Lady Helen Chowton,' she said severely.

'Oh—it is she who is ill, is it not?'

'She is indisposed; and she is waiting for you,' the woman answered.

'Does she want to see me before dinner? Oh, well, I'll come as I am, if she is in her room; or shall I dress first?'

The woman seemed amazed. She looked Mona up and down, and then turned and looked at the dress on the bed. It was the green chiffon, chosen because it packed into small space.

'Her ladyship is waiting,' she remarked, and opened the door.

(*Continued on page 152.*)

EX AQUA OMNIA.

By C. E. Benson.

GENERAL GEORGE MONCK, first Duke of Albemarle, came so near to being a great man that he is generally accounted one to this day. The nearest approach to greatness Christopher Monck, second Duke of Albemarle, and last of that stock, could ever claim was being the son of his father. He is also notable for having been instrumental in floating, quite literally, a successful treasure-quest company, but the element of greatness attaching to the undertaking was not an attribute of the duke.

In 1660 little Christopher, aged seven, was granted the title of Earl of Torrington, which he retained until the general's death in 1670, when he dutifully stepped into his father's shoes, and most loyally placed his services and his titles at the disposal of King Charles II. His Majesty accepted his services, restored him his titles, made him a Knight of the Garter, and three years later promoted him to be colonel of a foot regiment, presumably on the principle of 'like father, like son.' From that day young Albemarle flourished like a courtier, and won honours and promotion, one of his most noteworthy exploits being a quarrel with Monmouth, which did him no particular harm with Charles, and less than no harm with Charles's next-of-kin.

At the age of twenty-eight Christopher became joint Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Wiltshire, and this appointment a little later brought him into collision with Monmouth once more. When 'King' Monmouth landed, Christopher forthwith raised the neighbouring militia and advanced to check him. Monmouth summoned him to lay down his arms, and Christopher returned a loyal defiance. After they had crowed at each other for some time, Monmouth advanced, and Christopher retreated, first slowly, then expeditiously, then at a run. It is reasonable to suggest that had his father been in command, the Monmouth rebellion would have experienced a first and probably a final check; still, in fairness to Christopher, it must be admitted that he did good service to King James's cause by keeping a strong force of militia in the field, and so hampering Monmouth's movements. Afterwards he merited the D.S.O.—by issuing proclamations.

Turning from his martial exploits, we find that at the mature age of twenty-nine years Christopher's talents did or did not secure for him the Chancellorship of Cambridge University. In any case, for some reason, he did hold that august position. Also, he was made Recorder of Colchester and a Lord of Trade and Foreign Plantations. This last appointment, together with his parentage, constitutes his chief claim to the immortality of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. True, he was entrusted with the carrying of the sceptre with the dove at the Coronation of James II. This, the first gracious and delicate sign of the favour of the new monarch, did him no harm, and he survived the ordeal. The last honour conferred was of different metal. On 26th November 1687 he was made Governor-General of Jamaica. This was unkind. He did not survive. It killed him out of hand, and with him died the Monck-Albemarle dukedom.

Albemarle's appointment as a Lord of Trade brought him in contact with a character of real interest, one William Phipps, of New England. Phipps's origin is metaphorically, and possibly literally, obscure. His father is alleged to have been a gunsmith, some say a blacksmith. Nevertheless his cousin, Constantine Phipps, was Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and founder of the noble house of Mulgrave and Normanby. A plausible explanation is that some gentlemen, who, finding the sanctity and the religious tolerance of the Stuart restoration oppressive, emigrated to America, were compelled to take to humble occupations to earn a subsistence. William Phipps himself started life as a ship's carpenter.

Phipps was an austere Puritan. He was, however, by no means a Stylites. He did not seek to separate himself from things of the earth,

earthy, especially if there were any chance of finding 'dust' in the earth. On the contrary, as befitted a man of seafaring education, he kept his weather-eye very wide open. In the course of time he became a merchant captain of Boston City, now the hub of the universe, and took advantage of his social rise to enter into matrimony, combined with filthy lucre.

Freed from the necessity of working hard for a competence, Phipps devoted his leisure and his energy to a scheme which presumably had been maturing in his brain for some time—to wit, the salving of sunken treasure. He is credited with having invented a diving-bell, if not with being the inventor of the diving-bell. If this be true, it is certain that it was not on ascertaining the constituents of the bottom of Boston Harbour that his business-like ambition was intent. Spanish galleons had been lost in the waters that wash the Spanish Main, and Phipps felt that, could he but locate one at a reasonable depth, it would not be his fault if his fortune were not made.

To this end he made an expedition to the Bahamas, which, though fruitless of its immediate object, was fruitful in experience, besides putting him on the track of richer and really existent treasure. Finding his own resources inadequate for such ventures, he boldly proceeded to England and laid his case before the powers that were, one of whom was Albemarle. The chronicler, who in respect of Phipps was a hero-worshipper after the heart of Thomas Carlyle, hath it that the Bostonian's magnificent presence and convincing manner completely won the duke. The more prosaic and more probable explanation is that Albemarle was hard up—desperately so; the complaint was common enough during the days of the Stuart restoration. He determined to 'plunge.' That way—at the bottom of the sea—lay salvation. Accordingly he recommended Phipps to King James. King James provided a frigate, the *Rose Algier*, and a scratch crew, and so the venture began.

Even to-day a treasure-quest with a scratch crew would not be wholly devoid of risk; in the times of Captain Kidd it was a desperate undertaking. Phipps's men found themselves with a vessel well found and ready equipped to their hand, and very little but their captain to stand between them and the attractive life of gentlemen of fortune. They deliberated accordingly, and deliberation would soon have been translated into action but for the sudden intervention of authority—authority in the shape of several feet of exasperated bone and muscle, armed with the divinity that doth hedge a captain and the strength of a Hercules. When it came to man-handling Phipps had not many superiors, and a few minutes sufficed to bring the ringleaders to reason, tempered with unconsciousness. It is averred that Phipps quelled this mutiny with his fists alone, but that so practical a man should have overlooked the persuasive powers of a belaying-pin is unlikely.

The second mutiny was more formidable. The snake had been scotched, not killed.

Phipps had anchored by a desert island to careen and clean ship, and so forth. In spite of his former experience, he trustfully sent the men ashore for a well-earned holiday, whilst he and his friends remained in charge of the frigate. The men took their guns with them to protect themselves against the savages—who were not there—and to shoot game for the pot. The game they had marked down were the captain and his friends. In case of resistance they were to be murdered out of hand; in the event of submission they were to be marooned. In either case the mutineers were to sail joyously away under the Jolly Roger.

The seraph Abdiel, 'faithful found among the faithless, faithful only he,' was on this occasion impersonated by the carpenter. The crew suspected him, and would no doubt have knocked him on the head with the others; but, fortunately for him, they esteemed a carpenter of more value than a captain, forgetting that, though any one of them could steer a course, not one could set one. They therefore took this much-prized carpenter into their confidence, but they kept a close eye on him nevertheless.

Now that the long-planned mutiny was on the verge of execution, the time for action had come. The carpenter simulated an attack of colic—it may not have been all simulation under the circumstances—and this necessitated a visit to the captain's medicine-chest. Once below decks and out of sight of the conspirators, he lost no time in informing Phipps of what was toward.

Phipps made no sign. He let the men go ashore unhindered. On landing, their actions were curious—so curious as of themselves to have excited suspicion. With clumsy confidence they made a camp on the beach, where no camp was required, right under the guns of the frigate, and put it in some state of defence, though no defence was needed. Having completed these prudent preparations, with characteristic foresight they went away in a body, leaving the camp unguarded.

Phipps gave them a fair start. Then, when they were well out of sight and hearing, he slipped overboard and swam ashore. On reaching the camp, he proceeded to draw their teeth. Whether he contented himself with merely drawing the charges of their guns and carrying off their spare ammunition, or whether he took a boat and ferried away the camp defences, is immaterial. Suffice it that he put the mutiny out of action.

He then brought his ship broadside on to the camp.

In the evening the embryo mutineers returned for their evening meal, preparatory to carrying the vessel, and were met with a surprise calculated to take away their appetite and substitute acute-

indigestion. Instead of a helpless ship they found themselves confronted by an ugly row of muzzles, whilst a thundering challenge warned them that their captain was very much alive to the situation. In a voice that consorted well with his huge frame, Phipps announced that the tables were now turned, and that he and his friends intended to maroon them. The mutineers did not require to be told that the silent cannon would speak on slight provocation in tones even more sonorous and uncompromising. Instantly they fell on their knees and cried out, with unconscious humour, that they were betrayed. Eventually they were pardoned and taken on board.

That Phipps, after two mutinies, should have run such a risk would be inexplicable were it not clear that he did so to avoid one far more serious. Only his friends and he had been left on board the ship, so that, even if he had enough hands left to work the vessel—which is doubtful—it may be taken for granted that they were mostly landsmen, and not of a capacity to do so. Moreover, on those seas in those days there were perils other than those of the deep which made the full complement of a ship's company something of a necessity. Accordingly he resolved to hazard the danger of sailing with a twice mutinous crew, in preference to essaying a voyage with an inadequate company of inexperienced men, with all its horrid possibilities of suffering and privation through the act of God, and of battle, murder, and sudden death through the act of man. At the first port—Jamaica—he discharged the mutineers, and, engaging the minimum number of seamen consistent with safety, made his way home.

Such bludgeonings of chance might have shaken a less constant nature, but Phipps lost neither heart nor hope. He just told his story, nothing extenuating. It was a story to rouse generous sympathy, and Albemarle behaved generously. He opened a fund, and headed it with a handsome subscription. Several other gentlemen followed suit.

> Are there not
> Two points in the adventure of a diver—
> One when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge;
> One when, a prince, he rises with his pearl?

It would not be too much to assume that a good many of the subscribers, including the duke himself, were financially embarrassed and risked 'plunging.' It is curious to note that in the subsequent proceedings the man who did the least work got the most money, and the men who did the most work got the least money—if, indeed, they got any money at all.

For one reason or another the subscription list filled quickly, and very soon the Albemarle-Phipps Company, Limited, was in being, and the Phipps portion of it westward-bound with a carefully selected crew. Phipps had previously marked down the whereabouts of a likely wreck, and it was not long before he located the vessel. It was unsafe to attempt operations from the ship itself, and accordingly a large 'dug-out,' capable of holding fifteen or twenty men, was fashioned out of the trunk of a cotton-tree, and moored over the spot. It is uncertain whether any apparatus was at any time used during this expedition; in any case, the preliminary exploration was carried out by Indians, with no other equipment than their natural powers.

The first results were disheartening—old cannon, curious weeds, and so forth—and even Phipps began to give way to depression. The crew were sorry for him—sincerely sorry; and the following incident shows that they entertained a real affection.

One day, as the captain was sitting gloomily in his cabin, the men approached to present him with a singularly beautiful sea-feather. Phipps had not come out to look for sea-feathers, but he received the men with kindly courtesy. All at once something attracted his eyes to the cabin floor. The crew had brought him something more than a sea-feather.

It was a 'sow' of silver, the first-fruits of a treasure totalling approximately three hundred thousand pounds, retrieved by the Indian divers, the men who did the most part of the practical salvage. *Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum. Effodiuntur* is scarcely applicable to deep-sea salvage; but the recovered treasures of the deep provoked ills none the less. Phipps found himself with a ship absolutely under his command, a staunch and well-affected crew at his disposal, and a king's ransom in his hold. The temptation must have been great. That it did not assail him is unthinkable; that he resisted it wholly is certain. Not so the men.

When a bad crew mutiny matters are serious; when a good crew become disaffected, they are doubly so. On the former occasions Phipps had only to deal with a company of irresolute wastrels; this time he was in mortal peril at the hands of men—men scarcely less resolute than himself. Violence could only end in destruction, and Phipps—his Puritan training stood him in good stead—appealed to a Higher Power. Strengthened by prayer, he summoned the hands, and at length, by dint of promise and entreaty, succeeded in dissuading them from their purpose.

There is perhaps a shadow—an ugly, ill-defined shadow—of an excuse for the crew. They were probably more worldly wise than the simple-minded Bostonian, for all his shrewdness. They may have recognised that if they did not, there and then, secure their just remuneration for services rendered, in some degree proportionate to the profits of the expedition, they were little likely to see a penny of it. Accordingly they may have resolved to

> Make assurance double sure,
> And take a bond of fate.

Poor Phipps! He was to learn there were worse thieves at home in high places.

Of the three hundred thousand pounds, Phipps

received either twenty thousand pounds or sixteen thousand pounds. (He was, however, handsomely knighted, 27th June 1687.) Albemarle took either ninety thousand pounds or sixty thousand pounds (and had a medal struck), and presumably the other subscribers got their share. Still, there remains the possibility of a large balance unaccounted for.

Incidentally King James had a medal struck, commemorating the recovery of the treasure.

The Albemarle medal is sufficiently rare to be something of a curiosity. The inscription, which is for the most part in abbreviated Latin, runs, being interpreted, thus: 'Christopher Albemarle, Lieutenant-General and Governor-General of Jamaica;' and below are the letters 'G.B.F.,' signifying that George Burgess made it. The head is a profile of a typical nobleman of the Court of King James II., with a full-flowing wig falling to his shoulders, which are clad in armour, indicative of his military rank. On the reverse is a figure of Neptune and the inscription: '*Ex aqua omnia*' ('All things are derived from water').

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

CHAPTER X.

ABOUT the beginning of February, the colonel, having come home, at the fall of dusk, from an afternoon after woodcock, went into the gunroom in the eastern wing, and through the window which looks out to the north—that is, to the back of the house—saw a stranger. He paid little attention to him at the moment, thinking that he was probably some one from the village who had been on business at the back entrance, for the man went away towards the offices behind the western wing.

Two or three days afterwards the colonel was walking, about noon, through the spruce-belts on the slopes behind the house. He had come to the wood's edge, when he saw the same man about a hundred and fifty yards away, moving leisurely along the highroad, and now and then, as the colonel thought, glancing towards the house. My uncle watched the man's progress along the road until he disappeared round a bend, when the old gentleman left the belt and entered The Bield by a back entrance. Out of curiosity, he got his field-glasses, and from behind a curtain of an upstairs window took a look at the stranger. The glasses revealed a bearded, stooping figure of medium height, with a suggestion of age or tiredness in its gait. The man's clothes were well-worn, if not actually shabby; and although the day was one of biting cold, he wore no overcoat. His face was very dark, with a suggestion of pallor in it; and while he was too far off for my uncle to get a distinct portrait of him, his impression was that he was olive-skinned, dark-bearded, and (as the colonel put it) 'Jewish-looking.'

His movements riveted my uncle's attention. The stranger, after passing the house, turned and stood watching it for some minutes from under the trees which border the road, every now and then looking round him. A passer-by would have put him down as some one with the time and the inclination to idle in the enjoyment of fresh air and a country road. But the glasses showed my uncle that the man's glance around him was cautious, and often repeated. He was watching the house intently, and keeping a wary eye about him. Presently he got well under cover of the trees, and all that the colonel could then make out was the brim of his slouch-hat. There he remained quietly, watching; and my uncle, having made up his mind to have a look at him at close quarters, came downstairs and walked briskly down the avenue and out to the road. There was no one to be seen; and although the colonel went past the spot where the stranger had been standing, to his astonishmont there was not a sign of him. But there were distinct footprints of large, broad, hobnailed boots, the right one showing, in the centre of the sole, the clear imprint of a triangular patch.

These incidents did not at the time impress themselves on the colonel. Indeed, he almost forgot about them until two nights afterwards. He had retired to his bedroom about twelve o'clock. The night was quiet and windless, the moon drifting clear of a few clouds. The colonel had not lit his candle, and was standing looking through the window at the beauty of the night, when he thought he saw a movement near the edge of the wood. Instantly he slipped back behind the curtain and kept an eye on the spot. In a minute or two a man came cautiously forward, gliding noiselessly from behind one tree to another until he reached the edge of the wood, where he stood motionless in the shadow. On the alert, the colonel at once came downstairs on tiptoe to the 'Laird's Room.' There he crept quickly and quietly to the window, and peered cautiously below the blind. The man was standing not three yards from him, but the strip of window below the blind was too narrow to let his face be seen. For a few seconds the prowler stood still. Then he came close to the window. The colonel could hear a faint sound, and caught a glimpse, he thought, of one of the man's hands near the window-sill. The blind was one of the patent 'fly-up' sort. The colonel suddenly jerked the cord, and instantly the blind

flew up to the top, and the two men faced each other. The midnight visitor was the same man who had been seen twice already near the house!

'I must admit,' said the colonel, 'that the fellow behaved with extraordinary coolness. I could not see what he was doing at the window, but he put something in his pocket, pulled his hat over his eyes, and doubled back to the edge of the wood. There—would you believe it?—he raised his hat in a farewell salute—a polite enough gesture, if a little florid. Then he turned and vanished swiftly among the trees. I roused the house and went to the lodge for Angus, and the two of us, with a gun, in case of accidents, went all round the place. But we heard and saw nothing. Next morning we examined the path outside my room window, and there we found footprints identical with those which I saw under the tree on the roadside. But that was not all. On the woodwork of the window were scrawled in chalk the words, "I FRUGATORI." I think they are Italian, and mean "The Searchers," or something like that. Unfortunately the rain next morning washed them out.'

'Extraordinary!' said I. 'Surely a man such as you describe would have been noticed and easily traced in a quiet neighbourhood like this.'

'So one would imagine; and, as a matter of fact, two or three people think that they saw a stranger, though not in the evening. But they cannot swear to his appearance, and from the moment he gave me his adieu there has been no trace of him.'

'Did you tell the police?'

'I did; but, of course, I could make no charge. The Chief-Constable telephoned a description to all the police-stations, and sent a plain-clothes man to the district. All the likely trains were watched, but to no purpose. However, as nothing had happened, the incidents did not disquiet me, although I was puzzled by the remarkable failure of the police to hear of any one answering to the fellow's description. I had almost dismissed the whole thing from my mind when Hugh's story arrived; and now you come with yours.'

'I feel certain that the two are connected. Uncle Hugh may be too ill to look through his papers. They may be stolen from him. It is imperative that I lose no time in starting for Italy. I'll telegraph Uncle Hugh at once. I'll pick up a few necessaries in Edinburgh on my way South.'

'I wish I could go with you, Neil; but I do not feel quite equal to the journey. If you can bring Hugh here or to this country alive, do so. But you may be too late.'

We discussed the business until the luncheon-hour, when Dr Hall joined us. After luncheon I went down the avenue with the doctor, who was, I think, a little anxious about his patient.

'How do you think the colonel is looking?' he asked me. 'Your visit has brightened him a good deal. I'm glad to say that, since I saw you in Edinburgh, he has not once referred to his mysterious visitor.'

'I think he is looking remarkably well,' I said. 'But he told me about the dark-bearded man, and I believe that he is under no delusion. I am convinced that there is some one watching the house.'

'Well, I can't fathom it. The colonel is certain that he has seen this person, and although he can describe him, nobody else seems to have seen any one remotely resembling him in the district. In a quiet place like the Glen such a thing is almost incredible.'

'But the footprints.'

'They prove nothing, except that somebody had been there recently. But whose footprints?'

'The prints left by the man the second time my uncle saw him are identical with those found after his third visit.'

The doctor thought for a little. 'It is a pity that there have been no exact and methodical investigations. The path behind the house was not examined until the next morning. Were there casts taken of the footprints?'

'No. There was no great cause for uneasiness, and it was not thought worth while.'

'A pity! Big, broad, hobnailed boots with a distinct triangular patch on the right sole ought to be traceable. But it's a queer story. So far as I can see into the business, the only other solution is that ghosts still walk.'

'Ghosts don't write on walls.'

'They are credited with performing more astounding feats—walking through doors, for instance. But I don't follow you. I never heard of any writing.'

'Why, the last time the watcher was here the colonel surprised him in the very act of writing something on the woodwork of the window-sill.'

'Come, this is something definite. We may make something of it. I withdraw the ghost theory,' he said with a smile. 'I have not seen the colonel for some days, and have heard nothing of this. What sort of writing is it?'

'The words were *I Frugatori*, which, the colonel thinks, is Italian for "The Searchers," or something of that nature. They were scrawled in chalk on the window-sill, but a shower of rain an hour or two afterwards obliterated them.'

'I have heard, of course, of Italian secret societies, but I always understood that their aims were political. My acquaintance with them is limited to their lurid adventures in railway novels—long-haired Anarchists, throne-destroyers, ruffians with bombs in their pockets, and all that sort of thing. The idea of their being in this out-of-the-world place is preposterous. The man is probably crazy. What on earth can they be hunting for?'

I hesitated. The doctor must have noticed this, for he said at once, 'Pray acquit me of any desire to enter into family affairs. But it is possible that I may be of some use to you. Criminology has long been a hobby of mine, and, apart from any help I can give in trying to unravel the mystery, I have a great regard for the colonel. You may count on my services, such as they are. Besides, I shall be here, on the spot, and you probably cannot remain indefinitely.'

'We are very greatly indebted to you, doctor. The colonel has already told me of your kindness and attention to him. In confidence, there is a queer family story dating from many years ago. I can't tell you more. Indeed, I ought not to have said so much without the colonel's permission. But I see no reason why he should not tell you himself. Of course, he does not wish the matter to reach the public.'

'Naturally. It would probably be garbled beyond recognition; and, in any event, publicity would serve no purpose. I will respect your confidence.' He stood for a minute or two smoking in silence. Then, 'By George!' he exclaimed, with sudden animation. 'Now that I remember, twice I have seen an Italian here; at least, to me he was unmistakably Italian in type. The first time I saw him was on the road three or four miles west. He was carrying a melodeon. The second time was in front of my house some days ago, when he was playing his misnamed instrument. He looked down on his luck, and I gave him a copper or two. I haven't seen him since.'

'How long ago is it since you saw him last?'

'About a fortnight, but I cannot say exactly. There are dozens of tramp "musicians" on the road, and if it is a disguise, it is simple and ingenious. He was an elderly man, tanned by exposure, woefully out-at-elbows, with shaggy dark hair and beard. I wish I had thought of this mendicant musician sooner. I could have sent a message to the police to watch him. Indeed, it may still be of importance, and I think I shall telephone to the Chief-Constable's office from my house at once, if I have your permission.'

'By all means.'

'It seems a curious position. I gather that the colonel has information which may be of value to other people.'

'Or perhaps to himself.'

'Or, as you say, to himself. But surely—of course, I am in ignorance of the whole situation—surely it would be easy to meet these people and have the whole thing, whatever it is, straightened out. It is intolerable to be spied on.'

'No doubt in an ordinary question, let us say, of competing interests the rational solution would be to reconcile them; but this is no ordinary affair. We suspect we have to deal with scoundrels, although we do not know who, or what, or where they are. To compromise might be to compound a felony.'

'Were I in your shoes, dealing with dangerous men, I should consult Scotland Yard,' said the doctor with decision.

'There may be dark designs, but there has been no actual crime committed. Our story is bald enough. It is that an unknown man has been prowling round a quiet country house in the North of Scotland, and that we think his object is to steal something. That, of course, is pure conjecture. Still, I am inclined to urge the colonel to act as you suggest.'

'I should not hesitate. Scotland Yard may not be able to work miracles, but it has amazing knowledge, and I shall be surprised if it does not know a good deal about the gentlemen who call themselves "The Searchers," if such a body exists.' He held out his hand. 'I am sorry I must leave you, but I have to make a long run into the country to see a patient. Count on my help; and if I think, as a medical man, that your presence here is necessary, I will telegraph you at once.'

I thanked him, and he went off on his rounds. I hastened back to the house to do my packing, for I had not much time in which to catch the train.

My uncle handed me a generous sum by way of travelling expenses, with instructions to telegraph him if I required more. He came with me to the station, where I sent off a telegram to Keene-Leslie asking him to meet me in London. It also concerned Mr Wakeford of the Omnivagants' Club.

'I'm an old crock, Neil, and I must stay where I am; but I would give much to be able to go with you,' said the colonel. 'Bring Hugh here if you can, and take care of yourself. I have a queer feeling that you may be going into danger.'

I rallied him on his forebodings, and the old man said no more; but the warm grip of his hand on mine told me, as no words could, his feelings when he gave me good-bye.

The bright delicacy of the morning had faded. The sky was slowly lowering. Far up, above the valley, a thin curtain of haze—herald of a shower—dulled the keen edge of the sky-line; and a southerly wind sprang up, driving the distant rain nearer. Where, in the morning, the outlines of the mountain-ridges had been picked out with precision in the clear light, misty pennants now trailed in the wind from every spur. The rain began to drum steadily on the window. My last glimpse of the Glen was a blurred picture of rapidly massing clouds and spectral woods, with Ben Muichdhui and Braeriach brooding beneath their cowls over the mist-filled valley, like gloomy visionaries.

(*Continued on page 149.*)

LAKE TITICACA.

LAKE TITICACA is, I suppose, one of the most wonderful, though one of the least known, of great fresh-water lakes. From it can be seen the whole of one of the main 'cordilleras' of the Andes, beginning with Sorata, and ending with Illimani. At sunset the scene is beautiful, the waters brilliantly blue, and the after-glow tinting all the snow-peaked mountains a soft pale pink. Sorata and Illimani are both twenty-one thousand feet high. Illimani in shape resembles Fujiyama, and is Bolivia's finest mountain. It appears in the shield on the Bolivian flag, also on the five and ten cent pieces.

The Indians are supposed to be Roman Catholics, yet they still believe that Sorata is haunted by a spirit; and in the evening small saucers containing maize and rice are put at the foot of the mountain for its refreshment. Some of the Indians know their way up the mountain, but none of them will act as guide. The spirit, it is said, does not like strangers, and any one escorting them will be punished by failure of his crops. So those desirous of climbing the mountain have had to bring out Swiss guides. The Indians go all over the lake in their *balsas*, or reed boats, always keeping close to the edge, as sudden squalls are liable to arise, and their light craft would promptly capsize. The water is so cold that no one—not even a strong swimmer—stands a chance, as cramp sets in almost at once.

All round the shore are small villages, the largest of these being Puno, on the Peruvian side. Steamers belonging to an English company ply from Puno, across to Guaqui, in Bolivia. The biggest of these, the *Inca*, is about six hundred tons. Steamers leave Puno at nightfall, and arrive in Bolivia early next morning; and any one who has the energy to get up about six o'clock enjoys a lovely view. The clear, cold, blue water, the range of lofty snow-clad mountains, and the Indians paddling about in their *balsas*, with square rush sails, make a sight not to be forgotten. The air being so rarefied (the lake is nearly thirteen thousand feet above sea-level), all outlines are sharply defined, and shadows nearly black. The Incas used to be sun-worshippers; and no wonder, for when the sun is shining the scene is glorious. On a cloudy day, however, all looks desolate and dreary; the waters turn leaden and the snow appears blue.

Puno used to be the most important town before the railways were built, but now its population is decreasing rapidly. It is a most melancholy sight to see street after street of desolate houses, some beginning to fall to pieces. The paving-stones are overgrown with moss and grass. Guaqui, the Bolivian port, is just a collection of a few houses, a custom-house, a railway yard, and workshops. The old Indian village of Guaqui is about three kilometres inland.

Copacabana is where the famous miracle-working Virgin is to be found. She chose the town herself, so the legend goes. Her maker was an Indian who lived in Sucre, and she dates back to the sixteenth century. She lived quite contentedly in Sucre for some years, but after a while a great many misfortunes befell the city; and one of the priests had a vision, in which she appeared and asked to be taken somewhere else. Cochabamba was tried first, but suited her no better; so she was at once removed to Copacabana, where a special church was built in her honour, and there she rests content. The church in Copacabana has several silver altars; the high altar is especially beautiful, being beaten out in a rose design. Our Lady of Copacabana is on a swivel pedestal. Most of the year she faces her own chapel, but on her great festival she is turned and faces the main church. All the vessels are of solid silver, most of them beautifully worked. Her own private chapel is most interesting. In one corner are piles of crutches left by the people who have been cured by her. Her robes blaze with jewels, given her by the devout for having had their petitions granted them. But the story goes that a good many of these gems are glass, the originals having been sold by the priests. I believe the figure (which is just a metre high) is made of wood, but the man who made it must have been a genius, as the face really looks as if it were alive. The face is very dark, with black hair. No wonder the credulous Indian believes she moves and speaks, so wonderful is that face!

In August is the special pilgrimage to Copacabana, and Indians come from all over the country, some walking fifty or sixty miles. I never went to the actual pilgrimage, as so many Indians assemble, and they are so dirty and unhygienic that smallpox invariably breaks out. One can always recognise the people who have been on the pilgrimage, as they all wear a small rosette made of pop-corn. The corn is popped in an unusual way; a small hole is dug in the sand, which gets so heated by the sun that the corn pops itself.

Lake Titicaca has only one outlet, the Desaguadero River, which has a quaint way of sometimes flowing from Titicaca to Poopo, and sometimes *vice versâ*; whichever lake is the fuller empties itself into the other. When the river leaves Titicaca it passes through a narrow gorge a couple of miles long, which suddenly broadens out into a shallow lake, with a deep shifting channel. Except in the channel, the water is not more than two or three feet deep, and in some places it is less. Rushes (*totara*),

from which the Indians make their boats, grow thickly everywhere. They grow about four feet long, and are very tough. They make quite good boats, but soon get water-logged. Wild duck abound, but the sportsman does not get any 'sport,' as they are quite tame, never having seen a gun. There are two small, flat-bottomed paddle-boats which used to go between the two lakes and carry the copper ore from Corocoro, but now the railway has tapped that country. It takes about a day to cross the shallow lake, and soundings have to be taken, as the channel is always changing. Afterwards the river becomes narrow, with high banks on each side, till it reaches Poopo, which is too shallow for anything but row-boats. It is a most weird sensation to be on the river when it is changing its direction of flowing. We could not make any headway at all, but dropped our anchor and waited for the current to settle.

There are a great many beautiful little islands on Lake Titicaca, but the two largest are the most famous. One is called the Island of the Sun, the other the Island of the Moon; they get their names from the old Inca temples on them. There is nothing of interest on the Island of the Sun except what is called the Inca's Bath; but how he bathed in it is a mystery, as it is only about three feet long and two feet wide. On the other island the ruins of the Moon's temple are still to be seen, but they are not very interesting, being just a collection of very small rooms. There is a little winding path which leads from the temple to the highest point in the island, where, on the face of the rocks, there is a cat's face, with a sacrificial stone in front of it. Whether the face is a freak of nature or was carved there by the Incas is a much-discussed point. On this island, as on most, there is not much vegetation—just what the Indians cultivate and some coarse grass. But on the Island of the Sun the flowers and the trees are beautiful. What grows best there is barley, potatoes, and kinua (quinoa). When ripe kinua grain turns a blood red, which improves the barren landscape wonderfully.

There are no native trees; but wild olive, eucalyptus, and weeping willow do well—better than any others. Round most of the churches there are groves of wild olive. The lake is shrinking considerably in size, evaporation being so great. Tiahuanaco, the old Inca capital, used to be a port, and now it is twenty kilometres inland. There is supposed to be untold wealth buried in those blue waters. When the Incas found out what robbers the Spaniards were, 'tis said, they collected all their gold, made it into a huge chain, and threw it into the lake. Some still believe the legend, and many treasure-seekers have sought in vain for the Inca's Chain.

JOHN BROWN.

CONFESSIONS OF A NEW ARMY CADET.

By R. W. CAMPBELL, Author of *Private Spud Tamson; Dorothy, V.A.D., and the Doctor;* &c.

CHAPTER IX.—JOHN BROWN'S LETTERS.

DEAR SIR,—We are specialists in pedigrees, family crests, and armorial bearings. Since the raising of the New Army we have furnished no fewer than 25,385 officers with Family Trees and correct Escutcheons. We have innumerable requests daily for similar services.

The success of our scheme has been most gratifying. Hundreds of our clients have secured Staff appointments and married society ladies through our labours.

We have now decided to open our field to include all Military Cadets, and would draw your attention to the importance of your name (Brown) and its ancestral greatness.

Our work is divided into various periods. For example, a Family Tree dating from the Norman Period costs £5, 5s. 0d.; the Tudor Period, £4, 4s. 0d.; Stewart Period, £3, 3s. 0d.; and the Lloyd George Period, 10s. 6d.

We have discovered that your ancestor, Harold de Vere Browne, landed at Hastings as an Esquire to the Duc de Polonski, a warrior in the service of William the Conqueror.

We shall, therefore, be pleased to complete your genealogical tree.

TERMS—CASH.

Yours respectfully,
DODGEM & DODGEM,
Pedigree Merchants.

. . . . . .

DEAR SIR,—May we draw your attention to the use of our Bureau as a means of meeting desirable and highly recommended ladies with a view to matrimony? In the past year we have successfully negotiated over three hundred happy unions between officers and our clients. At present we have the following on our lists:

(1) Society Lady, young, beautiful, no means, but willing to meet a gentleman with £10,000 a year.

(2) Widow, middle class, age 40, income £150, desires to meet quiet, respectable young man.

(3) Actress, charming and beautiful, desires to wed wealthy man who does not object to visitors.

(4) Barmaid, 25, good-looking, capital £50,

wishes to marry Sergeant-Major (Life Guards preferred).

These are just a few of our clients. Should you be interested, we shall be pleased to arrange an interview, or to send photos prior to the meeting.

Interview, £1. Successful Contract, £10.

TERMS—SPOT CASH.

Yours faithfully,
LENSKY & TROTIN,
Matrimonial Agency, Ltd

. . . . . .

DEAR SIR,—We beg to enclose our catalogue, patterns, and book of letters from satisfied clients. We have supplied uniforms to Raisuli, Li Hung Chang, and King Dinizulu.

Our stock is the finest in town. Cut excellent, and finish superb. *We are the people.*

Owing to officers' accounts being 'overdrawn,' our terms are CASH WITH ORDER.—Yours, &c.,
DO-ALL & DO-EM,
Military Tailors.

. . . . . .

VILLA PETITE, WASHOUT-ON-SEA.

DEAR SIR,—My sister and I are two well-known society ladies, anxious to help our country. Since 1914 we have made it our duty to look after canaries and pet-birds belonging to Officers of the Old Army. The high cost of feeding-stuffs has, however, compelled us to appeal for subscriptions in aid of this great work.

We have, therefore, decided to make our aim ONE MILLION SIXPENCES.

Your sixpence will be gratefully accepted.—Yours sincerely, MAUDE SLIPPEM.

P.S.—Please send stamped addressed envelope for your receipt.

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RECRUITING OFFICE, SLOWTOWN, LANCS.

JOHN BROWN,—You are hereby instructed to report for Army Service on May 24th. As this is the seventh notice sent you, your failure to comply will entail a warrant for your arrest.

JOHN MUDDLE-MEN, *Lieut.*,
Recruiting Officer.

RUSTIC MANOR, BERKS.

MY DEAREST BOY,—I have been worrying a lot about you since the rainy weather started. I hope your boots are not letting in, and that you have not got a cold. I wired Harrods to-day to send you a Chest-Warmer, felt soles, and a box of Gregory Powder.

I am glad to hear that you have got a clergyman in your hut, and that you go with him so often to Communion. And I am sure you will not waste your leisure hours with those brainless girls who are always luring young men into wicked paths.

The rector called to-day, and I asked him what books I should send you. He suggested *Good Words*, *Life of David Livingstone*, and the *Parish Magazine*. I have sent them off.

I was quite shocked to hear you had a Radical in your hut. I didn't know Radicals got commissions. There must be corruption somewhere, and I am going to write to *The Times*.

When do you expect to get a Brigade?

I think that is all just now. Oh, I forgot. Take a spoonful of the Gregory's every morning before breakfast. Your dear father did that for twenty years.

Lots of love to you, my own dear boy, from
YOUR LOVING MOTHER.

. . . . . .

SWEETVILLE.

MY DEAREST JOHNNIE,—Why have you stayed away so long? Is it because I had to entertain my two Australian friends? Surely that is unreasonable. Now, I am not so jealous as you are. For example, Marjory Clarke and her sister Hilda have told me of the interesting afternoon you all had together in the Picture-House. I was so pleased to hear you were in such good company. But, a week later, I was very sorry to learn that you and Beefy had been silly again, sporting about with two low-class girls in the local hotel. You are such a puzzle. Yet I can't help liking you. Do come over on Saturday. There's a good boy!—Your loving ADELA.

(*Continued on page 156.*)

PRIVATE ELIOT.

By INNES LOGAN, Author of *On the King's Service: Inward Glimpses of Men-at-Arms*, &c.

I.

AN icy blast swept the little group of Nissen huts, and one of the sleepers round the stove stirred uneasily on the floor. An officer who had given up the attempt to sleep leaned forward from the bench on which he sat and dropped another fragment of wood into the struggling fire, felt for his cigarette-case, and, with a slight gesture of annoyance, desisted, remembering it was empty. Round the stove lay a dozen others with their hands deep-thrust into their breeches-pockets, and their heads propped on respirator or haversack. One, on his back, snored heavily at irregular intervals: another, set against the bench with his head sunk on his chest, slipped over sideways every now and again, and righted himself wearily. Two sat by the table, their faces pillowed on their arms. A solitary candle, guttering on the

table, was the only light in the cheerless place. In the huts around the men of the battalion lay close, crowded together for warmth.

Private Eliot, on sentry duty, halted at the end of his beat and looked eastward. He saw beyond the infrequent flashes of the guns the slow, pale light of a bitter March dawn creeping over the long ridges of Picardy. Far off a bugle blew, faint but clear; and, as though in answer to a signal, a heavy battery half a mile in front ponderously blasted off a score of rounds. In the lines of huts set high on that stark upland the sleepers moved and muttered.

To the sentry standing there the distant bugle-call had something ethereal and elfin-like in it. It was the voice of romance, of longing and remembrance. His face, turned to the distances, showed haggard in the chill shadows of the reluctant dawn. Its long outline, the drooping moustache wet with the dews of the night, was the face of a thinker, of a man who brooded; and the long, sensitive fingers gripping the rifle-butt told the same tale. Old emotions, dulled by the drab round of endless tasks, desires firmly held in check, became clamant within him. His thoughts flew swiftly to the day long ago when he had first known in its urgency the profound desire for the individual tenderness of home—so long ago, when, standing on guard over the sleeping camp at Barry, he had watched, on just such a morning as this, the Scotch express thunder by, a stream of orange light, to the distant city where his loved ones lay. He sighed, and, turning, resumed his march.

Over the rise to the right a motor-bicycle came into view, so suddenly that the brown figure bent low over its handle-bars seemed to rise out of the soil itself. It was being driven at a tremendous pace; the explosions from its exhaust merged into a continuous roaring noise. The water in the pools on the muddy road flew before its tearing approach. Opposite the camp it swerved, and bumping and rattling over the uneven ground, came to rest near the sentry. Its rider was drenched in mud. On one cheek, inflamed from the blow of a stone, a thin trickle of blood had dried to a rusty-brown. Straddle-legged across his cycle, he asked for the sentry's battalion. Private Eliot, without a word, pointed to the hut where the officers were sleeping. The despatch-rider, dismounting, walked quickly over, knocked at the door, and entered.

II.

Inside the hut the candle had died out in a mass of grease on the table, and the dim dawn could not yet penetrate the blanket hanging over the window. The officer seated on the bench was still nursing the fire. He struck a match, and walking across the hut, pulled down the blanket, and turned to the adjutant. 'Donald,' he called loudly, 'a message from Brigade.' A tall boy lying on the floor raised himself on his elbow, and then stiffly stumbled to his feet. He took the small oblong envelope, looked round for his helmet, failed to see it, and walked out of the hut bareheaded. He shivered as the piercing wind caught his chilled blood, and Private Eliot, wheeling at the moment, caught a fleeting glimpse of his young, weary face turned questioningly to the line. The adjutant entered the commanding officer's hut, almost immediately came out again, and disappeared behind the row of huts. An orderly crossed the open space, then another, walking quickly, adjusting helmets as they went. Armed men began to pour from the huts. They mustered on the road in methodical haste. Private Eliot was relieved, and fell in with his company.

In his heart was still the sensitiveness and the longing of his rare hour of solitude, and they found expression in a black mood of passionate reaction from his surroundings. The rush of memories wakened by the distant bugle-call had broken loose the surgent desire, so long sternly repressed, for the end of it all—so long repressed, but in his lonely vigil growing, mastering him, only waiting for the touch that should open the gates. And the magic touch had come in the bugle's note. In such an instant came the sudden summons that he face the issue at once, in its acutest form of imminent peril, perhaps death. There emerged into sharpest collision his personality and the immediate necessity. He loathed all this—loathed it with soul and body; loathed the discipline, the perpetual orders, the mud and the lice, the mutilation and the bloodshed. He rebelled furiously against it all. His heart cried out that it was intolerable, no longer to be endured. If he were killed, what did it matter to them, these men round him? Why did that man Davidson spit like that? And he wished the fellow behind would stop swearing—he was sick of blasphemy. It did matter supremely to his wife. For her it would mean lifelong loneliness and the unequal burden of their children. But to *him*—he knew about it; he knew, had seen it a score of times. 'Poor Eliot's gone,' they would say. 'Eliot gone? That's bad luck. Married, wasn't he?' And then next day, or the day after, they would forget all about him. That was war, a selfish, degrading thing. And in England they talked and talked. Easy for well-groomed old gentlemen to speak of fighting to a finish. When it meant the finish of yourself, most likely, it was different. He did wish that fellow Davidson would stop spitting. And why on earth didn't he have those teeth of his seen to when he was at home on leave the other day? *He* hadn't had leave for nine months; and now all leave was stopped, they said.

The colonel's ringing voice called the battalion to attention, and the long column, marching by platoons, began to swing off down the road.

III.

As they marched they advanced into the fringes of battle, with signs familiar enough to these old campaigners, and yet increasingly with features which puzzled and surprised. The long, rather high ridge towards which they were now advancing was under continuous shell-fire; but the white or dark clouds of smoke that tufted its summit and sides showed a lack of concentration or plan in the shelling which perplexed them. It seemed difficult at times to be sure whether the ridge was being shelled by their own guns or the enemy's. Could it be that the artillery on neither side was certain where its front line lay? Their own artillery through which they passed were, at all events, now firing but little; and the sustained clamour of the guns that had come to them distantly the previous day had died away into spasmodic outbursts from isolated batteries, and the more persistent booming of the long guns farther back. They met batteries moving under orders rearwards, passed ammunition-dumps deserted of all life, and, as the hour wore on, realised, with all an infantry's ironical (and often unfair) bitterness in such an event, that the whole line of artillery was evacuating its gun positions and moving back. Rumour passed from lip to lip. It was said that the enemy had broken through to the south, and was already far behind their right flank.

The leading platoon swung to the left, and struck into a lane leading across country to a village. As they approached, a shell burst fairly on the cross-roads, and another and yet another whizzed overhead to explode with tremendous effect among the buildings. The men turned their heads to the noise, or tilted their steel helmets to catch any flying stones or fragments, as their temperament or the mood of the moment led them. The usual jester, the 'comic' of the platoon, successfully made the inevitable joke. The officers held themselves erect, and walked steadily on. The battalion turned to the right at the cross-roads, cleared the village, and halted.

IV.

As Private Eliot looked round, leaning on his rifle, he saw the medical officer and the chaplain standing together a few yards from him. They were poring over a map, marking points on it with a pencil. The stretcher-bearer sergeant, a brave man wearing the Military Medal with clasp, stood just behind, on his face the expression of the whimsical boredom he usually assumed (and apparently felt) on those occasions. Eliot gloomed at them. He resented their preoccupation. He resented anybody taking an interest in the matter at all. 'Eye-wash!' That's what the army was. Filth and eye-wash, mud and misery, and pretending to be 'cheery.'

An R.A.M.C. officer strode up and joined the others over their map. He had a pale, thin face, which the shadow of the steel helmet made disproportionately small; and from his broad shoulders to his lean flanks and shapely hands and feet, he moved with grace and lightness. Never well, often weary beyond measure, his wiry frame held a spirit of unconquerable resolve; and, amid the sordid rigours of war, his lofty idealism, endlessly employed, but never exhausted, in the labours and the perils of the front line, gleamed and burned, a guiding star to many. Eliot could hear his voice—they had folded up the map—but what he said only in part. 'Think of it—the fate of civilisation in the balance—and we're in it, man; *we're in it.* Greatest moment in history for centuries—all in the balance—good or evil—to be decided by *us —by these fellows there!*'

These words, which were spoken with a kind of subdued passion, seemed to snap some cord in the private soldier's brain. What discipline, habit, comradeship, the ringing tones of their colonel had done for the other men, these words, spoken so quietly, but with such fervour, did for him. His mind, singularly sensitive in these hours to impression, saw, as in a flash, the vision, and caught fire. His spirit leaped to it. It restored his soul. A grim memory, that had held him in its grasp throughout the march, of a man in his platoon whom he had recently seen die—his legs blown off, one at the knee, the other at the hip—was lifted from him. A shell whooped overhead, and plunged into a house behind. It failed to burst, and the platoon commander, turning, caught Private Eliot's eye, and smiled. Eliot smiled back. Even Davidson, reflectively chewing a blade of grass with a rather bovine expression on his face, not irrelevant to his occupation and his habitual state of mind, now seemed to him, at least, a homely and harmless creature, whom one might despise, but without resentment. Eliot surveyed the battlefield with a keen glance. He was master of himself. Neither routine, the soldier's school, nor fatalism, his frequent refuge, would be called on to support his spirit that day. When they marched again, Private Eliot bore himself proudly.

V.

A German aeroplane dropped swiftly out of the sky from the north, came very low, circled once above the battalion, and sped off home. The company commander stepped to the side of the road to speak to the adjutant, and the men heard him say, 'Dig in here—just over the rise? Very good.'

A moment later the company sergeant-major came down the line. 'Now there is no one between us and the enemy. That ridge is lost. They may be on us at any moment. Don't you worry about that. That's the commanding officer's job. *Your* job is to DIG!' He snapped

out his words, and moved off, a fine figure of a man.

They had reached a sunken road running up to the top of the rise. The remains of an artillery-dump, half-a-dozen howitzer-shells, and a score of eighteen-pounders lay scattered by the roadside; to their immediate left a battery was still firing regularly, and, in reply, German 4·2's were crashing on to the empty ground between the battery and the road. The battalion spread right and left under orders, and began to dig. Eliot threw himself into the work, using his entrenching-tool fiercely.

He worked so hard that he was unaware of his platoon commander's presence till he heard him speaking. 'Private Eliot, the intelligence officer wants six men to go out on patrol with the snipers. I want you to go with him.' The little group fell in quickly, and got their orders. Their instructions were to advance cautiously in couples; to obtain contact with the enemy if possible, without fighting unless necessary; to obtain all possible information; and to be back at a certain time. Eliot had as companion a tall corporal, a gamekeeper in civil life. Two by two scattering, they moved off down the hill into the valley below.

Eliot and his companion slipped cautiously into a small group of battered farm buildings. The yard was empty. Keeping close to the wall of the steading, the corporal leading, they walked towards the other side. Eliot, glancing quickly everywhere, suddenly felt his heart grow cold. The barrel of a rifle was protruding from the door of the broken cow-shed, across the yard, twenty feet away. Like lightning he threw his rifle to his shoulder and fired through the doorway, and then leapt for the opening. As he fired the flash of the German's gun blazed out, and even as Eliot sprang he was conscious of the corporal, without a sound, sinking slowly to the ground, his rifle clattering on the cobbles as he fell. When Eliot reached the door the German fired again; the bullet went wide by an inch, and the Scotsman was in the shed. For a second he could see nothing in the half-light filtering through the holes in roof and wall of the sordid place; then straight ahead of him he saw the German, with his back to the farther wall, tearing at the bolt of his rifle. He was making a kind of snarling noise, the sound of a man in an extremity of anger or of fear; but in an instant Private Eliot was across the floor. In the dim light, as he thrust, he was aware of glaring eyes and lips drawn back, of murder in the eyes that glared—and of murder in his own heart; but even in that fraction of time of deadly knowledge that it was his life or the other's, the event was taken swiftly out of his hands. With a blasting roar the roof flew apart in a red blaze of flame. Eliot, stunned, thrown back across to the wall, saw through the choking dust the light of the open sky broad on his enemy. He looked into a mouth wide open, jaw sagging, and above the jaw saw nothing at all. Face and head were gone, sheared off as though by a giant knife. By some freak of balancing, the body stood upright for a moment, then slowly heeled over and sprawled full length on the floor. Private Eliot, as though from a distance, heard his own gasping intake of breath, felt himself slipping sideways down the wall, tried to recover himself, failed, and passed swiftly into darkness and oblivion.

VI.

When he came to himself he was lying where he had fallen. His throat was full of the acrid taste of brick-dust and explosive. His confused mind struggled to remember, and slowly the picture of the past came back to him, at first in fragments like a picture-puzzle, then in fuller measure, till all was clear and in its place at last. He lay with his head propped at a sharp angle against the wall, dully aware that he was in pain. With an effort he moved, and agony took possession of him. He steeled himself to it, and moved again. Raising himself on his hands, back thrust against the wall, he looked, and saw that his leg was torn and bleeding. He broke open his field-dressing and bound it on the wound as well as he could, then rested a while. With patient labour he sought to rise to his feet, clinging to the rude planks of the gaping wall, and at last succeeded. He stood, trembling with the cost of the effort, and then moved towards the door, a step at a time. He reached it at last.

Private Eliot stood in the doorway and looked across the yard. The corporal lay drawn together on the cobbles, motionless. Eliot started out to reach him, keeping close to the wall, against which he frequently rested. The journey seemed endless to him, but at length he stood beside the huddled form. He stooped, and with an effort, clinging the while to the lower flap of the stable door, turned it over. The corporal was dead. A tiny hole over his heart told why. Private Eliot unbuttoned the breast-pockets and pulled out the pay-book and a bundle of letters. A photograph of a child, a boy of three or so, fell to the ground, and he stooped to recover it, almost overbalanced, and with difficulty pulled himself erect. At a second attempt he succeeded. He put pay-book, letters, and photograph in his pocket, with a grim thought that, for all the chance they had of getting to the battalion, they might as well have been left where they were. He paused, looking down, then shook out his handkerchief and laid it gently across the dead man's calm face. He crept painfully on his way again.

When they had left the battalion the corporal and he had not come straight forward, but had crossed diagonally, in obedience to the order that the scouts were to scatter along the battalion front. Eliot, halting as he reached the corner,

knew that he could be no great distance from the line. He knew also that he was very near to collapse, and that if he had to give in he would be found by the enemy or not found at all. The swell in the rise facing him concealed the line, but he thought it must be just beyond, just out of sight. He prepared himself to make the attempt.

But as he did so he stiffened, standing for a moment very still. He had remembered that he had taken no identification from the German lying dead in the shed—and he ought not to go back without one. They would want to know his age, regiment and division, and so on. It was his duty to go back. He cursed his folly, the folly of an unpractical man turned soldier. After all, no one need know. He had been wounded by a shell, not in hand-to-hand fighting. No one need ever know. But—it was his duty to go back.

Private Eliot turned and painfully retraced his steps. He crept along the wall and round the farmyard; he entered the shed, and made his way round to the sprawling figure, stooped, and fumbled. A few minutes later he emerged, and began his slow progression round the wall. He felt stronger now, with the false strength of growing fever. The courtyard moved up and down strangely before his eyes. It seemed now larger, now smaller. Once it became enormous, then diminished again absurdly. It seemed no bigger than a box. *A Doll's House.* Wasn't there a play called that? Of course; and he had given it to his little girl. No; that was a real doll's house, not the play. As he reached the corner his strength went from him, and he fell on hands and knees. He began to crawl feebly towards the line.

He became conscious in some dim fashion, as he crawled, that he was in a depression or fold in the slope, and that this appeared to run upwards. He would keep to that. There seemed to be a machine-gun firing bursts from his left over his head—or two. He could not be sure. He had to rest very often; and once, as he lay prone on his face, he felt something trickling into his mouth, something warm, with a peculiar sweet taste. He rubbed his face with the back of his hand and looked. It was blood. He must have been hit on the head too. He hadn't known that. He got on his hands and knees again, and crawled on, weakly.

VII.

Private Eliot reached at length a little cup in the ground near the top of the slope, where the long fold came to an end. He lay for long, then essayed feebly to climb its lip. Three times he tried, and at the third failure lay exhausted. His shoulders suddenly shook with suppressed laughter. What was that story about Bruce and the spider? Seven times the old spider tried. Mustn't be beaten by a spider. His light-headedness was more prolonged now, and the intervals of intelligence shorter. He raised himself to try again, and for the fourth time failed. It wasn't spiders, it was bees, anyway. He remembered how they used to drift in at the schoolroom window, bringing with them the sharp fragrance of the wild thyme on the Border hills. He got on all-fours again, and this time, with the last effort of his failing strength, succeeded in raising his head to the top. He could see the trench a hundred yards away. He made a supreme effort to keep his hold, and his thoughts clear. He tried to shout, and could not. And as the darkness closed in on his mind again his arms went from under him, and falling over on his side, he slid slowly downward into the hollow of the cup, and lay still.

He waked to the stars shining down clearly from a great expanse of sky. He lay staring upwards, without pain or any distress of mind. He was very tired, that was all, and sleep would be unspeakably welcome. How easy it was—this that men dreaded so! If only those at home could know how easy it was!

He heard quick steps and a familiar voice; saw in the starlight a face near his; recognised Davidson, who had once annoyed him about something—what was it?—years ago.

'There you are, chum. Spotted you when you looked over, but no one allowed across in daylight because of that machine-gun over there.' Davidson jerked his thumb outwards. 'Gently now; gently does it.' Stooping, he gathered Private Eliot in his powerful arms, rose easily with his burden, and breasting the rim of the cup, strode strongly towards the British line.

'ALSO RANS.'

If no one ever reads us,
And no one ever writes
A critic word that speeds us,
A friendly that delights;
If people in the papers
Should never quote our names,
Reviewers light no tapers
On altars that are Fame's;
If we must die unheeded,
As we have lived unknown,
Less even than the weeded
In gardens of Renown:

What of it?—as we stumble
Through death on heaven's gate,
We shall be brave, though humble,
Awed, yet importunate.
'Do You—do You know better?'
We shall make haste to ask;
'Know we have loved both letter
And spirit of our task?
Your light past understanding
Was ours in our degree;
Dark to the world's demanding,
But plain for us to see.
We, too, have known art's glory,
If not creation's flow!' . . .
And God will hear our story,
The Giver say, 'I know.'

V. H. F.

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SEVENTH SERIES

CECIL RHODES.

SOME PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.

By Sir HENRY LUCY.

I.

I MADE the acquaintance of Cecil Rhodes at a breakfast-party given in the parliamentary session of 1892 by Mr Munro-Ferguson, not yet G.C.M.S., or dreaming of occupying the important post of Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. The guest of the morning arrived late, and chanced to drop into an empty chair by which I was seated. This happy accident was the opportunity of establishing a friendship which, with increasing warmth, lasted to the day of his too early death.

Two years later my wife and I paid a visit to the Cape. On the arrival of the steamer we were greeted by the aide-de-camp of Sir Henry Loch, Governor of Cape Colony, who was the bearer of a letter of warm welcome and of invitation to lunch on the following day at his Excellency's country quarters a short distance out of Cape Town. Among the guests was Cecil Rhodes. Again favoured by fortune, I found myself seated on one side of him, my wife on the other. In the course of conversation he told us that his country residence, Groote Schuur, was in process of renovation, adding that, if we did not mind the discomfort of the presence of workmen about the premises, he hoped we would be his guests during our stay at the Cape. We were doubly grateful for the proffered hospitality. Primarily, it offered opportunity of closer intimacy with a fascinating personality. In the second place, it delivered us from the depressing circumstances of hotel life in sun-baked Cape Town.

Rhodes had been fortunate in finding within a mile or two of Cape Town an old Dutch house set at the foot of Table Mountain, in the lovely suburb of Rondebosch. Originally, as its name (Dutch for the Great Barn) implies, it had been a granary. It was plainly and strongly built; the architect, under Rhodes's personal supervision, greatly improved it by raising it in height a storey, and extending its base by the addition of a wing. Rhodes's ambition was to furnish the old mansion in the style suitable to its age. He was ever on the look-out for old furniture, whether to be found in Dutch homesteads in South Africa or in salerooms in London. I have a pleasant recollection of a wardrobe in the bedroom where we slept, a massive structure in black oak, severely simple in design, a silver lock and silver hinges glistening on its dark surface. As we had been forewarned, the builders were in possession, and the living-rooms were limited to a couple of bedrooms, a dining-room, and the library. Our host slept in a hut in the garden at the back of the house, giving up the only bedrooms to his guests. Among the passengers on the Castle Liner was Horace Plunkett, an Irish member, Unionist in politics, patriotic by instinct and practice. I spoke of him to Rhodes, who forthwith called upon him, and insisted on his joining us at Groote Schuur. Not more loath to leave his hotel than we had been, Sir Horace (as he now is) by his company added greatly to the pleasure of the house-party.

Two years after our visit Groote Schuur was destroyed by fire, and with it many of its garnered treasures. The calamity wounded Cecil Rhodes sorely. There were particular associations that endeared the place to him. It was a home of his own making, upon which, amid pressing business of imperial scope, he had lavished much money, infinite thought and personal trouble. He was not, however, a man idly to lament an irreparable misfortune. He rebuilt the place on its original lines, and, with sublime prophetic faith in the country's destiny, bequeathed it on his death for the use of the Premier of South Africa. Dr Jameson occupied Groote Schuur after Rhodes's death until General Botha, first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa (the fulfilment of Rhodes's vision), entered it as his official residence in 1910.

II.

Another matter Rhodes found time to deal with during a flying visit to London was a project to do honour to the gallant Britons who died with Major Wilson (December 5, 1893) when Lobengula turned at bay at the Shangani River and fought his pursuers. The bodies were found where they had fallen, rifle in hand. By direction of Rhodes, the remains were collected, and carried a distance of two hundred miles to be buried at 'World's View,' in the Matoppo Hills, in the neighbourhood of one of the prehistoric ruins that are among the marvels of

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South Africa. His desire was that these heroic fellows should have a memorial worthy of their deeds. He conceived the idea of building round their place of common sepulture a stout wall, setting within it medallions in *basso-rilievo* containing portraits of the heroes, each with his name inscribed below. He commissioned an eminent London sculptor to work out this unique memorial, which was in due time set up in its appointed place.

When the great Matabele king died, after his flight from Bulawayo, his three boys were left without provision and with few friends. It speaks volumes for the reputation Cecil Rhodes had established with the savage tribe he vanquished, that the first thought of the orphaned children's guardians turned to the great white chief at Cape Town. Escorted by two or three of the old king's men, Lobengula's children made their way to Cape Town, and presented themselves in Rhodes's doorway. He immediately took them in, gave them rooms, and undertook to provide for them. He had an idea, the realisation of which would, he believed, be attended by perfect happiness for the lads. He was at the time having a portion of the far-reaching land round Groote Schuur laid out for specimens of the wild animals to be found in Africa. He told me he would have the boys trained up to take charge of these Zoological Gardens, work for which both their instincts and their aptitude promised to qualify them. I never heard how the project fared, but it is certain Rhodes would make permanent provision for the orphans of his ancient foeman.

He was even prouder of his library than of his old furniture or the blue hydrangeas that glorified his garden and gave him special pleasure. He was always buying books. Amid the pressure of his vast business, political and commercial, he found time for reading only by sitting up late at night, a habit which did not prevent his taking an hour's ride at six o'clock in the morning. His favourite study was the lives and works of the Roman emperors. He bought every book he could hear of bearing on this wide subject. He had a rare collection of their portraits on coins or engravings, and many manuscripts specially copied from originals at the Vatican and other libraries of Rome. The fascination 'imperial Cæsar dead and turned to clay' had for the founder of Rhodesia was complete, perhaps significant.

When I returned to London after visiting the Cape, people who heard I had been the guest of the financial magnate said, not without suspicion of envy, 'You must have got some good tips.' As a matter of fact, neither goldfields nor diamond-mines were mentioned in our many intimate conversations. Yes, there was an exception. Rhodes occasionally referred to the reputed site of Solomon's mines, whence he brought a handful of particles of gold, displayed on a plate in his library. But it was the regal state of King Solomon that interested him, not his possession of gold-mines, which, compared with the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa established and controlled by Rhodes, were insignificant. In general society, gathered in a London house to do him honour, he was frigidly taciturn. Seated after dinner on the stoep at Groote Schuur, with the moon shining in a blue sky almost as brightly as the sun over London town, he talked by the hour about ancient Rome and its warrior emperors.

One other subject on which he talked—attractive as being imperial in its interests—was preferential tariffs between the Mother Country and the Colonies and between the Colonies themselves. Speaking at Grahamstown in 1903, Dr Jameson stated that the fiscal policy recommended by Mr Chamberlain (at the time a subject of rancorous political controversy) was fifteen years earlier proposed by Cecil Rhodes. I am not aware of any general scheme of preferential tariffs promulgated by him. He certainly did contemplate something of the kind as applicable to Cape Colony. He showed me correspondence in progress with the Canadian Premier, having in view the establishment of a bargain between the two colonies designed for mutual profit. Canada was to admit Cape wine on a preferential tariff, Cape Colony importing Canadian wood at an exceptionally low tariff.

III.

Rhodes had a dinner-party every night of our stay at Groote Schuur, giving us the opportunity of making the acquaintance of the principal personages in public life at the Cape. On one occasion came Dr Jameson, fresh from Matabeleland, where there had been trouble with Lobengula. At the time, unconscious of a destiny that would bring him a Privy-Councillorship, a C.B., and a baronetcy, he was known to his friends and the public—the terms were identical—as 'Doctor Jim.' In the course of conversation at dinner he privily told me how much he suffered from the constriction of a starched collar, worn after months of sartorial freedom on the veld.

When, in the autumn of this same year, 1894, Jameson accompanied Rhodes on a visit to England, Rhodes brought him to luncheon with us. The arrangement was characteristic of the greater man. Abundant in his own hospitality, he avoided London society, hated going out either to luncheon or to dinner. Invited to Ashley Gardens, he telegraphed (his private correspondence was largely conducted by telegraph): 'Don't ask anybody else, and I 'll bring Jameson.' So it was arranged, and we had a delightful two hours listening to these two empire-makers in the freedom of unfettered conversation. Then, as at our first meeting, I was struck with the innate simplicity of Jameson, his amazing unconsciousness of merit or distinc-

tion above the average man. An affectionate confidence existed between him and his comrade in the battle of life in South Africa. To the hour of his own death, 'Doctor Jim' silently mourned the too early cutting off of Cecil Rhodes. It is pleasant to think that they sleep together in everlasting rest on the lofty height of the Matoppos, which looks far over the veld of Rhodesia. Loyal to each other during life, in death they are not divided.

I noticed with some surprise that when Rhodes was making up his list for a dinner-party (we were never more than eight or ten all told) the name of Sir Henry Loch did not seem to occur to him. The fact is that the two men, though socially on friendly terms, were not altogether at one. Rhodes wanted too much, and was impatient of restraint, gently but firmly applied by the hand of the Governor. Loch was at that time in a most delicate and difficult position, which he mastered with native tact and finesse. He found himself between the devil and the deep sea, represented by the crafty Kruger and the overmastering Englishman, bent on realising his dream of a line of British territory running from the Cape to Cairo.

Rhodes told me he never trod the streets of London in his recurring visits without thinking of the time when he drove through them to take ship for the Cape. He was sent out to South Africa as the last resource against the advance of consumption. On one occasion he called on the doctor in whose charge he had been. The astonished man, regarding the sturdy figure, ruddy countenance, and bright eyes of the Premier of Cape Colony, turned over his old books, and showed him an entry in which Cecil Rhodes was written down with circumstance as a hopeless case of consumption. The Cape and the whole of South Africa owe much to the energy and the ability of Cecil Rhodes. *Per contra*, to the splendid South African climate was due the lengthening of his life.

With all his hard exterior to the world at large, his imperious manner, and his habitual stand-offishness to society magnates, Cecil Rhodes had a heart tender as a woman's. I remember one morning at breakfast at Groote Schuur finding him in painfully depressed mood. I thought something serious had happened in State affairs concerning the Cape Government, or that there was bad news from Matabeleland, where, at the moment, Lobengula was in flight. After a while he told me that his butler had had a very bad night, with blood-spitting and other evidence of consumption. This was premonition of failure of cherished hopes. The young man was the son of an old parishioner of Rhodes's father. He had found his way to the Cape, as many go thither, in an advanced stage of consumption. Rhodes, who knew nothing about him except that he came from his own home, took charge of him, sent him up-country to the health-restoring veld, kept him there till he had made a cure, took him into his service, and finally advanced him to a position of high trust in his household. Now he threatened to break down, and tears stood in his master's eyes as he told the story, and made careful preparations for his revisiting the veld.

IV.

Cecil Rhodes and Jameson visited London together just a year before the Raid. They stayed at the Burlington Hotel, of which costly hostelry Rhodes, in his imperial fashion, engaged a whole wing, with private entrance. If he cared to reflect on the topic, he might have consoled himself with the conviction that he was the only denizen of a London hotel whose dinner was served on silver plate. That was a detail due rather to a sense of propriety on the part of the landlord than to Rhodes's personal requirement. A man of the simplest tastes, wanting little here below at dinner-time, he wanted that little good and well cooked, with a moderate allowance of the best wine, for which he had a delicate palate. Overwhelmed with invitations to dinners, big and little, he declined all, dining every night in his own rooms, always with Jameson. Rochfort Maguire was present on most nights, and two, or at most four, friends made up the small party. For Jameson Rhodes privately expressed boundless confidence and an esteem that bordered on affection. The only time they were separated during their stay in London was from a Friday to a Monday, when Jameson went down to Sandringham, the guest of Edward, Prince of Wales.

There was a delightful touch of comedy in Rhodes's explanation of his failure at the last moment to countermand his lieutenant's foray. I remember well the twinkle in his eye when one day, at Groote Schuur, conversation turned upon the different course events might have taken in Matabeleland if a particular message from Sir Henry Loch had duly reached Jameson. Lord Ripon, then at the Colonial Office, urged by strong protests made by Labouchere and others in the House of Commons, cabled to the High Commissioner of South Africa an order forbidding the Chartered Company's expeditionary force to engage in armed conflict with Lobengula. Sir Henry Loch sent on the message. When at length it reached Jameson, Lobengula's army had been defeated, and the king was already in flight. The delay was most regrettable; but somehow or other, as Jameson officially explained, the telegraph-wire had broken down, and before foot-messengers could reach the invading force all was over.

The South African Committee appointed to inquire into the circumstances attendant on the Raid met in February 1897. The Prince of Wales, an early comer at the first sitting, had a unique experience. He was kept waiting three-quarters of an hour whilst the committee debated

in private on matters of procedure. He bore the ordeal with genial good-humour, resting his folded hands on his walking-stick, and occasionally chatting with his neighbours right and left. As he remarked to one of them, the last time he had been in that part of the hall was in attendance at the Tichborne trial. The Grand Committee-Room in which the committee sat is built on the site of the old Court of Queen's Bench, in which forty-five years ago opened the trial at bar of the Claimant.

A modern annexe of Westminster Hall, the Grand Committee-Room where Rhodes was practically on his trial is approached by a mean staircase. The only decoration of its walls whilst the committee conducted its inquiry was a colossal map of Africa—that map of which (spread out before him on smaller scale in his room at Groote Schuur) Cecil Rhodes, with a rapid sweep of his hand from the Cape to Cairo, had said to me little more than two years earlier, 'I mean to paint it red from here to here.'

Throughout the bad three-quarters of an hour's waiting Rhodes sat bolt-upright at the end of a bench immediately behind counsel. Never at the height of his prosperity had I seen him looking so well. He was slighter, both in figure and in face, the change bringing into greater prominence his massive head and lofty brow. He did not speak to any one, and for the most part looked straight ahead. Occasionally his eyes glanced round the crowd to his right, but ever returned to the big map on the wall to his left. When called to the witness chair, he found himself in a curiously awkward position. He was seated at a small table, facing not his interrogators, but the shorthand clerk. After a while he, in accordance with habit, took the direction of affairs in his own hand, turned his chair round, and so fronted the benevolent visage of Sir William Harcourt. At the outset he was undoubtedly nervous, reading his statement at a pace that made some passages unintelligible. Fortunately it was printed, and copies were in the hands of the committee, who closely followed the reading. When it came to cross-examination he went to the other extreme, his answers being so long in coming that Harcourt occasionally passed on to another question without receiving a reply to its predecessor.

After a day's experience of the procedure and such surroundings, Rhodes grew so much at home that at luncheon-time he drank his bottled stout under the eyes of the envious committee, and munched a ham sandwich as he explained to them his policy in South Africa. The restless movements, the nervous tension of the face, the long pauses in his replies all disappeared. He became quite chatty, occasionally confidential.

V.

During the progress of the inquiry the illustrated papers were full of portraits of Cecil Rhodes strangely differing in appearance. An additional bond of sympathy existed between him and Lord Rosebery in the fact that each had strong objection to sitting for his portrait before either easel or camera. The consequence was that the illustrated papers were fain to pick up anything they could get purporting to be a portrait of the hero of the hour. The best portrait of Rhodes hangs, with its face to the wall, in the studio of an English R.A. Yielding to the wishes of a friend, he consented to sit for his portrait, and the commission was given to Luke Fildes. It happened to be a period of unusual storm and stress, which, acting upon a temper not constitutionally placid, brought Rhodes to the studio day after day in increasingly irascible mood. He addressed the artist in tones and terms unfamiliar to an R.A. He pettishly declined to follow directions as to where he should sit, declaring that if Fildes could not paint him as he pleased to station himself, he must leave it alone. One day Fildes, at the end of the tether of his patience, decided to leave it alone. He quietly informed his imperious visitor that he would decline to receive him any more. Rhodes, somewhat to his astonishment, was politely conducted to the door, with assurance that it would not again be opened for him. This was rather a costly reprisal on the part of the artist, since it meant forfeiture of the exceptionally handsome fee named in the commission, and the portrait was so nearly finished that it would not have taken long to complete.

London hostesses almost literally fought for Rhodes's presence at their parties. On one occasion I met him at a house in Portland Place. Among the circle of well-known people was Henry Stanley, for whom the occasion must have had a melancholy interest. Not many years had passed since he was the lion of London, the drawing-rooms of happy hostesses who had captured him for an evening being crammed with worshippers. I have vivid recollection of seeing him, just home from his discovery of Emin Pasha, at a party given by Sir John Pender in Horace Walpole's old house in Arlington Street. The room was crowded with the best-known people in London. Just before midnight the late king of the Belgians, who was among the company, gave his arm to Lady Pender to conduct her to the supper-room. Close behind in the procession walked Stanley, his head almost up to the shoulders of the king. It was upon him that all eyes were fixed. There were many kings, but only one Stanley. On this subsequent night Stanley moved about the crowded room in Portland Place almost unnoticed, all eyes being bent on the modest figure and bravely smiling face of the much-bored Cape Premier.

During a later visit to London in the summer of 1899 Rhodes and Kitchener saw a good deal of each other, renewing and strengthening former acquaintance. Both had in ordinary social

relations a great gift of reticence. In each other's company they were voluble. A couple of years earlier they had forgathered at Cairo. An officer at whose quarters they frequently met gave me a graphic account of how they spent one night there, as he put it, 'sprawling on the floor, grabbing at Africa.' Their host was the happy possessor of one of the largest and most nearly up-to-date maps of Africa. This was spread on the floor, Kitchener and Rhodes going down on their knees and tracing their several proposed routes, Kitchener coming down from the Soudan, Rhodes advancing from the south, till, meeting, they made the way clear from Cape to Cairo. When the Sirdar captured Khartoum, one of his earliest telegraphic messages was despatched to Rhodes, with inquiry, 'How are you?'

Public interest in Cecil Rhodes, dormant since Dr Jameson 'upset his apple-cart,' revived by his sick-bed. People were glad to know that King Edward, who never forgot to do a kind thing, personally communicated by cable with the sick and wearied Titan. It was curious to note how fatalistic Rhodes's relatives were on the subject. His brother and sister were both certain he would come safely out of the wrestling-bout with death. Eight months before he was beaten in the struggle I met Colonel Rhodes at a country-house party. He was *en route* for Cairo, where he had tryst with his brother. They were bound for Khartoum, and Cecil intended to return to the Cape by the eastern route, touching at Zanzibar. Colonel Rhodes told me that when, early in the autumn of 1901, his brother arrived from the Cape, there were symptoms of heart-disease that gave great concern. A quiet stay in Scotland pulled him together; and when, at the end of October in that year, he set out for a leisurely journey to Egypt, he was quite a new man.

'Cecil,' Colonel Rhodes said, 'doesn't mean to die till he has completed his project of connecting Cape Town with Cairo by railway and telegraph. When he has made up his mind to do a certain thing, he generally sees it through.'

Nothing in the life of Cecil Rhodes more sharply struck the public than the provision in his will directing his entombment. The picture of the funeral procession making its way northward over the South African veld till it reached the mighty Rhodesian mountain he had selected for his mausoleum created a profound impression. An old friend and colleague of the South African magnate told me an interesting story in connection with this episode. Rhodes drew from the Bible the inspiration that found realisation in his magnificent burial-place. He was a constant reader of the Old Testament, particularly delighting in the Book of Job. He frequently, more especially when depressed by overwork or bowed down by extreme anxiety, quoted Job's lament that he had not died in infancy: 'For now should I have lien down and been quiet; I should have slept; then had I been at rest with kings and counsellors of the earth, which built up waste places for themselves.'

The varied quotation given in the margin of the Revised Version is 'built solitary piles.' This idea of the kings and counsellors of the earth lying in majestic loneliness on hill-tops fascinated Rhodes. He carried out the idea with peculiar appropriateness, taking his last sleep on a hill-top commanding far-reaching views of the vast territory he had added to the Empire.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XI.

THE more I knitted my brows over the events of the last few days, the more was I convinced of the existence of a link between the three mysterious men, the red-haired impostor in Edinburgh, the visitor to Hugh Forbes in Italy, and the prowler at The Bield. Filled with restless impatience, I must have plucked out my watch every quarter of an hour of the journey, but at long last I reached Waverley Station, and hurried to Jura Street. There I found a telegram from Keene-Leslie asking me to breakfast with him in his rooms next day.

Reaching London early next morning, I went straight to Tony's address, where I found breakfast waiting and my host absorbing the morning paper.

'What's in the wind, Neil?' he asked after greetings, as we sat down to kidneys and bacon.

I told him my story: Hugh Forbes's letter to the colonel; the visitor 'Wakeford' at Ubriano; the mysterious prowler at The Bield; the extraordinary linking up of the words '*Exultabunt Domino*' in the faded paper at The Bield with '*ossa humiliata*' in the one concealed in the cigarette by the man calling himself M'Nair.

'This promises well,' exclaimed Tony. 'Let me tell you that there is nobody called Wakeford who is a member of the Omnivagants' Club. When I got your telegram I went straight to the secretary of the club—an old friend of mine—and found out that there never has been one of that name a member of the club since its formation fifteen years ago. The secretary took the trouble to go through the annual lists.'

'So that the mission to Hugh Forbes in Italy was of such a character that the emissary used a false name.'

'Palpably. Of course, that in itself does not label him a criminal; but putting the story together, it looks to me as though Mr "Wake-

ford" is on the track of the paper, and wants it badly. . . . The Leopard's Eye! It may be a jewel, but we won't jump to conclusions.'

He went to a desk, and from a pigeon-hole took out a neat bundle of documents, untied it, and selected two papers.

'This will interest you, Neil,' he said, as he opened one of them. 'It is from Scotland Yard, short and to the point. It tells me that the finger-print taken from your shirt-front is not one on the books—that is, the Habitual Criminals Register of New Scotland Yard. There they have a little collection of over two hundred and fifty thousand prints, and a system of classification as nearly perfect as can be imagined. You may take it that the owner of the fingers is not a known criminal. As for "The Searchers," the name may be a blind. If any such organisation exists, I don't see why it should advertise its movements by chalking up its name when out on the prowl, unless by this it hopes to terrorise the colonel.'

He took up the other paper.

'Here is a memorandum regarding the secret societies known to the authorities. There is no end to them. They are nearly all of Continental origin. The record ranges from full-blooded, stick-at-nothing Anarchists to mutual-aid-to-thieving clubs. They have all sorts of names, some high-sounding, some fantastic, others merely grotesque, from "The Brothers of the Violet Crown" to "The Spotted Kangaroos." Some are semi-political. All reek with rascality. Most of them are under surveillance, and know it.'

He ran his eye down the list. 'So far as I can tell, "The Searchers" (assuming that *I Frugatori* stands for that) are unknown, at least under that name. But I'll get into communication with my Scotland Yard friend, and fix up a meeting with him. You have six hours before the boat-train starts.'

He went to the phone, and in a few minutes came back to tell me that a meeting had been arranged for eleven o'clock. In the interval I gave him the facts again carefully and exhaustively, while he took notes and familiarised himself with the whole story. At the end of an hour his grasp of the details astonished me.

At 'The Yard' I was introduced to a little, mild-looking gentleman wearing gold-rimmed spectacles, who might have passed for the secretary of a charitable institution. He greeted Tony as an old friend, and heard all we had to say, taking notes, and now and then putting a question.

'A curious story,' he said. 'There *is* a gang—some of them Italian—in whom we are much interested. We suspect them—*inter alia*—of forgery of Italian bank-notes. They are the same—at least, I think so—as the lot who engineered the Linovada Syndicate and the Plymouth Mail robbery.'

'A clever business!' said Keene-Leslie.

'Undoubtedly their leaders are men of brains, and they have command of money. But although they have a catholic taste in crime, I scarcely think that they are in this search for a document.'

'What about the Leopard's Eye?'

'It sounds like a jewel, but I never heard of it. However, queer things happen, and I am in hopes that we may round up this gang one of these days. We have no direct evidence, but I may tell you that a suspected house near London is being watched.'

'London?' said I. 'That doesn't look as if they were interested in an out-of-the-way Italian village.'

'From what I know of the gang we are after, they would hasten to Patagonia if they could bring off a *coup*. By the way, Mr Forbes, are you going alone to Italy?'

'That is my intention.'

He gave a glance at Tony.

'You may be in danger. If "The Searchers" and the gang are one and the same, they will stick at nothing. In any event, Mr "Wakeford" may still be on the alert. I will give you an introduction to the Chief of Police at Naples. You may require it.' He wrote a few words on the back of a card and handed it to me.

The rest of the interview concerned details for his notes, and soon Tony and I were out in the drizzle in Westminster.

We had not gone more than a dozen yards when he said, 'You are not going to Italy alone, Neil. I'm going with you. What say you?'

'I should like it above all things. But are you free?'

'More free than I'll be for months. As a matter of fact, I thought of going North for some fishing, but in this climate'—he pointed to the sodden streets—'the idea of Italy appeals to me. Why not? I'll pack in a trice, have some lunch, and then "see Naples and live!"'

The prospect of his help and company delighted me. We lunched together, Tony talking as gaily as a schoolboy on the first day of the holidays; and an hour afterwards we boarded the boat-train.

Dull and dispiriting weather all the way from Charing Cross, a rough Channel passage, and an icy wind made the warmth of the railway-carriage at Boulogne most welcome.

Paris left behind, the journey was drab enough—monotonous regiments of poplars, characterless country, and sluggish streams. Now and again we roared through busy towns, the green of their jalousies relieving the predominant gray. The blue Lake of Bourget, speckled with white sails in the afternoon sun, heralded our approach to Italy. Then night absorbed colour and form again as we climbed the Alps towards the frontier.

Past Mont Cenis we slid down into Italy in a setting of tumbling streams, hill farms, and red-tiled campaniles, to the dull and fertile Plain of

Lombardy. The bright Ligurian coast was a relief to the eye; and after a night of roaring tunnels and asphyxiating smoke came Leghorn, and with it, in a miraculously clear morning, came my first view of the real Italy—sea and sky of deep sapphire; the delicate lines and colouring of the fishing-towns; the Maremma with its lovely desolation, in its robes of cyclamen, narcissus, and tall asphodel, its only signs of life the skin-clad shepherds with their giant white *pecorajo* dogs at their heels, watching herds of goats and sheep cropping lentisk and cytisus. Then the old Laurentian forest, lair of wild-boar and buffalo, led us into the brooding melancholy of the Roman Campagna. Here were ruined villa and temple, and many an ancient tower, and in the distance, floating in mid-air like a gigantic bubble, the great dome of St Peter's. These left behind, the dark, wolf-haunted mountains of the Abruzzi accompanied us to Naples.

The train service in Italy is as good as in this country; but, to our annoyance, we found that there had been some dislocation on the line, and it was past midnight when we got to Castellamare di Stabia. Chafing at the delay, we hurried to the Piazza, and having chartered a trap, took our seats behind a handsome *cetturino*, who was clad point-device in smart brown boots and English-looking clothes. I had often heard of the excellence and the speed of Italian horses, but the only notable features of our beast were its picturesque nodding crest of plumes, and its neck-chain of blue beads to ward off the evil eye. Whether the driver could not or would not hurry I cannot tell, but, to my disgust, the trap rumbled along tediously, the Rosinante in the shafts apparently half-asleep, except when she suspected the slightest ascent in the road. These she picked out with the uncanny precision of a spirit-level, and crawled up them at a snail's pace.

The road climbed, and dipped, and climbed again, winding through the gray-green of ancient olive-groves, beyond them a vignette of hills, faint in the half-light of the morning. Had I been travelling for pleasure I could have enjoyed every yard of the road—the sleeping rose-coloured villages, the fields of poppies and bright-eyed flowers, the delicate green of the terraced vineyards, green and silver olives, the ripening early figs, orange-groves, and the torches of the chestnuts. The atmosphere was of perpetual spring, a faint shimmer in the air deepening into purple on the distant mountains, and below us a sea of darkest blue.

But in my impatient mood the sound of the leisurely hoof-beats ticking off the precious seconds was nothing short of maddening. I knew no Italian beyond a few words, and to my '*Avanti! avanti!*' the driver's invariable answer was a placid '*Benissimo!*' and an illusory flourish of his whip, accompanied by a disarming smile and a glimpse of white teeth. Inwardly I was fuming, and wondering for the thousandth time if I should be in time to see my uncle Hugh alive. However, there was nothing for it but to cultivate patience.

Soon the rim of the hills became tinged with a faint radiance; on the soft morning air came subtle aromatic scents from the woods. The sun awoke and cut a burnished track on the sea. It struck the olive-groves, searching out the trees and the roofs of the houses and claiming them from the shadows; strode up the hills, disengaging their tranquil details from the vague distances; and steadily mounting over the fairest sea in the world, unveiled the blue-black splendour of the sky.

'*Guardate, signore! Come è carino! Una bellezza!*' said the driver as we rounded a bend on the crest of the ascent, and on the breast of the slope towards the sea we saw, close at hand, a white campanile, and a cluster of houses sleeping around its base.

(*Continued on page 168.*)

GOLD.

By R. MORDAUNT.

GOLD is the standard of currency almost all over the world. The first English monarch to issue gold coins was Henry III., who in 1257 coined a penny of fine gold and ordered it to be current for twenty pence; though the real consecutive English gold coinage commenced in the year 1347, when Edward III. was king.

The name sovereign was first given to a gold coin issued by Henry VIII. about 1500. It remained in circulation until the reign of Charles II., when it was superseded by the guinea. From that date, 1660, the coin varied until 1817, when the sovereign was finally decided upon. On the obverse side it bore the head of George III., and on the reverse a representation of St George and the Dragon, which, parenthetically, was engraved by an Italian, Signor Istrucci. Parliament fixed the standard and the value, but the statute was repealed, though in substance re-enacted, by the Coinage Act of 1870, which is law to-day, and forms the basis of our monometallic system of currency.

The yellow metal, as gold is termed, is found in both reef and alluvium, principally the former. Not much is obtained in England; there are a few small mines in North Wales. The largest and richest gold-mines are in Africa, in the Transvaal—the Rand Mines. Australia possesses valuable gold-mines, as also do Canada and India. Russia is one of the oldest gold-

yielding countries in the world. Mexico produces gold; and the metal is won in smaller quantities in other countries. Madagascar, under the French, has exported gold for many years. Germany does not possess any gold-mines, nor have any ever been discovered in her colonies.

The British Empire produces more gold than any other country in the world. In 1917 we obtained from our mines in different parts of the world 13,324,759 ounces, value £56,498,873, out of the total world's production of 20,756,384 ounces, value £88,083,123. So that our contribution was about 64 per cent. of the world's supply.

In its natural state, gold is nearly always found associated with other metals, such as silver, lead, copper, &c.; hence the process of extraction is a complex business. The general method of winning gold from free-milling ore consists of crushing the ore in stamp-batteries to the required degree of fineness, and passing the pulverised ore over copper plates covered with mercury. The gold, 'freed' by crushing, is caught and amalgamates with the mercury, whilst the uncaught particles of gold and the pulp pass over the plates into V-shaped launders, whence they are conveyed to machines and undergo separation or concentration preparatory to further treatment, or are treated direct by what is called the cyanide process. The gold and quicksilver remaining on the plates is called 'amalgam.' This is collected and subjected to great heat, when the mercury vaporises and escapes into a condenser, and the gold is left behind in lumps. It is then melted down and cast into bars, ready for use.

It may seem that gold is hardly topical at the moment. But it is. The war's influence on prices has affected the gold-mining industry throughout the world to such an extent that gold ore, payable to mine in pre-war days, has now become unprofitable to treat. Some little time ago, representatives of the world's gold-producing countries formed a committee to make representations to the Government on the matter. While the standard price of gold has remained stationary at four pounds five shillings per fine ounce, everything connected with the winning and working of gold has increased in cost—plant, machinery, tools, stores, wages, &c. With the mining of all other metals, an increase in the price of the metals themselves has met the enhanced working costs. But not so in the case of gold. There has been no compensating influence in the way of an increased price paid for the metal to set off against the great increase in the cost of its production.

It has been said that during the war the only thing in the world that has not increased in price is gold.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer appointed a committee to inquire into the matter. It consisted of well-known men; and after an exhaustive inquiry, in which the Empire's most expert authorities on currency, finance, and gold-mining put forward opinions, it was decided that nothing could be done to aid the industry, as that would tend to produce an increase in the price of all other commodities. The Gold Committee asked for aid by way of a subsidy or a bonus on production, more especially to low-grade mines. In the Transvaal there are many large properties working at as low as threepence per ton profit. Some are merely paying expenses, and it is a well-known fact that they have been kept working for patriotic reasons. It is the same with many Australian mines. The decision of the Treasury Committee not to advise the Government to help low-grade mines and offer some encouragement to the industry may have a serious influence on the Empire's production of gold. Indeed, the result of the inquiry is sufficiently disappointing to create the possibility of further negotiations; and more may be heard of what is now known as 'The Gold Question.'

LADY HELEN'S NEURALGIA.

PART II.

MONA was shown into a large room next door, of which hers was the dressing-room. In the bed, sitting up eagerly, with her fair hair falling over the lace and ribbons of her night-dress, and her slender bare arms showing white against the pink silken quilt, was a very young girl, her timid blue eyes fixed on the door. When she saw Mona, wrapped in a white-silk dressing-gown, and smiling at the adventure of her reception, the girl's face lost its look of anxiety, and she gave a cry of delight.

'Oh, you're *nice!*' she said. 'You're lovely—and quite young!'

'Well, I'm not so young as you are,' Mona said, laughing.

The girl wrinkled her forehead, like a perplexed baby. She looked very small in the big carved bed in the big room, and she was blue and white and gold, like a piece of Dresden china, and almost of transparent fairness.

'No—I'm far too young, am I not? And every one else is so—— Go away, Thomson. We sha'n't require you.'

The elderly maid seemed unwilling.

'Go away!' said the girl. 'I'll ring.'

She waited till the door was closed.

'That's right,' she said, settling back on the pillows. 'You needn't begin at once, need you? I should like to talk.'

'What about?' asked Mona. 'But, first, Lady

Helen, please tell me the name of my hostess. It seems absurd; but the fact is, no one has told me.'

'Oh! Do you mean my aunt? She is Mrs Chowton.'

It conveyed nothing to Mona, so she said nothing.

'I never expected you to look like that,' the girl said. 'What a pretty dressing-gown! Mine are all *so* ugly.'

'What did you expect me to look like?' Mona asked. 'Very fierce and strong-minded?'

'Well, it *is* strong-minded to have a profession, isn't it?—I mean, as you're a lady. I didn't expect you to be a lady.'

Mona laughed outright. 'So that explains it,' she murmured.

'Are you married?'

'No!'

'Are you going to be married?'

'No!'

'Well'—Lady Helen folded her hands—'*I am.*' Her big blue eyes filled with tears.

Mona became serious.

'Oh, you poor little thing!' she cried involuntarily.

'And—I'm not exactly sure to whom,' Lady Helen added.

Mona's face changed. She laughed. 'That's awkward!' she admitted.

Lady Helen turned her blue eyes on Mona reproachfully.

'Don't laugh at me, Miss—— By-the-by, what *is* your name?'

'Ralston.'

'Miss Ralston. You look so nice, and I like to talk to you. You see, going about as you do, you must know a good deal. You must hear so much gossip! Do you rub many people?'

'*What?*'

'Have you many patients, I mean?' Lady Helen asked politely.

'I have no patients—I don't understand you,' Mona cried, bewildered.

Lady Helen raised herself on her elbow. 'You are a masseuse, aren't you?'

'No!'

'Then *who* are you?'

'I am Miss Ralston. My father is Sir Henry Ralston, the Member for Brompton.'

'And why are you here?'

'To address to-morrow's meeting, I understand,' Mona answered with dignity.

Lady Helen stared at her for two minutes without speaking; then she sank back into the pillows and laughed till she cried. Mona maintained her dignity for a few moments, and then she began to laugh too.

'They've mistaken you for the masseuse! I asked for one. I said I had neuralgia,' gasped the girl.

'But—was the car not sent for me?'

'No—for—for a visitor—and the masseuse!'

'But—was I not expected here?'

'No! Never heard of you—or of the meeting!'

Mona thought furiously for a minute. 'Then—where have *I* gone? I mean, where has the masseuse gone?'

'Why, don't you see? She must have gone where you were expected. Where was that?'

'I don't know. They said hospitality was arranged for—by the president. I expected some one would meet me. I got into the car.'

'Delicious!' cried Lady Helen.

'It is not delicious at all. I must go.'

'You *can't*. I'm just beginning to love you. I want a friend.'

'But what is the masseuse doing—at the president's, whoever she is?—Oh! that must have been her! I saw a girl with a bag at the station, and she got into a little open car—*it* must have been sent for me! Oh, this explains everything! I thought your aunt—Mrs Chowton—rather—not very'——

'No, she wouldn't be.' Her niece nodded comprehendingly. 'Now, sit down. You can't possibly go to-night. And I'm in *such* trouble. You may be the means of averting a tragedy, if you'll just sit down and listen. I suppose, as you speak on platforms, you are a Suffragist, and strong-minded, and have views, and that kind of thing?'

'Yes,' said Mona vaguely. 'But I *must* go, Lady Helen—and my things are all unpacked'——

'Then what, I ask you, is the use of all your views if you won't help a fellow-woman? Sit down!'

Mona's troubled eyes turned to her.

'Do you approve of marrying without love?' added Lady Helen.

'Certainly not!—at least'——

'But you *do* approve of marriage?'

'Of *course!*—at least'——

'Yes, that is how I feel. So I will marry the other.'

'I'm afraid I don't understand.'

'Ah! if I had a mother, she would understand. She died when I was six. I can hardly remember her.'

'And your aunt has brought you up?'

'Very badly. She doesn't love me a bit. All of this belongs to me'—the girl waved her hand round—'and I hate it all, because it has prevented any one loving me. At least'——

'Well?' Mona was deeply interested.

'Well'—the girl half-turned her head away, and pleated the lace of the pillow idly with her hand—'*some one* does; but my having all this was what prevented him from asking me. So I thought he didn't care, and I was angry and miserable, and I said I'd marry the man downstairs.'

'The man downstairs?' Mona's eyes opened wide.

'Yes. He is my cousin—at least, we call him

so; but he is only my aunt's nephew. Oh, I don't mind him. He's very kind to me. But he's forty, and I'm not one-and-twenty till next month. Aunt wants me to, because it would keep the property in the family. She said he would probably ask me to-night, so I pretended to be ill, and sent for you.'

Mona waived aside superfluous details.

'Do you mean Major Stanhope?' she asked.

The girl turned her averted face, and looked at her.

'Yes. How did you know his name?'

'Of course I know his name! He is the candidate. He is speaking to-morrow.'

'Oh, *is* he? Then he made this visit to me to suit his professional engagements! That is how it would always be. His horrid old politics first, and me second!'

'But, Lady Helen, he—he is very high-minded—very clever. Do you quite realise'——

'How do you know?'

'I drove from the station with him.'

'Oh!'

There was a pause. The two girls looked at one another. They were both rather flushed.

Far away somewhere below, a gong sounded.

Mona sprang up. 'Is that dinner? And I'm not even dressed!'

Lady Helen looked troubled; then she gave a nervous little laugh.

'My aunt doesn't expect you,' she said. 'I'd better be truthful. You see, you're the masseuse.'

'But, you see, I'm *not*.' Mona got up with a smile, but she wore what her father called her *grande dame* air. 'I shall have to send down and explain to your aunt, and apologise for having'——

'Nothing of the kind! I know my aunt. She'll be rude to you. And *I'm* mistress of this house; at least, I shall be when I'm one-and-twenty, and that is next month. And—and I've had a letter—from the other one. He has come into an inheritance—he—I think I'll wait before giving Major Stanhope his answer; though, by-the-by, he hasn't asked me for one. I must wait. What would you advise?'

'I think, Lady Helen, since you consult me, that you are treating Major Stanhope very badly.'

'Oh!'

'I am perfectly certain he is not the sort of man who would want to marry you against your will.'

'Of course you *came* here to speak for him,' Lady Helen said reflectively.

Mona stopped abruptly, and regarded her.

'And *I* thought you came to rub *me*. I don't want to treat him badly,' she added; 'but he won't care! He thinks he is doing it for my sake. I know aunt has made him think that. She has pointed out that I'm rather pitiful and alone, and need to be taken care of, and he doesn't mind undertaking the charge because—well, you see, there are compensations. Politics is an expensive profession.'

'That is a *horrid* insinuation!' Mona cried, her big amber eyes flashing. 'You are accusing him of marrying for money.'

'Well! he can't see anything else in me—how lovely you look when you're angry!—he, so clever and brilliant, as you say, and I've never been educated! You should have seen my governesses! He has known me always, and thinks of me as a child. I rather bore him. He has never once said he cared for me. He is absorbed in politics. I don't suppose he even knows whether I'm pretty or plain.' She stopped, and looked at Mona.

Suddenly Mona remembered the moment when the candidate and she stepped from the darkness into the lighted hall downstairs, and his changed expression as he turned and saw her. She blushed vividly under Lady Helen's questioning eyes.

'I don't think I like Major Stanhope,' she said, 'if what you say is true. He cannot be a man of high principles. But perhaps you are mistaken in thinking he—he is a party to your aunt's designs?'

'Very likely,' said the girl indifferently. 'But, in any case, my aunt will carry them out. The fact is, I'm afraid of her. There! She has dominated me all my life. I know if I go downstairs I'll accept him, whether he proposes to me or not. And Charlie'——

'Charlie?'

'Yes, I told you—Charlie Foster'——

'Charlie Foster! Captain Foster of the —th Hussars?'

'Yes.'

'He is my cousin!'

'Your cousin! Are *you* Mona? Oh, he's often told me about you! No wonder I loved you at sight!'

All at once Mona remembered Charlie's half-made confession in the taxi, and what had been her interpretation of it. Again she flushed vividly, and again it was under Lady Helen's questioning eyes. The younger girl's expression changed. She put out a tremulous hand, and touched Mona's.

'You are very lovely, dear,' she said slowly. 'Beside you, I am like a snowdrop by a rose!'

Mona took the little hand in her firm grasp. 'Charlie told me about you,' she said. 'He is breaking his heart for love of you! I will help you'——

There was a knock at the door, which neither of them heeded, and the elderly maid entered the room. 'Please, your ladyship, your dinner'—— she began.

'Miss Ralston will dine with me, up here. Send two trays,' Lady Helen said quickly. 'Her rubbing has done my neuralgia ever so much good,' she added, looking triumphantly at Mona.

It was eleven o'clock when Mona Ralston returned to her own room, where the fire was almost out, and the green chiffon dress still lay

spread on the bed. She was committed to a plot that was of her own making, but she was by no means clear as to her motives, save that they were mixed.

'I hate that aunt—and little Helen is a darling; but she isn't fit to manage her own life. Then there 's Charlie—poor boy!—and—and I don't think Major Stanhope *can* know—and I wonder what he thought of my non-appearance to-night, and what he 'll think of my speech to-morrow!'

(Continued on page 172.)

ASIA'S MOST FAMOUS TREASURE-HOARD.

THERE are very few stories about hoards of hidden treasure that do not stir the imagination, and the recital of them has sometimes led to exciting and perilous adventures in search of the concealed wealth. There is one such story that has always held the imagination of almost all Asia in thrall. From Yokohama to far-off Khiva, from Bokhara and Samarcand to Basrah, from Urga in north Mongolia to Bangalore in southern India, the tradition of this cache of the kings of an empire of long ago still inflames the imagination of the story-tellers and their listeners in the towns of Asia. That there is some truth in this six-hundred-years-old tradition has recently been established by facts, as will be told later.

When we take into consideration the gold, silver, and jewels lying in the graves of kings and emperors long dead, the valuables concealed in the ruins of the cities of central Asia buried under the white desert sand, where but five hundred years ago all was green and life went on busily, and the treasure left in forgotten mountain temples, central and southern Asia may be said to be the tomb of lost millions.

The greatest and most famous of these reputed treasure-hoards is that buried in the tombs of the great khans or emperors of the Mongols—that formidable military race which poured out of middle Asia early in the thirteenth century, and ravaged eastern and central Europe from Dantzic, on the Baltic, to the Adriatic. Now, during the past few years many large precious stones, including turquoises from the Syr Daria—one of central Asia's great rivers, where turquoises were obtained for the Court of the khans—together with thirteenth and fourteenth century Asiatic ornaments, rare jewellery, and pieces of Tatar-worked gold, have been coming out of the state of Nepaul into Indian bazaars, without any adequate explanation as to their source.

Some years ago a few similar articles of ancient Asiatic workmanship and a quantity of rubies and other precious stones were sold in Bokhara by two men of Yarkand, and passed ultimately into the collection of the Tsar of Russia. In each instance the goldwork and the precious stones came from the long-lost tombs of the once mighty khans of the Mongols, for the two men of Yarkand had chanced on the place of sepulchre and treasure.

The story they related, as vouched for by Russian authorities in Bokhara, reads like a chapter out of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainment*. The two men belonged to a caravan trading between Yarkand and the towns that fringe the great desert of salt and sand that forms part of eastern Turkestan. They soon quarrelled with the headsman, however, and set out on their return to their native place—Yarkand.

On the fourth morning they lost the track among the defiles of the mountains, and after wandering for two days they happened on a trail that was hewn out of the solid rock, and was only wide enough for two men to pass abreast. After travelling for some time along this deep and gloomy defile, they found it led them into a little, rocky, arid valley. Here they saw a number of huge images in a row before a heavily sculptured doorway. Beyond the square open portal lay a cavern, in which was a series of tombs, each filled with many objects of immense value. They averred that they saw of precious stones alone more than sixty camels could carry. It is interesting to note here that medieval Chinese historians and travellers, when touching on the burial of the great khans, mention the enormous wealth of gold and silver and jewels utilised to adorn the tombs.

The two traders brought off as much treasure as they could carry, but had to throw practically all of it away in the effort to save their lives before they found succour and regained the caravan route to Yarkand. They made careful observation of the trail, however, and left heaps of stones to mark it. On reaching their native town, they resolved to sell the few remaining articles in Bokhara, where a higher price was obtainable than in their native town, and after a few days proceeded to that city by way of Kashgar and Khodjend, taking advantage, for safety's sake, of a caravan going thither. Here, in Bokhara, that most picturesque town of central Asia, they came in contact, when in the bazaar, with an adventurous Englishman, H. Spaulding, who for some years had been engaged in exploration in Ferghana and Turkestan.

Spaulding, who at once recognised that the goldwork they were selling was of ancient Tatar origin, won their confidence, and to him the two men related their tale. It appealed to him with invincible force, and he had little trouble in organising an expedition, though the two men

were with difficulty persuaded to return with him. By this time the rumour had run through Bokhara that the treasures of the Mongols, about which all central Asia had been dreaming for centuries, had been discovered, and Spaulding fully realised that his expedition was in danger of being attacked on its way back. Despite this knowledge, however, he determined to proceed.

It is known that the route he took was one of the old and now wholly unused caravan trails between China and western Asia. The tombs of the great khans, five in number, are said by the Russian authorities who interviewed the two traders to lie north-east of the Kashmir border, on the way to Khotan from Yarkand. Whether Spaulding reached them we do not yet know. It is believed that he and his men died in or hard by the desert. In the bazaars of Samarcand and Kashgar it was whispered that he had penetrated to the tombs, secured part of the treasure, and had been murdered with his men on the verge of the desert, the murderers making for refuge in Nepaul.

Certain it is that since Spaulding's disappearance the jewels and the goldwork of the Mongols have found their way into India out of Nepaul.

And so this quest for the Mongols' treasures ended in both success and failure.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER X.—MAKING UP WITH ADELA.

ADELA'S last letter certainly made me feel a silly ass. Somehow, it upset my usual happy trend of thought. I couldn't work, and my soul was torn with conflicting emotions. One moment I hated her; the next I loved her. Then the Devil would whisper in my ear, 'What has she got to do with it, John Brown? Sow your wild oats. Have your fun. Everybody 's doin' it.'

Privately speaking, Adela was right; but this righteousness annoyed me. She wasn't my sister or my mater, and yet she was giving me fits for having a bit of fun. Still, Adela was sweet. She had a way with her. The attraction was both physical and spiritual. She had that sort of healthy figure which makes a student of eugenics stop in the street and mutter, 'Here 's the model girl!' Adela was also a ripping hockey-player, and one of the best at tennis. When men saw her knocking about with a racquet she seemed irresistible. They wanted to know her—wanted to kiss her. And she liked a bit of fun; but she wasn't a fool. A girl who can live in a country parish without getting a sticky label on her name must be rather decent.

Somehow, she balanced my emotions. After indulging in sloppy things for a time, she would say, 'Come on, John; don't be decadent. Let 's talk.' Then we separated our chairs, smoked cigarettes, and chatted away about Kipling, Galsworthy, Hardy, Byron, and Shelley. Adela could talk. In the country she had found time to think. Her observations were so very shrewd and sane that I often said to myself, 'This girl would make a topping wife and mother.' I pictured her with rosy-cheeked kiddies playing in a garden. You needn't say that was silly. The best people do it.

And yet she had dropped me (*pro tem.*) for those Australians.

However, affection will out. I wanted to see Adela again; and Beefy wanted to see her sister. You see, Beefy was a little bored kissing barmaids, and longed for something more congenial. As a matter of fact, Beefy was commencing to *think*. This was a revolution.

'Come on, John. Jump on. We 'll go and see somebody decent to-day,' he said.

Away we went, and in twenty minutes Adela and I were alone in the lovely conservatory overlooking a beautiful country-side. And didn't Adela look well! She had such a nice short skirt which showed her dainty ankles. But it was in her face and eyes I found rest and consolation.

Adela was clean.

'Have a smoke, John. They 're State Express,' she said, pushing the box over. 'And here 's a cup of white coffee.' This tempting beverage was served in a charming cup. As she passed it I touched her hand—accidentally, of course. I was thrilled. 'Now, Johnnie,' she said very quietly, 'let 's have this thing out. I hate being bad friends, and I don't like to hear my pals being discussed by cooks and kitchen-maids.'

'You 're jealous,' I said maliciously.

'I 'm jealous for your uniform, not for you. My brother has the D.S.O., and he wouldn't make an ass of himself—least of all in a local hotel. You haven't learnt wisdom, old boy.'

'Well, you 're to blame. Why did you toddle off with those Australians?'

'What a babe you are! You and Beefy must have a weak kink. Can't we see other people? And don't you think you 're just a little presumptuous?'

'Perhaps. But I didn't break any commandments, I can assure you.'

'You don't need to break a commandment to be a fool. People don't judge by the great things. They sum you up from little things. When they find cadets hobnobbing with barmaids, and fooling around with chorus-girls, they think and talk a lot.'

'Oh, be a sport, for Heaven's sake! One would think you were at a Dorcas society,' I said, getting rattled.

'Very well, Johnnie, if you're going to be rude, and not man enough to face things out, you can go. Men may be scarce, but girls at least have a sense of decency and pride.'

'Awfully sorry, old girl. Really, I didn't mean to be nasty. But, you know, you *are* making a song about it. I'm really sorry, or I shouldn't be here. I've been dying to come all the time. I vowed I would never see you again. But here I am. It's all you!'

She smiled. She was a woman, after all. (Between you and me, Adela was a bit soft on your humble.)

'You'll never do it again, will you?'

'Never—honest Injun!'

'Very well, you're pardoned. And here's a kiss.'

'You're a sport, Adela. But what about those other fellows?'

'The Australians?'

'Yes.'

'They're very nice people. When they want to come here, they can do so. It isn't for you to decide. Cheeky boy!'

'Then you can't be my special charmer.'

'Who wants to be? Do you imagine we girls are going to allow you to label us "Special" or "One of the Crowd"? Johnnie, you're the limit!'

'That's my ultimatum!'

'You're a silly kid. If you met those two Australians, you would be charmed. We have got to give hospitality to our relatives.'

'Oh, then, they're related?'

'Yes—very old friends of the family.'

'That makes a difference, Adela.'

'Still, they're interesting, although they're relatives. I'm just longing to see them again. You may come, too, and guard me if you like.'

'I won't!'

'Oh!'

'Do you think, Adela, I'm going to play second fiddle to your bush-whacking cousins? Not at all! There's always the barmaid for me.'

'Really, I despair of you. You're as narrow as can be. But I'm going to be loyal to my friends.'

'All right, Adela; I'm off,' I said, getting up in a theatrical way. I didn't really mean to go. I wanted to test her. But I was so amazed at her cool acceptance of my dramatic exit that I repeated, 'Adela, I'm off,' and went to the door.

She followed me out, quietly helped me on with my coat, and, just as I picked up my hat, she burst out laughing.

'What are you laughing at?'

'You—you silly boy.'

'Oh!'

'If I showed you the photo of the Australians, the joke would be apparent.'

'Well, show it to me,' I said, rejoiced at finding *any* excuse to stay.

'Very well. Off with your coat!'

I took it off.

'Now, come in here;' and she led the way to the drawing-room. We stepped across to the mantelpiece, and she lifted a photo. 'There's the two Australians,' she said, with a grin.

I looked at the photo of two beautiful Australian girls in nursing-uniform, and muttered, 'By Jove, what charming girls!'

'Are you satisfied now, old King Jealousy?'

'Yes; but why didn't you tell me when you wrote the letter?'

'Why?'

'Yes.'

'For a very womanly reason.'

'What is it?' I ejaculated, a little annoyed.

'These girls are so handsome, I couldn't afford to take risks. Don't you know that old music-hall song?'

'What?'

'"Never Introduce your Donah to a Pal."'

'Oh, that's it, is it? You were afraid of their collaring Beefy and me.'

'Yes, old boy; I'm like you—jealous.'

'You needn't have worried, Adela I really like you.'

'Do you, Johnnie?' she eagerly exclaimed.

'Yes,' I answered.

As her head got mixed up with my khaki sleeves I heard her muttering, 'Don't be a silly ass again—John Brown.'

(*Continued on page 176.*)

TANK B 2 4 1 1.

By JACK SPUR.

I.

HIS commission bore the name of Henry Alfred Grafton, but to his brother-officers in the 'Tanks' he was always 'The Count.'

He earned his nickname this way. He had come to us from the Rifle Brigade, and in appearance was a big-boned, typical-looking Englishman. We took to him all right, though we never felt that we knew him in the same way as we knew our other fellow-subs. For one thing, he was no good at games. Then he was a teetotaler, and, worst of all, a glutton for work. Of course, some of us *had* to work, and, if he preferred it, it was no business of ours.

Soon after Grafton joined us Charlie Sommers came back from leave, and he and I went down to the mess together. Grafton was standing in the anteroom when Sommers and I entered.

'You haven't met Grafton, Charlie,' I said. 'Let me introduce you.'

The two looked at each other; then Sommers gave a hearty laugh.

'Grafton, did you say? Why, this is "Graf," an old school chum of mine.—How do, Graf? I didn't even know you'd joined up;' and he shook hands warmly with our latest sub.

I thought Grafton changed colour on seeing Sommers, and he gave my friend a meaning look. Anyway, Sommers said no more. Several of us had heard his remark, and asked him about Grafton, but he gave us no information.

Afterwards, however, it came out that Grafton's name had been Grafenstein, and that his father, a naturalised German, on the outbreak of war had changed his name to Grafton.

Grafton and Sommers had been chums at school, and they remained so in the service, but the rest of us held aloof. Sommers used to call him Graf, and as Graf is German for 'count,' as subs. will, we christened him 'The Count.'

He took it all in good part, and when he was chaffed about his German descent, took no offence, and expressed no feeling one way or the other. Grafton went over in the same big draft that Sommers and I went in, and we settled down to our work together. We were sitting in our quarters one night, just before the big push at St Quentin, when Grafton's name was mentioned, and one or two of the fellows began discussing him.

'It's a bally silly idea,' said young Travers, 'giving a fellow like him the command of a tank. Once a German, always a German! He'll hop over to his pals one of these fine days and make them a present of a nice new landship. Then, when they've cottoned to the idea and improved on it, we shall be boosted out by an army of Boche tanks.'

'Rot!' replied Sommers. 'You're talking through your hat, my boy. I've known old Graf for years, and I'll bet you a pony he's all right.'

'Don't tell me,' persisted Travers. 'Why, the very fact of his changing his name gives him away. I'll bet, if he gets a chance, he'll'—— and then he paused, for the object of our conversation stepped into the room. He couldn't have helped overhearing what we were saying, for none of us was exactly whispering. He stepped up to Travers, whom he looked squarely in the face.

'He'll what?' he asked.

Travers looked foolish for a moment, then with an obstinate set of the jaws replied, 'I contend that a man with German blood in him, when in a corner, can't be trusted to play the game. He will remember that he is of the nation, his old sympathies will revive, and he'll be more likely to stand by the country of his descent than by that of his adoption.'

'The Count,' as he generally did, listened quite calmly.

'Travers,' he replied, 'suppose your father, disgusted with England, had left it when quite a young man, had gone to Germany, settled, married, and become naturalised there. Suppose you, as the son, had been educated there, imbibed German ideals, played German games, read German literature, and become convinced of the purity of German foreign policy. Suppose, also, that you had only occasionally visited England, and spoke the language imperfectly—I ask you, would your sympathies be with England or with Germany in this struggle?'

'With England, emphatically!'

'But suppose, further, that you hoped some day to—er—marry a lady belonging to the land of your adoption?'

'My dear chap, if my father had emigrated to Timbuctoo, and I had been born in the Brazils, of a Tartar mother, I should remain English to my finger-tips!'

The Count smiled. 'Well, after all,' he said, 'England is not Germany. You may be right.' And he disappeared through the door.

Sommers turned angrily upon Travers. 'I say,' he growled, 'it's an infernal shame to bait old Graf so. He's a white man all through; that I'm sure of.'

'We shall see,' retorted Travers; and so the matter dropped.

II.

In the push that followed the tanks played a very important part, and much of the initial success was due to them. The Germans cut down the carriages of field-guns to get a low trajectory against the tanks; but even when they made their surprise counter-attack upon us, though they knocked a good many tanks out, we flattered ourselves that they could not capture one intact, and therefore wouldn't have our model to serve them as a pattern to manufacture from. That idea was, however, rudely dispelled a few days later. Things had gone pretty badly with us, and tanks, instead of heading an advance, had now to protect a retreat.

An ugly rumour began to circulate. One of our tanks, getting into a warm corner, had pulled up; then for some reason or other it had gone straight on, right into a whole battalion of the enemy, and had disappeared without firing a shot. The number of the tank was B 2411, and it was the one of which Grafton was in command. The rumour gave rise to a considerable amount of heated comment; but, like everything else in war-time, the subject was soon dropped and forgotten. Nor should we have thought any more about it if it hadn't been for a curious accident.

On the evening that we recaptured Bapaume, Sommers and one or two more of us were standing talking amidst the ruins, when suddenly,

from nowhere, as it seemed, a crump came hurtling over us. We heard the whir-r-r, and threw ourselves on the ground before the crash came. A mighty rush of air swept by us, and then we looked up cautiously and felt ourselves to see if any of us were a corner short. No; we were all right, except——

'Hallo!' cried Sommers; 'where's Henderson?'

We looked round. Poor Willie Henderson! He had completely disappeared. Not a vestige of him, not a badge, not a button remained; and we looked at each other with solemn faces, the same thought in all our minds.

He had been blown to pieces!

No sooner were we convinced of the fact, and had got upon our feet again, than a hollow voice was heard saying, 'I say, you fellows, can't some of you help me out of this confounded hole?'

We all jumped. The voice was undoubtedly Henderson's, and it seemed to come from under our very feet. Sommers solved the mystery. He looked round, and saw a smashed wooden trap that opened into a cellar beneath the house in front of which we were standing. It was clear Henderson had been blown, or had fallen, through.

In a few minutes we had procured a light, descended, and found our friend, bruised, but otherwise unhurt. The rush of air caused by the crump had blown him down into the cellar. We were helping him out, when a groan from one corner of the cellar drew our attention.

'Hallo! there's another fellow here!' said Sommers. 'Perhaps it's a Boche.'

A search showed us a figure huddled up in a corner, and in five minutes we had him out too. Getting him into the daylight, we saw he wore the remnants of a khaki uniform, and that he had a sergeant's stripes.

'And, look, he's one of ours!' said Henderson, pointing to the tank badge on his arm; 'and it's—yes—no—why, it's Sergeant Smithers, who disappeared with poor old Grafton.'

Smithers tried to speak, but couldn't. In a few minutes we had him on a stretcher, and a doctor was attending to his hurts, which were not serious. He was merely exhausted. In a couple of hours he was comfortably waiting to be taken back to a base hospital, and Sommers, Travers, Henderson, myself, and one or two others were sitting round him to listen to his tale.

III.

'It's soon told,' said Smithers. 'I was taken prisoner on 24th March, and have been kept at work by the Huns just behind their front ever since. I've been half-starved, and worked almost to death. I was in Bapaume yesterday, helping to load motor-lorries till I fainted with hunger and weakness, when a ginger-headed sergeant—pray Heaven I may one day meet him face to face!—simply kicked me down into the cellar where you found me, and told me to lie there and rot. I did lie there, and felt so weak and ill that if you gentlemen hadn't rescued me I should have died there.'

'Nice people, these Huns,' said Travers grimly. 'I hope, now Grafton has got amongst his friends, he'll feel comfortable. I suppose *he's* all right, Smithers.'

The sergeant's eyes flashed.

'Mr Grafton, sir,' he cried vehemently, half-sitting up, 'if ever a man deserved the V.C., it was Mr Grafton.'

'It is rumoured that he voluntarily went over to the Boche,' suggested Travers softly.

'Whoever said so is—I say, speaks falsely;' and Smithers sank back on his stretcher.

'Tell us what happened,' said Sommers gently.

'It was this way, sir. As you know, on the 24th we all got separated, and some of us were well ahead of the others. Our tank must have been leading by a good way when we got a slanting hit. I don't exactly know what happened, but we found our steering-gear was knocked out. We could go ahead, but we couldn't turn, neither could we stop, and so the old crab went straight on, right into a whole battalion of Boches, who simply smothered us with rifle and machine-gun fire. We could have dropped out ourselves and got back safely when we were first hit, and at the time I suggested doing so to Mr Grafton, but he turned to me in surprise, then burst out laughing.

'"What! abandon the old thing?" says he. "Make a present of it to the Huns? I *don't* think; and I'm surprised at you, Smithers, for hinting at such a thing. We've got our guns intact, and we shall have the opportunity of our lives directly." And so we did. No sooner had Lieutenant Grafton convinced himself that the tank was out of control than he waited his chance, and when we were well in amongst the enemy he let fly until we had not a single round of ammo. left. We drove on, well in rear of the Germans, till we practically ran into the base of a small hill, and there we jammed. In an instant a hundred Boches swarmed round us and tried to force an entrance, but Mr Grafton emptied his revolver amongst 'em, and then, telling us to lay hold of spanners, hammers, or anything, he leapt out and laid about him with a small crowbar.

'I can tell you, gentlemen, we left our mark on the Boche, but it was no good. In a few minutes Mr Grafton, myself, and Tommy Hunter were the only ones alive, and we should have been bayoneted if an officer had not come up and literally booted back the men attacking us. He told us in English to put up our hands at once or it would be the worse for us; but even then Mr Grafton defied him, and told him to shoot us down as they had shot the women and children

at Louvain. The officer gave an order to his men, who leapt upon us and secured our arms. Then the officer, who had been joined by several others, got into the tank and had a look round. They could not make things out, apparently; so the first one who had come up returned to us and asked us our names and ranks, and then said to Mr Grafton, "You were in charge, I suppose?"

'"I was."

'"And you thoroughly understand the machine?"

'"Thoroughly."

'"And could explain everything to me?"

'"Yes."

'"Well, we're very anxious to know all about these tanks. Tell us, and we will spare your life."

'Mr Grafton laughed in his face and said, "Do you expect me to accept such a vile offer? I refuse absolutely."

'The officer turned savagely upon him. "Wait," says he. "Before I shoot you, these fellows"—pointing to Tommy and me—"shall be bayoneted before your eyes."

'At this Mr Grafton turned pale and seemed to hesitate, while the German grinned like a devil and lit a cigarette.

'"It wouldn't be 'playing the game,' as you sporting fools say, to sacrifice these;" and he nodded again towards us.

'"If I do as you want, will you give these men their liberty?" asked Mr Grafton.

'"Yes."

'"And me my life?"

'"Certainly; and a good deal more if you play your cards properly."

'I thought I saw a meaning glance pass between them, and I cried out, "Don't consider us, sir. Let these devils do their worst. We're not afraid to die;" on which the German officer hit me on the mouth with the back of his hand. I tried to break away from the men who held me, but it was no good. I told that brute what I thought of him, but I was punched and kicked till I shut up.

'Mr Grafton took no notice of me, but said quietly to the officer, "I will do what you want on one condition. I will explain everything—but only to your general and his staff. If you don't agree to that, do your worst."

'The German looked him straight in the eyes. "I am an engineer officer," he said. "I may be present, of course?"

'"Certainly; that is one of my conditions."

'And then we waited. At Mr Grafton's request, Tommy and I were marched out of earshot, and Mr Grafton talked and smoked with the German officer. Presently a tall, old, gray-headed devil of a German general, several crosses and things on his long frock-coat, came up, and with him about a dozen others—staff officers, I should say, for they were all great swells, and several had eyeglasses and showy uniforms. There was a great deal of saluting and jawing, and Mr Grafton talked to them all. Then they walked round the tank, and we could see Mr Grafton pointing out this and that, while Tommy and I cursed him under our breath. Then Mr Grafton, the general, and five or six officers all went inside, and for about five minutes we saw nothing. Afterwards Mr Grafton came to the door and beckoned the others, as though he wanted them to observe something. He disappeared, and in another second there was a blinding flash, a terrific report, and the tank, Mr Grafton, and all those German officers in and near it were blown into a thousand bits. Tommy and I were a good fifty yards away, and were knocked over by the explosion. When we recovered we looked round, and there was a torn and ruined mass of metal, and one or two tattered groaning forms, in the remains of swagger uniforms, lying around. The rest, every mother's son of them, had been blown to Kingdom Come.'

Sommers gave a long-drawn 'Ah!' when Smithers finished speaking.

'It was Graf's own idea,' he said softly. 'He told me about it. A dynamite charge hidden in the bottom of the tank and operated electrically by a push-button. He told me he had fitted one to his own tank, and had written home recommending them to be fitted to all tanks, so that they could be blown up in case of danger of capture. Poor old Graf! He was a gallant gentleman.'

'Sommers, I misjudged your friend,' said Travers, and his voice was a little husky. 'I apologise. Have you a match?' and lighting a cigarette, he walked off.

The rest of us went our several ways, and for my part I wondered whether, placed as 'The Count' had been, I should have had the pluck to act as he had done.

YOUTH AND AGE.

BRIGHT poppies dance amidst the yellow corn,
A lark is singing in the cloudless sky,
As through the fields, this radiant summer morn,
We wander hand-in-hand—just you and I.
'Oh love, dear love, how fair the world to-day!'
So trills the lark; so our glad hearts do say.

'Life has its shadows!' thus croaks one who leans
Upon his scythe amid the waving corn.
'Ah me, life is so dreary!' she who gleans
Behind him moans, this beauteous summer morn.
Shall we believe them, sweetheart, dear one?—Nay,
For, love, we find life, oh! so bright to-day.

'Youth is the time for laughter, age for sighs,
They tell us as we pass them singing by;
We gaze into each other's dancing eyes,
Then upward toward the cloudless azure sky.
Oh love, dear love, how bright the world to-day!
And yet they moan, 'The gold must turn to gray.'

B. DUNBAR DEY.

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LOVERS' LUCK.

A STORY OF THE MALTA HOSPITALS.

By ALBERT G. MACKINNON.

CHAPTER I.—A STRANGE MEETING.

'FEGS! My lieutenant!'

Jock M'Gowan was never more surprised in his life. The place of meeting was certainly a very strange one. It was loneliness personified. Duejra, the classical home of the Cyclops, looked weird enough to harbour any monster, and made one feel that the child-like race of long ago had not required any very great gift of the imagination to see in it the haunt of that mythical one-eyed giant. Sitting in an ambulance-chair, placed on a ledge of rock, was a figure swathed in bandages, pensive, and looking into the sad bay of shadows at his feet.

Jock hastened forward, and then, steadying himself on his crutches, saluted.

'M'Gowan, is that you? Well, it was always your way to turn up at the unexpected moment. But I certainly did not anticipate meeting any of my company at this Land's End,' was the response.

'Weel, sir, I recognised ye by the cut o' yer heid an' shoulders. I didna expect to find ye here. Ye see, I'm a patient in Malta, an' oor Scotch chaplain arranged to tak' a lot o' us ower to Gozo for the day, an' we hae driven the length o' the island. The ithers are ower there, but I took a daunner roond to hae a look at the bay.'

'I see you are just as inquisitive as ever,' laughed Lieutenant Reid. 'And this time you are rewarded by discovering the one-eyed monster in his native lair.'

Jock, with a sympathetic glance, had already taken in that it was just about half of his old officer that was left. One leg was missing, only the stump of one arm remained, and one eye was gone. The sight made him very sad, but he was too true a gentleman to betray his feelings.

'I heard, sir, hoo ye had saved oor fellows by throwin' yer coat on the bomb an' tryin' to smother it, an' hoo ye had got hit a' ower; but I'm richt gled to see that ye hae plenty o' speerit left.'

'I do not know about that, M'Gowan. You have got me at ebb-tide. There is not much life remaining. That is why the surgeon has ordered me away to this quiet spot, out of sight of people, that I may grow accustomed to the fact that in the future I must be a burden to everybody. He was quite right. It is not easy to bring one's mind to it.'

'There 's nae fear o' that, sir. Yer wounds are things to be prood o', an' I 'm thinkin' yer freen's 'll spoil ye when they get the chance.'

'To tell you the truth, M'Gowan, I have few friends. But sit down on that rock and have a crack. I shall never be your officer again, so we will dispense with all formalities. Your company is cheering, for I was feeling pretty low down. My nerves have had a bad shake, and I suppose the doctor thinks I should not talk much, but I shall enjoy a chat with you. I heard you were on the island, and doing your bit to keep everybody about you cheery. For putting real spirit into the men you were always worth far more than all the "tots" served out to them.'

'It 's easy to pass alang a cheery word, sir; an' a lauch is no that deeficult to raise, provided ye choose the richt time.'

'Yes, there is a great deal in that. I think it is Shakespeare who says, "A jest's prosperity lies in the ear of him that hears it; never in the tongue of him that makes it." You have a sense of atmosphere, M'Gowan. Perhaps that is why you have turned up here. I was just picturing my future as dark as that pool down there.'

'If I were you, sir, I wud look at that high pinnacle o' rock oot there, an' note hoo it tooers up oot o' the black depths until the blaze o' sunshine croons its head wi' glory.'

'You mean the General's Rock. Yes, it rises three hundred feet sheer out of the water. So you would make it a silent sermon showing how I should rise above my troubles. It is an excellent object-lesson, I assure you, M'Gowan.'

'Ay, the Cobbler o' Arrochar cud sit verra comfortably on its tap, an' rest his feet on the cliffs here.'

'Capital idea! That takes a little of the terror out of the scene, for one would certainly much rather meet a cobbler than a Cyclops,' laughed the lieutenant, and Jock did not lag in joining in.

'You have cheered me up already. And now, as you have two hands, I will trouble you to light me a cigarette, and help yourself to one out of the box.'

M'Gowan willingly performed the little service.

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He had deft fingers for handling a match in a breeze, and for a few moments the two wounded men exchanged whiffs of smoke in lieu of ideas.

'I am afraid I am beginning to look at that gloomy pool again,' began the lieutenant. 'I can see no future before me, and what I feel most of all is the thought of being dependent on others. For my old job I needed both arms and legs. I was a surveyor, and had to do a good deal of riding. I shall have to turn to something else, though what I shall ever be able to do for a living I cannot see. Besides, I have a widowed aunt to support. I had a good prospect before me; but all that is gone now.'

'Ay, it's gey hard, sir,' was Jock's sympathetic comment.

'Yes, when one talks glibly about sacrifice, one little thinks what it means when it has to be drawn out through a lifetime. In fact, M'Gowan, I may as well tell you what has put me into the dumps to-day, for I want you to do me a favour.'

'I'll dae that, sir, wi' a' my hairt.'

'I was engaged to a Miss Gertrude Glover. Her mother, who is naturally very ambitious for her beautiful daughter, was opposed to our marriage, even when I had the prospect of, at least, a comfortable home. Now that I have nothing to offer, she has put my duty clearly before me. By a strange chance she and her daughter are on their way to Egypt, and their boat has put in to Malta. Mrs Glover knows that I am here, though I am not sure that Gertrude does, and I have just received a letter from the mother to-day, asking me to break off the engagement. Sir Edward Baird, a rich man, who is on their ship, is very anxious to marry Gertrude, and her mother says that it is my duty to free her, as of course I cannot possibly marry her now, and the girl's future must not be ruined. What answer could I give to that request?'

'Ye're in a gey deeficult position, sir, I admit; but I think the young leddy ocht to be consulted. After a', it's her life that's affected,' Jock answered with deliberation.

'But supposing the mother is watching her so carefully that it will be impossible to get any word to her? Mrs Glover is a very smart woman of the world, and it would be a clever brain that would outwit her. Besides, what is the use? Gertrude and I can never be any more to each other, and it would only be increasing the pain to consult her. I have already offered my life to my country, and now I must yield up something even more precious.'

There were tears in Jock's eyes as he listened, for he had a wonderful depth of sentiment in his being. 'Ay, it's a bigger sacrifice than yer life that ye are asked to mak' noo, sir,' he replied. 'But, hoosomever, ye may not be alane in it. I still think the young leddy shud hae her say i' the maitter. Ye're takkin' for granted ower readily that she hasna a bit o' the soldier in her, tae. Supposin' she prefers to stick to ye, I think ye ocht to gie her the chance.'

Lieutenant Reid smiled. 'You are a sly doctor, M'Gowan,' he said. 'You prescribe the medicine your patient wants. Of course I should like to consult her; and if we met, I believe she would vow never to leave me. She is that kind of girl. She has got plenty of grit, and would laugh at all opposition. But, then, would that not be selfish on my part, and really unfair to her? I cannot provide for her. The best I could do would be just to keep her above the poverty-line. No; I have written a letter to her mother renouncing my engagement. I should like you to take it with you back to Valetta and get it sent on board the P. and O. liner. Here is a shilling to give a messenger for taking it to the ship.'

'But ye maun see the young leddy hersel',' persisted Jock.

'I should like to, no doubt, even if it was for a last farewell; but I am afraid that it cannot be managed. Her mother would never let her come. I am also sure that she is guarding her carefully, so that she may not learn that I am here. No message that I sent would ever reach her, so that any attempt that I might make would be quite futile.'

'I'm no sae sure o' that. I hae ta'en on pretty deeficult jobs in my time, an' though I'm on crutches, I wudna think muckle o' mysel' if I cudna get to leeward o' the auld leddy. I'll manage it, sir, if ye'll leave the maitter in my haunds.'

'What! a meeting with Gertrude?' exclaimed the wounded officer, allowing the delight of his heart unchecked expression.

'Weel, sir, it's only but richt. If she approves o' ye giein' her up, then yer conscience is clear. If she doesna—weel, believe me, though things look a bit dark, a wumman wull find a wey oot.'

'M'Gowan, you are the most cheering individual I ever came across, though a bit of a tempter too. I am not sure that it is quite fair to Gertrude to ask her to see me.'

'Let her be the judge o' that,' interposed Jock.

'Very well, have it your own way this time; but I am afraid that you will not get past the watch-dog,' laughed the lieutenant, as, in answer to a distant whistle, Jock rose to go.

During the rest of his day in Gozo Jock was very silent. He was deep in thought, evolving plots and plans. He had taken on an adventure, and had promised success before he saw a way through.

On the journey back the party visited the great unroofed temple called the 'Giants' Tower.' Jock was too abstracted in thought to take in all that the chaplain told them, as he pointed to the doorway with its massive stones, each eighteen feet high and five wide. How these had been placed there if there were no giants in those days was a mystery. The whole style of these remains, the chaplain explained, had nothing either Grecian or Roman about it. They belonged to an earlier period. It was

clearly a Pyraitheion, a place for worshipping the sun. These huge masses of stone were the birthplace of the word 'cyclopean.' The chaplain ended his address by asking if any one could suggest how these great blocks could have been placed there without cranes.

'I hae got it!' suddenly exclaimed Jock. Then, as all eyes turned to him, he grew red. He had just hit on a plan for outwitting Mrs Glover. 'Oh, I didna mean onythin' in regard to this temple, sir,' he stammered, as he felt the chaplain's eyes on him; 'but I juist remembered that to-morrow was the 1st o' June.'

That was a discovery that meant everything for Jock, and he laughed to himself to think how it opened a way of springing a surprise on the vigilant mother.

When he reached his hospital he sought the orderly-room. He was on the best of terms with the clerks there, and he asked the loan of a typewriter for a few minutes. With it he wrote a short note to Sir Edward Baird, offering to have unveiled for the inspection of himself and a small party of friends the famous tapestries in the Cathedral Church of St John's. He signed himself 'The Custodian.'

'Sir Edward wull never ken that they are unveiled in ony case on the 1st o' June, an', thinkin' that it is bein' done especially for him, he 'll come, an' ye may be sure wull bring Mrs and Miss Glover wi' him; an' if I dinna manage to get a word wi' her there it 'll no be my fault,' he said to himself as he despatched the letter by special messenger to the liner.

Of course, he had to get leave from the medical officer; but Jock had already earned privileges in the hospital, and when he explained that 'it was a verra delicate maitter affectin' the happiness o' twa lives,' the request was granted with a smile.

At the hour he had appointed next day Jock was in the church, impatiently watching the door from his chair. His vigil was not prolonged; his bait had been taken. Five strangers sauntered in. Their leader was a big, rather bumptious-looking man.

'Yes, there are the tapestries unveiled for us,' said Sir Edward, pointing to the artistic relics which on that day were unbared for all eyes. 'It is very good of the authorities to give us this special opportunity of viewing them.'

Jock soon picked out Mrs Glover and her daughter. The mother had allowed Gertrude to accompany them at Sir Edward's urgent request. She had learned that Lieutenant Reid was safe in Gozo, and that there was no chance of meeting him, so she was off her guard.

Jock watched his opportunity, and chose a moment when Miss Glover was near him, the others having walked on ahead. Then, rising on his crutches, he intentionally slipped and fell on the floor. In a moment she ran to his assistance.

'Tak' that,' was the astonished greeting the girl received, as she stooped over the fallen man, while he shoved a pencilled note into her hand. 'Dinna let onybody see ye readin' it, for it is aboot Lieutenant Reid, who is in Gozo the noo. Gie me yer answer afore ye leave the church. Noo awa' wi' ye, afore they suspect.'

Jock had got on to his feet, and Gertrude Glover, who had grasped something of his meaning, obeyed his commands. She slipped into a side-chapel, and there read what Jock had written. He told her how he would take her to Gozo that very afternoon to see her lover, and mentioned a trysting-place where he would have a carriage waiting to drive to Marfa.

He watched for his reply, and when she smiled and nodded to him, he rose and went out, for he had much to arrange.

CHAPTER II.—A STRANGER DISCOVERY.

JOCK had a way of 'wangling' things, and before he returned to the hospital he had managed to secure two seats in an empty motor-ambulance that was running down to Marfa at the very hour he had mentioned.

'That saves nearly twa 'oors. I 'll hae Miss Glover back for dinner on her ship, an' her mither may never miss her,' he soliloquised with eminent satisfaction. 'Lieutenant Reid wull hae got my 'phone message to meet us at Migiaro at half-past three. I 'll gie them an 'oor to themsel's, an' we 'll be hame by seeven o'clock. It 's weel planned, I maun admit.'

But Jock had other duties awaiting him in his ward. During his absence a Scottish soldier, badly wounded, had been brought in.

'Sandy M'Cracken, is that you?' he exclaimed, as he recognised an old friend.

'Ay, what 's left o' me, Jock. I 'm richt gled to see ye. It mak's the place hame-like, an' I feel mair comfortable to think I hae a freen'.'

'If I can dae onythin' for ye, Sandy, ye can coont on my services.'

'Weel, maybe ye can. I hae had an awfu' experience. Sit doun, an' I 'll tell ye. Perhaps ye remember Major Ashmore. I was his servant, an' a better maister ye cudna hae. He had heaps o' money, an' was gey generous, an' I wud hae done onythin' for him. The day we made oor chairge everythin' seemed to gang wrang. We took the first line o' Bulgar trenches easy eneuch, an' we shud hae stayed there; but on we went, an' cleared them oot o' their second line. Then they let us hae a barrage richt on the spot. It was fair awfu'. There was nae place to shelter, an' the shells cam' droppin' richt in beside us. Ye see, they kenned the range to an inch. It was naethin' but pure murder to remain. Sae we got the order to fa' back. I had lost sicht o' the major, an' it wasna until we returned that a wounded mon crawled in an' told us he was lyin' badly smashed in a shell-hole quite close to the enemy's line, an' that he was

callin' for me. It was broad daylicht noo, an' I knew it was mair than madness to risk it; but I got anither chap to come wi' me, an' takkin' a stretcher, we went ower the tap. My companion, puir fellow! soon got laid oot; but I cairried on, for I remembered a' that the major had done for me. It was a miracle hoo I managed to dodge the bullets. Ane got me in the shoulder, but I never thocht o' it at the time. At last I fund the shell-hole, an' there was the major—an awfu' sicht. Pairt o' his jaw was cairried awa', an' he cudna talk richt. Ane o' his airms was a' smashed. It nearly made me sick to look at him.

'"I knew ye wud come," he said. "Ye're the richt sort, M'Cracken."

'"I'll try an' tak' ye in, sir," I said, forgettin' that I was losin' bluid fast, an' cudna hae moved him wi'oot help. He tried to smile.

'"Ye canna dae that," he said. "I'm ower far gane for help noo; but there is ae thing ye maun dae for me, an' I know ye wull, even though ye risk yer life. I hae committed a terrible sin, an' I canna leave the warld wi'oot tryin' to pit maitters richt. I inherited a' my uncle's money, for I was his only relative. That's hoo I hae been sae rich. But he left a wull, which I fund ae day by accident, and I wasna honest eneuch to tell ony ane. If ye can tak' it tae my lawyer, an' tell him I said ye were to be weel paid for it, he micht be able to trace the richtful heir. Quick noo, for I am gettin' verra weak. Pit yer haund inside my tunic, an' ye'll find a locket hangin' by a chain roond my neck. Tak' it aff an' open it."

'Weel, I did what he said, an' I took oot the locket a' richt, but hoo to open it was the deeficulty.

'"Quick! Gie it to me, an' I'll show ye," he gasped.

'I pit it intil his only haund, but it had nae pooer left, an' he let it drop to the grund. Then he gave me sic a look. I'll remember it a' my days, it was sae fu' o' despair.

'"Quick! Quick!" he gasped again.

'I picked up the locket an' did my best to find the spring, but it was nae use. He watched me until his eyes glazed, an' I could juist hear him murmur, "Quick!" Then he pegged oot.

'By this time I was gey far gone mysel', sae I determined to wait where I was until nicht. I gied up tryin' to open that locket, an' I pit it into my pocket, an' then I think I maun hae slipped aff intil unconsciousness. When I cam' to it was dark, an' I started to crawl back. It seemed a terrible length, but I had almost got in when the Bulgars pit ower a few shells. Ane burst near me, an' I got some o' the splinters in my leg, an' I knew nae mair until I fund mysel' in hospital. They brocht me on to Malta, an' I'm feelin' better noo; but I canna get the sicht o' the major oot o' my mind, or his last words, "Quick! Quick!" It was gey frichtsome.'

'What like was the locket?' asked Jock, his curiosity aroused by the strange story.

'Ye can see for yersel', for I hae it in that bag on the shelf there,' was the response. 'My conscience 'll no be easy until I cairry oot the major's last wish. Try yer haund, mon, an' see if ye can open it. There 's somethin' inside o' importance.'

Jock was not slow to obey the request, but though he fumbled with his fingers, the locket stubbornly refused to betray its secret. 'I'm awfu' sorry that I maun gang the noo, for I hae ither important business, but if ye dinna mind I'll tak' the locket wi' me, an' in my leisure try an' discover hoo to open it.'

'Ay, I 'll be gled if ye'll dae that,' Sandy replied.

Jock had already taken his commanding officer into the secret of his coming afternoon's exploit, and when he set off he was wished the best of luck on his errand. 'Life would be dull in this hospital without our irrepressible Jock,' said that officer to a friend, with a laugh, 'so he must have his way. He is an exception to all rules. Besides, it is good for his health to have excitement. He would mope if his surplus energy did not find some vent.'

Miss Glover was at the trysting-place, and she and Jock had the inside of the ambulance-motor to themselves. The other men crowded the outside seat in order to leave them alone, for Jock had imparted more than a hint of what was on hand, and suggested the necessity of his breaking gently to Miss Glover the condition of Lieutenant Reid. He was anxious, also, to sound her feelings, and discover whether she was likely to prove loyal to his beloved officer.

'Ye wull see him greatly changed,' he said. 'But we maun be thankfu' that he is spared to ye.'

'Oh Jock, I am so overjoyed at the thought of seeing him again that, just so long as it is himself, I shall not mind what he is like. Mother said that the last word received from Salonika about him was that he was in a dying condition. I was so anxious to try to go on there and see him, but mother said that, even if I did get permission, it was no use.'

Jock remained silent, not without a secret joy that he was getting even with 'the auld leddy.' 'He wull require carefu' nursin'. Somebody like yersel' ocht to look after him. He tells me he has nae freen's,' probed Jock.

'Oh, but you know we are engaged, and it will be my duty to care for my poor dear,' declared the girl. 'I want nothing more in life than just to be allowed to nurse him.'

'I'm richt gled to hear ye say that,' exclaimed Jock with warmth of feeling. 'He deserves the verra best, and,' he added with a twinkle in his eye, 'I think he is likely to get it. Of course, there micht be deeficulties in the wey o' yer mairrage. He tells me he's no verra weel-aff, an' a leddy like you maun hae things graund.'

'Jock, I shall not care if he hasn't a penny. I am strong and well educated, and in these days girls can work for their living. I will make enough to support the two of us.'

'Bravely spoken, an' it does my hairt guid to hear ye say it. But maybe yer mither michtna look at things in the same licht.'

'Yes, I know mother must be thought of. I'll not deny there are difficulties, Jock; but see how, thanks to you, we are overcoming the first one, which seemed so insurmountable—that of seeing him. We will trust the rest to lovers' luck.'

When they reached Marfa a boat was waiting to take them across to Migiaro, and a strong side breeze made them skim over the strait like a bird. In an ambulance-chair on the opposite pier sat Lieutenant Reid. So far as was possible he had his wounds hidden, and he wore his old well-groomed air and carried himself in a manner that showed how within the mutilated body breathed an indomitable spirit.

'Noo I'll leave ye for an 'oor to yersel's,' said Jock considerately. 'That'll gie ye time for a guid crack. Then we maun stairt for hame.'

With these words he moved away on his crutches to find a sheltered nook, behind some rocks, out of earshot.

To put in the time he pulled out of his pocket the locket, and began to try anew to find its secret spring.

'It's fair puzzlin',' he murmured as his attempts proved in vain.

All of a sudden the locket opened in his hand, it almost seemed of its own accord.

'I'll tak' guid care noo no to shut ye, for ye hae been waur to haundle than the maist stubborn oyster,' was Jock's apostrophe to the mysterious trinket.

Then he looked curiously at what lay revealed before him.

On one side was an old-fashioned photograph of a lady; on the other, in very small but clear writing, was: 'The Last Will and Testament of Joseph Ashmore. With the exception of ten thousand pounds to my nephew, Harold Ashmore, I leave and bequeath all my property to the one lady I ever loved, or to her heirs—Miss Julia Graham of Ardnish, whose photograph is also enclosed in this locket. I estimate my property at two hundred thousand pounds. Signed, Joseph Ashmore.'

'This tak's ane's breath awa'. What a fortune! Nae wonder the major had some'at on his conscience. Maybe, hooever, he wasna altogether to blame, for it's a gey funny place to pit a wull, an' if he had as muckle trouble in openin' this locket as I hae had, it micht hae been years afore he discovered it. We'll gie him the benefit o' the doot.'

Then Jock began to scrutinise the photograph. 'I hae seen that face afore. It's michty familiar; an' yet I canna remember ony wumman like it. Yet those eyes, that nose, an' that chin reca' some one. Fegs! I hae it noo! It's the image o' the lieutenant. It maun be some relation o' his. I'll awa' an' see. This is gettin' gey excitin'.'

Since Jock had taken to crutches he had never covered ground so quickly. He swayed perilously as he moved over the uneven rocks, and he rounded the corner as if he were first in a race. He pulled up breathless beside the two lovers, just as the officer was saying, 'Gertrude, it is not fair to you. I cannot ask you to be my wife. I have nothing to offer. I wonder why Jock did not hand the letter I gave him to your mother.'

Then both looked up startled, for there was Jock making frantic efforts to steady himself on his crutches. 'Dae ye ken wha that is?' he said abruptly, thrusting the open locket before Lieutenant Reid.

The latter put out his hand to take it, but Jock drew it back hurriedly. 'Na, ye dinna,' he exclaimed. 'I'll not let the uncanny thing oot o' my haunds, or it micht shut, an' we micht never get it open again. Look at it frae whaur ye are, an' tell me wha it is.'

'Why, that's my mother,' replied Reid in surprise.

'I was thinkin' sae,' ejaculated Jock, with hilarious triumph in his tone. 'Mon, I congratulate ye. Ye're a millionaire—leastweys, ye wud be ane in America. Joseph Ashmore has left yer mither a big fortune, an' I think ye ainee telt me that yer mither was deid, an' that ye were the only child.'

'Yes, that is true. I have heard her speak of Ashmore as an old lover, who had made a great deal of money, and who had never married. Really there seems to be something in this,' answered the officer, echoing in his voice the exuberance of the other.

'Ay, it mak's the wey easy for ye,' said Jock. 'Mrs Glover wull gie ye her blessin' noo, an' I'll no require to haund her yer letter. Here it is back.—An' ye'll be excused, miss, if ye're late the nicht. Seein' that the wind has gane doun, I doot that we canna be back afore eicht o'clock, sae it's a real bit o' Lovers' Luck.'

A HOLIDAY IN EAST AFRICA.

I HAD five hours after my leave was granted to pack my kit, guns, and chop-boxes (sixty pound head-loads), take out a big-game license, and get on board the B.I.S.N. Company's steamer leaving at 5 P.M. for Lamu, an old Arab and Portuguese port, one hundred and forty miles north of Mombasa, where I was stationed.

There is no big game to equal elephant for

sport, because of their cunning and extraordinary sense of smell. Like nearly all African game, elephants are nomadic. As necessity or desire for a change of diet compels them, herds are known to travel as much as a hundred miles. Their nightly range is usually from ten to twelve miles. Small herds frequent the coast-belt as far as Port Durnford, and commit depredations on coco-nut plantations. The coast species is not so fine a beast, and seldom carries a tusk heavier than ninety pounds weight; whereas tusks from Uganda, and from German East Africa that was, have been brought to the coast weighing over two hundred pounds each.

At daybreak the sand-dunes of Shella Point, under which lies buried an old Arab town, were distinctly visible; and soon after we passed the partially submerged ruins of an old Portuguese chapel on a coral-reef, off which we anchored. Lamu Island lies inland about two miles up the creek, and is covered with coco-nut palms. Mangrove bark (used for tanning purposes), ivory, rubber, and cattle are the principal exports. The inhabitants show their mixed Negroid, Persian, and Arab origin. The women, when walking in the narrow streets, are attended by their servants carrying a small canopy to screen them. This coloured cotton sheet is supported by four thin sticks, and is similar to those with which they swathe their bodies.

Having lunched with the Provincial Commissioner, I engaged native porters and a small dhow to take me up the creeks. After sailing about twelve miles, we put in at a village approached through a winding mangrove swamp. Here I spent the night in a room of the headman's hut, at the same time requesting him to send out runners for *khabar* (news). Before sunrise I was out and bagged a couple of antelope and a guinea-fowl for the pot, and the same evening, with a tame native tracker in tow, marched three miles, spending the night in a large *shamba* (Swahili term for a native cultivation). Abdulla, my guide, was a stocky-built Bajoon, belonging to a tribe of mixed slave and Arab descent, which gave him intelligence above his native bushcraft. His head was shaven, probably with a potsherd of bottle-glass, and as his whole travelling-kit consisted only of a stick, two loin-cloths, and a fibre-bag containing a few millet-cakes, I was enabled to load him with my mosquito-net, ground-sheet, water-bottle, some meat, and other impedimenta. Before retiring I warned my guide to shake my foot if he heard anything on the move. He awakened me at 1 A.M., and we immediately moved off. It was good going, except for half-buried tree and bush stumps. The elephants were about half a mile away, on the opposite edge of the *shamba*. The tricky night-breezes and dim light prevented me from entering the thicket; so, choosing a vantage-point, we waited for them to break cover. From the screaming and other noises we gathered that there were three males, and evidently they had found some tit-bit such as the fruit of the rubber-bushes. They fed on till about 4 A.M., and then made off silently into the forest on the way to water. Male elephants are seldom found feeding together with the cows.

We trekked back to camp, and after breakfast I took my water-bottle and rifle, a Jeffry ·404 bolt action, handed my double-barrelled ·450 to Abdulla, and off we marched up the forest-ridge in a half-circle, facing the monsoon in order to pick up any fresh spoor. After a two-mile tramp, we came on the tracks of a lone elephant, which Abdulla pronounced to be a rogue and a pest to the cultivators, but which appeared to me to be a female. A heavy fine is inflicted by the authorities for shooting a cow-elephant, and the tusks of males weighing less than thirty pounds each are confiscated. I hesitated to follow it up, as the footprints were nearly circular, instead of oval, and only about twelve inches across, whereas the spoor of a good bull is over twenty inches long. With the size of the spoor generally corresponds the size of the tusk, and I fully expected that the tusks of the animal would be small. When dried out they proved to be only forty and forty-two pounds respectively.

All I could get out of my guide was, '*Wanamume labuda;*' literally, 'Male, perhaps.' However, as he seemed keen, I followed. After two miles of dodging thick bush, we came on the droppings, into which Abdulla inserted his big-toe to test the heat. He concluded that the elephant was not far off, and would soon halt to take his siesta. Within the hour we found him lying flat on the ground asleep—an unusual occurrence. One ear was fanning the air to his trunk, so that, even in his sleep, he could get the scent of any human intruder. I hesitated to shoot, as he was head on, and, so far as I could see, the tusks appeared undersized; but as my guide whispered, 'Shoot, sir; it is a male,' I got into position, dropped on one knee in order to get the sights of my rifle in line with his chest and heart, and fired. He was soon up and standing, broadside on, bewildered. I gave him another bullet behind the shoulder, which sent him crashing ahead about thirty yards, where he fell.

I dived into the thick jungle to give him his quietus, but before I could get far he was up again and coming towards me, so I beat it back to the open spot. As he charged from the bush, his head with trunk raised and ears spread, he appeared like some gargantuan slate-coloured butterfly. I gave him a snap-shot above the trunk, which steadied him up, and then I headed across his front.

Elephants have poor sight, and are unable to turn quickly; but, unfortunately, when about ten yards from him I tripped over a creeper and came down. He had staggered some distance ahead, standing side on to me as if listening. I

lay fumbling quietly with the bolt of my rifle, and soon managed, with the help of a thorn, to get the sand out and work the bolt back. Whilst I was thus occupied the elephant had moved off into the bush, evidently very sick. Following, I went close up behind him, ready to finish him off with a bullet in the base of the skull; but he was swaying and unable to move off, although he tried to raise his forefeet alternately. I saw his game was up, and in a few minutes he fell sideways, with a groan, against a tree, which smashed under him. His stumpy tail raised, and his legs extended singly, he died like a horse. I crawled aboard and enjoyed a pipe of Boer tobacco. Abdulla had sprinted early in the game when the elephant got up and charged. Evidently he heard him fall the second time; for, after shouts and repeated assurances that the elephant was dead, he haltingly emerged from the bush. His first remark was, 'True, he is dead; and wasn't he fierce?' After he had viewed the trophy, I sent him to the village for an axe with which to chop out the tusks.

My experience is that a sportsman should never run away from a rhino or an elephant. In the forest there are always cat's-claw and 'wait-a-bit' thorn to hold you, and creepers and grass to throw you. An elephant will pick you out of a tree and smash you against it, or dance on you, and jab you with his tusks to vary the performance. When charged by an elephant have your gun ready, and give a holding-up shot at close quarters in the head, the shoulder, or the chest; then dodge, and give him another between the eye and the ear, or in the leg. The brain-shot is, however, the only one that is really effective, but the brain cavity is very small in proportion to the size of the head. With a heart-shot an elephant will travel a long distance.

The tusks of a cow-elephant are soft ivory, called *Vilaiti* by Indian merchants, literally meaning 'European.' They rarely exceed thirty pounds each in weight, and are used for making billiard-balls and ivory carvings. I have known a pair to fetch a pound value per pound weight in the Mombasa ivory auction sale.

Abdulla turned up later with my kit and axe, accompanied by a bunch of Wa-boni men and women. The people of this bush tribe are the hereditary slaves of the Galla and Somali tribes, who levy tribute from them. They were all practically nude, and the women, although emaciated, carried their possessions on their backs, supported by a thong suspended from their foreheads. In exchange for the meat the men were willing to chop out the tusks, and as this job would take them till sundown, I determined to spend the night on the spot.

Before commencing to cut up the elephant, the chief of the party and the other males gathered round, the former standing at its head. With his arms extended, this high-priest of the forest howled forth his incantations with song and speech to the god of the forest and the elephants, much to Abdulla's amusement. He, like myself, understood little of their gibberish, although he explained, with native cunning, that the chief was extolling my virtues as a hunter.

Whilst two of them hacked away at the tusks, which with great skill they extracted undamaged from the osseous spongy mass that surrounded them in a curve upward from the jaw to the top of the head, the others removed sections of the hide and slabs of the flesh, which the women cut into strips like biltong, and festooned with red the branches of the trees and poles cut for the purpose. The meat attracted swarms of flies. The tribesmen varied the monotony of the task by gorging pieces of the meat raw. Their feast of roasted meat extended well into the night, so much so that next day they appeared stupefied from the effects, and their stomachs were distended, not the smallest crease being left. Two were quite ill owing to their gluttony, and on being consulted, having no medicines with me, I suggested tree-climbing as a cure.

I pitched my camp well out of range of the stench, preferring the company of prowling hyenas. My supper consisted of a piece of the thick part of the trunk toasted on a stick, which, although slightly elastic, was very nutritious, and tasted somewhat like Bovril. One bullet had grazed the base of the heart, another had ploughed through it, and large intestinal worms had entered, rendering it unfit for my consumption. The hollows of the tusks, which extended to half their length, were filled with a pale-pink fleshy mass, which fell out like small duplicate tusks when the parchment-like cap was removed from the bases. The ivory at the sealed ends was as thin as an egg-shell, and the skin enveloping the tusks protected them from the bony walls of the caverns.

There was much suppressed excitement when these fleshy interiors were removed, and Abdulla and I were not permitted to see what ceremony was performed when the Wa-boni buried them, if buried they were. It is probable that they treated them for purposes of witchcraft.

I had one of the feet kept for me, the meat, like that of the rhino, being a delicacy. The method of preparation is to seal the foot intact with clay at the chopped-off end, then to place it in a hole scooped out of the centre of a termite ant-heap; bush is next piled over and around, and kept burning for a few hours, when the foot is removed, roasted to a turn.

It is somewhat anomalous that the game-killing tribes of the back-blocks of the British East Africa Protectorate are allowed practically the unrestricted killing of elephants, while the European sportsman is only permitted to kill two male elephants on a sportsman's license, which costs seven hundred and fifty rupees (fifty pounds). No person may purchase or have

in his possession any ivory excepting that obtained under a game license. The result is that ivory has been extensively smuggled out of the country to the benefit of the neighbouring territories—German East Africa, the Italian Protectorate, and Abyssinia.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XII.

IT was very early when we entered the little village. Nobody was astir, and there was an exasperating delay before our man contrived to rouse the *padrone* at the modest inn. When at last we got admittance, we found that he could speak a little English, and I was most thankful to hear, in answer to my anxious inquiry, that he knew about the sick English gentleman. '*Si! Si!* He is ill truly, but he is no worse.' This was good news, and I was much relieved.

It was too early as yet to present myself, but while we breakfasted sounds of life came from the street—men and women going to early Mass, the thin musical jangle of goat-bells, the trundling of carts or barrows piled with black olives, fish, and *frutta di mare*. Peasants, wearing their coats as cloaks, and carrying long-handled spades, were going to their day's work; and everywhere was the smell of roasting coffee, mingled with the indescribable, unforgettable odour that clings at all hours and seasons to an Italian village.

We hurried through breakfast, and the *padrone* (who no doubt put us down as mad Englishmen who chose to travel at unearthly hours) showed us the way to a clean and picturesque *villino* on the outskirts of the village. A little, elderly Italian woman, with a red coiffure and a villager's black-and-white dress, was standing in the doorway, and as soon as she saw us came forward with a low bow.

'*Il signore* desires to see the Signor Forbesi,' she said when I had introduced Tony and myself. '*Benissimo! Il signore* telegraphed, *non è vero?* The Signor Forbesi has expected him *tanto, tanto!*'

'I am not too late, then?'

'*Grazie a Dio*, no!' But she shook her head, and her little black eyes filled with tears. '*Il signore* ees varee weak—*debolissimo*—and he is lonely.'

'Has he no friends? No visitors?'

'*Sissignore! Il dottore* and sometimes *il reverendo*, the *parocco*, and once or twice a stranger. *Madonna mia!* it is *doloroso*, for he is so gentle and kind. Now, *per fortuna*, he sleeps. It would be better, *forse*, not to waken him. The repose refreshes him, for he tires easily . . . *si stanca facilmente*. Friends of the Signor Forbesi are welcome, and he told me that you would come. *Sant' Antonio!* What a pleasure for him! *Che piacere!*'

'Is he fit to go a journey?'

'*Nossignore! Perdio*, he will never voyage again—except once.' She crossed herself. 'The doctor had not the heart to tell me so, but I know, and I think the Signor Forbesi, he knows too. He wished to see *La Scozia*, where he was a boy, once again; but'—she broke off with a sad gesture—'the signore will see him for himself, when he is awake.'

She led the way inside the cottage to a little room embellished with earthenware figures of saints and paper roses from the last *Festa*. Marietta was her name, she told me, taking me all in with her little, shrewd, black eyes, and making friendly essays in small-talk, in her quaint and kindly diction. She knew a little English; she had been for a year, when she was young, in America. She had come to the village long time ago—*tanto tempo fa!*—fifteen years ago, when her husband—*poverino*—had been carried to the Campo Santo. She hailed from Padova. Padovani still love *i campi loro*—their own fields—*ma che vuole?* She had been left this *casaccia*, so here she came, and here she remained. A quiet spot—*tranquillo*—and far from the world with its trouble; but trouble cannot be avoided, and no one is happy, *salvo i matti ed i morti*—except the crazy and the dead. And so the good soul went on making conversation, until she thought it time to see the sick man, when she left us for a few minutes.

Tony suggested that I ought to interview my uncle Hugh alone, and I agreed. On Marietta's return she led me along the passage to a sunlit room, where Hugh Forbes lay propped up on a couch, holding out a thin hand in welcome. His smile was the ghost of the one in the portrait at Glen Ciuin which I knew so well, and a glance at him told me that he was nearly done with the business of this world.

'You are Neil,' he said, his hand in mine. He spoke slowly and with difficulty. 'It is good to see you.'

'And you, uncle?' I said as cheerfully as I could, but with a weight on my heart. 'Uncle Ewan sent me to bring you home.'

He shook his head. 'I'm past it. I'm breaking the doctor's orders by talking, but tell me all about Ewan and the old place.'

A tearing cough shook him.

'Promise me not to talk meanwhile,' I said. He nodded, and his clasp of my hand tightened as I began to tell him of the colonel and the North Country. He lay quite still, listening,

a smile on his worn face. I was anxious not to weary him, and was relieved when, after half-an-hour, Marietta's light knock sounded on the door. She came to tell us that the doctor was coming down the village street.

The doctor—a pleasant gentleman—was very glad to see me, as his patient had been buoyed up by my telegram, and disappointed because of the delay in my arrival. He was with the patient for a few minutes only, and when he came out from the sickroom his first words were to forbid me to allow my uncle to speak.

'But I have something of great importance to discuss with him, doctor,' I explained.

'I have given him a sleeping-draught, and when he wakens you may talk to him. But on no account must the Signor Forbes utter a word. Hæmorrhage, you understand! *Caspita!* It would be most dangerous. He may write a few words if there is anything of such importance as to warrant this, but a few only. *Per Bacco!* to exhaust him would mean that he might not rally again. He has wonderful spirit, but, as you no doubt see for yourself, the end is, at the outside, only a matter of a few days. It would be wise to give him the afternoon to himself.'

He promised to call again in the evening, and left me after once more counselling me to avoid tiring or exciting the invalid.

Tony and I went back to the inn, and in the afternoon set out to explore the neighbourhood. We were amply rewarded. The village was a quiet little Noah's Ark of a place, off the beaten track, unspoiled by sprawling hotels and an excess of villadom. Every turn of the road in that beautiful spot delighted both the eye and the heart. There the gray rock was clad with rich soil, which gave lavish thank-offering to the sun in lemon-groves, in orange-gardens, in walnut-trees fresh in their early leafage, in dark cypresses, the whole tessellated with vivid patches of flowers; while the volcanic hills, in the sun's alchemy, glowed with the sheen and lustre of the grape.

Cliffs, honeycombed by green caves, fell to a sea placid as the sky, blue as the speedwell, save where its fringe crumbled into dazzling white on the shining curve of the sand. A winding cliff-path invited us, and half-way down it we turned aside to rest in the shade of a clump of trees. A few brown sails, far out, flecked the blue floor of the sea; but there was only one craft near. It was a little launch, painted light green with a white line, and had just shot round a bend in the bay. Its clean, lithe lines and its long lateen yard and raking spar drew our admiration as it ran into a cove, and a tall man in white stepped out of it on to the tiny landing-stage. The half-dozen Southern oarsmen, almost as dark as Arabs, and as wiry, bent again to the oars, and the beautiful little craft slipped through the water like a witch, and disappeared round the bend.

The man came up the cliff-path and passed within a dozen yards of us. Absorbed in thought, he did not look in our direction; and even if he had, I doubt if he would have noticed us lying in the shade. He was very tall and lithe, with the suggestion of strength and ease in his movements. Presently he halted, and having lit a cigarette, took off his straw hat to fan himself. His face was a handsome and refined one, and the whole man—the small, well-poised head, the lean flank, the clean lines of his spare figure, the swing of his easy stride—recalled some well-bred, highly-strung animal. His clothes, of some white stuff, were well cut and English. His eyes were dark and heavy-lidded, and a carefully pointed, little dark beard could not spoil the line of an eloquent-looking jaw. He swung up the path and disappeared from view.

We lingered a while, and then Tony went back to the inn, while I hastened to the cottage, feeling rather guilty, to find that my uncle Hugh was still asleep. But Marietta had a piece of information. The signor with the dark beard—so!—she pointed her brown fingers from her chin—Signor Vachifordi—had just called. He wished to see her lodger, but she had refused. He had offered her money; but no! She refused! When she told him that the signore's nephew was here, he said nothing, and went away quickly. Had not the signore met him?

'Signor Wakeford? A tall man, Marietta?' I asked, trying to keep excitement out of my voice.

'Even taller than you, signore, wearing a straw hat, and dressed *all' inglese.*'

I dashed out, and ran down the dusty road to the cliff-path. The green launch was slipping round the bend, and the sun glanced on the white straw hat of a tall man in the stern. I was too late, but I had seen 'Mr Wakeford,' and I thought that I should know him again. I hurried to the inn, where I found Tony, and told him that the man in white was none other than 'Mr Wakeford,' and that his launch had taken him round the point.

'This is luck, and something after my own heart. You must, of course, go back to the house. Your uncle is at death's door. Meanwhile I'll try to make Wakeford's acquaintance. He'll likely return. Anyhow, he can't be far away, seeing he comes and goes in a launch. Have no fears. I'll come back here and report progress, and carefully avoid any interest in you or your movements. Off you go, while I do a little thinking.'

I hastened to the house, and waited until later in the evening, when the sick man awoke. He was very weak, and his big blue eyes burned in their hollows, but his mind was alert. When I broached the subject of his letter he nodded in comprehension, and pointed to a little cabinet. I handed him paper and pencil, and he wrote

with painful care: 'In the box are all my papers. Keys under my pillow. Will show you them to-morrow.'

Keeping the doctor's injunctions in mind, I did not talk much, but sat beside his couch and read aloud from a copy of an English newspaper which I had bought at Naples. The doctor paid another visit in the evening, but could say no more than that the signore was no worse. Not wishing to leave him, I got Marietta to make a shake-down for me in a little annexe where I could rest within easy call of him. She, good soul, promised to look into the sick-room now and then while I rested. The fresh air had made me drowsy, and I fell into a light sleep. Twice I woke and went into his room on tiptoe, but he was sleeping peacefully, and his breathing was less laboured. Soon I dozed off again, to waken with a vague feeling that I had heard something moving. It was now in the small hours, and the faint early light revealed a tired-looking figure by the table beside the open window. A couple of strides brought me to its side. It was Hugh Forbes, and when I touched him I knew that the wanderer had found Home. He lay with his head resting on an arm thrown across the table, as naturally as in sleep. Death had claimed him gently.

(*Continued on page 181.*)

RECENT EXCAVATIONS AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL RESEARCHES IN ITALY.

By Ivan Lavretsky.

NOTWITHSTANDING the war and its inevitable drain upon the material and intellectual resources of the nation, there has been practically no diminution in the zeal and the enthusiasm of Italian archæologists, no serious interruption in the various fields of archæological activity. In fact, the work of excavation and restoration has continued as in normal times.

At Pompeii the work of excavation, under the direction of Professor Spinazzola, is going on as usual, and new and interesting discoveries are constantly being unearthed. Unfortunately the results of these excavations are made public only at irregular intervals. The last official report on Pompeii appeared in September 1914. There is reason to believe, however, that a new report will be published shortly. Remarkable treasures have been brought to light recently in the Strada dell'Abbondanza (Abundance Street). The latest discovery—the house of a great personage, one Trebio Valente—is of particular interest. The house can now be seen with its *tablinum* entire, whilst the peristyle with *triclinium* in the garden was found in an unusually good state of preservation. The excavations in the peristyle disclosed four human skeletons buried beneath the ruins of a portico. The position in which they were discovered revealed the manner in which these four unfortunate human beings met their death. It appears that they were endeavouring to make their escape by pressing close to the wall in order to avoid the mass of cinders and falling ashes which had already obstructed the central garden; but when they arrived at the south-east corner of the peristyle, the roof of the portico, not being able to support the weight of cinders, fell, suffocating and entombing two of the fugitives beneath the ruins. One of these, in a sitting posture, with body and head erect, was a woman, as was recognisable by the gold ear-rings found on a level with the head; on her finger were two gold rings. She appears to have been hurled against her companion, who had fallen on his hands and knees. The third skeleton is that of an adult in a stooping posture; on one of the fingers of the right hand there was an iron ring set with an artistically engraved representation of a raven. The fourth skeleton, apparently that of a youth, was found facing the wall.

Other new discoveries at Pompeii comprise a *fullonica* (fullery) and an adjoining residence, in which is to be seen a beautiful coloured relief representing the combat of Achilles with Hector.

As at Pompeii, the excavations at Ostia (near Rome) have been conducted on a large scale, and the results, thanks to the indefatigable labours of the late Dante Vaglieri and his assistant, Dr Guido Calzo, have been of the highest importance and interest. Whilst Pompeii gives to the world the remains of an elegant town of villas and sumptuous buildings, the new explorations near the mouth of the Tiber (Ostia) reveal to us a strictly commercial city, where, better than anywhere else, one may trace the inner aspects of the life of the Roman people in their better times. At present the excavations at Ostia are largely in connection with the systematisation of territory already exposed to view. A fact particularly worthy of note is that the Italian Government, through the purchase recently of the immense Aldobrandini estate, has secured at Ostia for future investigations the ownership of land comprising the largest and best part of the area as yet unexplored.

In other localities of the province of Rome archæological research also continues. Finished, it is true, are the explorations (still recent) at Velletri, where the remains of a Volscian temple were discovered; likewise those at Licenza, near the alleged villa of Horace, and those of Lanuvium, Palestrina (ancient Præneste), and of the

temple of Jupiter Latialis on Monte Cavo. But, on the other hand, the excavations at Cære, which have been vigorously prosecuted on behalf of the Government by Signor Mangarelli for the past eight years, are still being pushed forward with praiseworthy zeal. The important results which have been obtained here, however, owing to the unfortunate lack of published reports, are as yet practically unknown outside a very limited circle.

The Etruscan problem, the old problem which still torments the wits of those who would like to have explained the origin and the nature of that superb civilisation so closely connected with that of Rome, will find, perhaps, its solution at the point of the pick at Cære or at Veii, when it has been found possible to extend to the surrounding territory the explorations which thus far have been confined to these two ancient *necropoli*. Whilst the excavations at Veii were temporarily interrupted owing to the fact that the inspectors directing them were under arms at the front, archæological progress, nevertheless, continued in these regions through the unceasing activity of the general superintendent, Professor Coltini.

At Ravenna recent excavations in connection with the restoration and reconstruction of the historical church of Sant' Agata have also yielded interesting and unexpectedly valuable archæological material. The excavations, which were under the general supervision and direction of the Superintendent of Monuments, extended over the entire space of the ancient quadriportico, the site, it appears, of a vast tomb, or burial-place, comprising numerous strata, the lowest of which belongs to the age of Theodoric (fifth century). It has been possible to trace clearly the entire plan of the structure, and the investigation, furthermore, has confirmed previous inferences and observations concerning the system of earth sepulture. Especially gratifying to the archæological student is the fact that a wealth of epigraphic material has also been unearthed. Numerous inscriptions bear the Consular indication and date, and some refer to personages of distinction who held important official positions. Amongst other objects, there is a metrical inscription, which constitutes a notable literary record. From the intermediate stratum was also recovered a large quantity of ceramics, whose artistic value is of the highest order. The collection includes thirteenth and fourteenth century pottery of all forms and sizes, and *graffiti*, painted and glazed, showing figured representations, with the emblems of Porto, San Vitale, and Classe. Many are intact or in a good state of preservation; others, however, which were in fragments, have been put together again with great patience and artistic skill by the Canon of Sant' Agata, Father Bignardi. Especially notable in the collection are numerous Faenza bowls and an amatory *lance* with a musical rebus motto, which, for its singularity, is destined to be one of the most curious and precious specimens in the Ravenna Museum, where the collection has been placed. A full report of the Ravenna excavations, with a description of the various objects discovered, will be published in due course by the Royal Lincei Academy. Meanwhile the work of restoration and reconstruction is progressing rapidly. The façade of Sant' Agata, together with the walls and the principal cornice, has been completed for some time. There still remains the reconstruction of the *piazzale*, or square (the site of the ancient *atrium*), the surrounding wall, and the campanile. One might add that if the church itself were in a city less rich in artistic treasures than Ravenna it would attract great attention on the part of visitors, and, indeed, would be considered a rarity. The church of Sant' Agata is filled with secrets and is alive with memories. From the early Romans to the rude Justinians; from the mosaic, still visible in the apse, to the painting of Luca Longhi; from the marble which records the name of Boëtius, to the epigraph which commemorates the Prefect Leone; from the miracle of Archbishop Giovanni, who witnessed the protecting angel's heavenward flight, to the pious exhumation of Cardinal Aldobrandini—art, history, and legend have left here in this church their imperishable mark.

The Picenum, which has recently revealed so much to us through the excavations conducted there by Professor Dall' Osso, has, during the past year, spoken its latest word at Fabriano, where, amongst other objects discovered, were the remains of a well-preserved ancient chariot, which is now in the hands of Professor Rocci, an expert restorer, for reconstruction.

New excavations, undertaken since the war began, are notably those at Como and at Este, near Padua. The Como excavations, which are under the direction of Signor Patroni, are intended to complete the discovery of the Porta Romana which was unearthed by the Societa Archæologica Comense (the Como Archæological Society) whilst excavations were being made for the foundations of the new Palazzo degli Studi. This gate was the principal portal of the ancient wall of Roman Como, towards Milan—an immense gateway flanked by two octagonal towers.

About the middle of May 1917 were recommenced at Este the excavations in the so-called Deserto district, on ground connected with the Arco di Sant' Antonio. It is confidently expected that when these researches have been completed the Atestino Museum will be enriched by a quantity of archæological material analogous to the fine collection of votive objects discovered in 1880–87 in the neighbouring Baratella.

At Bologna they have recommenced the work of excavation (begun in 1887 and continued until 1889) near the Giardino Margherita, out-

side the Porta Castiglione. The object of this investigation is to ascertain the extent of the Etruscan necropolis at the south-east of the city, and to discover eventually precious objects similar to those found during previous excavations.

In Rome, at the northern extremity of the Volkonsky-Campanari villa (Via S. Croce di Gerusalemme and Via S. Quintino) a beautiful series of Roman sepulchral monuments has lately been discovered. According to Roman law, the sepulture of the ashes of cremated bodies was not permitted within the walls of the city. These tombs, as was customary, extend along a public road. This was the ancient road which ran from the neighbourhood of the Colosseum, following a similar road to the present Via Labicana, near the church at SS. Pietro and Marcellino and the Via Merulana, and ending at the republican wall, the so-called wall of Servius Tullius. Entrance to the funereal cells was gained by means of frequent rectangular openings like windows. The cells are vaulted, and contain urns with the ashes of the cremated dead. On the façade of the wall are sculptured in relief the figures—busts, smaller than life-size—of the deceased, bearing the engraved funereal inscription and the names of the freedmen of Quistia and Clodia families. The excavations are being pushed forward under the direction of the Ministry of Public Instruction. It appears that the tombs extend under the villa Volkonsky-Campanari as far as the Via Merulana.

At Berceto, in the Upper Parmese Apennines, on the great Roman road trodden by so many armies, imperial and papal, a few miles from the Cisa Pass, majestically rises the very ancient monumental church of S. Moderanno. In the first chapel to the right, dedicated to Saint Burchard (who was of noble English origin, and was Bishop of Würzburg from 742 to 751), is to be seen—or was to be seen formerly—a modest painting representing two monks. Recently the Archbishop of Parma, Mgr. Conforti, in the course of some researches, had this painting removed from its position at the back of the chapel, whereupon a large arch was revealed, and behind that was discovered the sepulchre of Saint Burchard, with the inscription: '*Carolus Imperator fecit hoc opus S. Brochard MCCCLV.*' This inscription is engraved on a triangular slab, of Carrara marble (like the tomb itself), with the imperial eagle in the upper corner. The capitals on which the stone arch rests show an angel's head on one side, and on the other an eagle, indicating that the tomb of the saint was thus placed under civic protection—this being customary in the case of the sepulchral slabs of medieval tombs. The tomb, which measures 1·35 metres in height by 1·55 metres in length, was constructed by order of the Bohemian prince, afterwards Emperor Charles IV. Inside the sarcophagus was placed the leaden casket, which was removed in the time of Bishop Nembrini, and exposed to the faithful on the altar. This sarcophagus bears two inscriptions. The first, in Gothic characters, says that on the 18th of June 1355 the *serenissimo* Prince and Lord, Charles, King of the Romans and King of Bohemia, whilst sojourning at the city of Berceto, in the presence of numerous nobles, bishops, dukes, and counts (whose names are specified), had the sepulchre of Saint Burchard opened, and that they found the bones of the saint reposing in a leaden casket. The other inscription, which is on the top of the sarcophagus, says that 'Bertrando Rossi, count and lord of Berceto, in 1501 (Maximilian reigning), after restoring the temple, transferred to this chapel and had placed on the altar the coffin of Saint Burchard which was constructed by the Emperor Charles.'

Considerable historical importance is attached to this discovery, in addition to its archæological interest. History tells us that Saint Burchard was chosen Bishop of Würzburg by Saint Boniface, martyr; that he was the latter's worthy companion in the apostolate of Germany; and that, in the year 752, he had a large share in deposing Childeric III. and electing Pepin as King of France, during the Pontificate of Zacharias.

LADY HELEN'S NEURALGIA.

PART III.

I.

THE meeting was crowded. It was market-day and a half-holiday in Tonborough, and the afternoon was cold and wet. Both facts lent success to the meeting, and inside the town-hall the atmosphere was overpowering. All the windows were shut, and, though it was but three o'clock and broad daylight, all the gases were lit. Every inch of room was occupied, save the platform.

As the minute-hand of the clock below the gallery passed the hour, the door on the left of the platform opened to admit the Mayor of Tonborough, accompanied by eight ladies and four men, and the meeting broke into vociferous applause. The ascent to the platform, by rickety steps at the side, was managed with trepidation and care. The candidate was waved by the Mayor to a chair on his left, and handed an elderly lady, who was the president of the Women's Association, to the chair next him.

The rest of the platform party all tried to sit in the second row. The Mayor glanced at the two vacant chairs on his right, and then over his shoulder at the crowded row behind him. There seemed to be some altercation and remonstrance going on there, and a young woman was pushed forward into the chair of honour on the Mayor's right, and looked round her with an expression of hopeless agony. She was dressed in a long blue-serge cloak, and she clasped in her lap a shabby brown-leather bag. The Mayor rose, and, during the applause that followed, no one noticed a ninth woman enter by the platform door, and stand in the shadow at the side of the platform, behind the rickety staircase.

The clock pointed to the half-hour before the opening remarks from the chair were concluded. 'I will now call upon Miss Ralston to address the meeting,' he said, after his peroration, and, bowing and smiling affably at the girl on his right, he heavily resumed his seat.

The girl let her bag roll off her lap. It fell on the front of the platform, bounded thence over the edge, and landed on the bent head of the local reporter, who sat writing at a table just below. It opened as it landed, and a tin box was shot out. From it descended a mighty shower of white powder, which covered the reporter. He rose with a yell. The platform started up, and the girl was seen to seize the Mayor's arm and talk to him excitedly. The reporter kicked her bag under his table, dusted himself vigorously, and resumed his seat; while the Mayor appeared to be arguing with the agitated lady holding his arm. The meeting was much diverted, and the murmur through the hall evolved into laughter and clapping of hands and scraping of feet. No one noticed the woman who stood behind the platform step quickly and gracefully up the rickety stair, along the back behind the crowded chairs, and come swiftly through them to the front, just at the moment the girl holding on to the Mayor dropped his arm and burst into tears.

Mona Ralston wore a dress of some black diaphanous material, which mingled indefinably with touches of old lace in the bodice; and round her throat was a string of pearls, with a small diamond pendant that caught the light from every gas-jet in the hall. Her black hat was so ultra-modern in its form that none would have dared to wear it save a woman as beautiful as Mona.

She gave the weeping girl a look of sympathy, and slipped between her and the audience. A sudden dead silence fell on the meeting. Mona smiled at it comprehensively.

'Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen!'

Captain Stanhope, who had been looking much irritated, started and leant forward, gazing at the speaker across the portly Mayor, who had remained standing in his astonishment.

It was some moments before that dignitary remembered to sit down; but, almost before he had done so, Mona had captured the meeting.

II.

'It all arose from our secretary—our dear, indefatigable secretary—being ill. We really depend on her; and she was *so* sorry!' the president explained in the anteroom after.

'It didn't matter about me,' Mona replied graciously; 'but I was so sorry for that poor girl. Where is she?'

'Gone, I think. The stupid little thing! We thought her very—well—inefficient at dinner last night. She scarcely spoke. And she *would* take her bag to the meeting!—said all her things were in it. We thought she meant her speech. Who was she, I wonder? I am not clear yet. And *you* stayed at the hotel, did you not?'

'Only since this morning,' Mona told her, avoiding Major Stanhope's eye.

She had cycled to the hotel after her early morning cup of tea, firmly refusing further hospitality, and leaving without seeing any one save Lady Helen.

'Most uncomfortable! I can't tell you how I regret having missed the pleasure of your visit. And must you really go this afternoon?'

'I am afraid I *must*,' Mona answered. 'I must catch the five-forty train.'

Was it possible she just glanced at Major Stanhope under her lashes as she said it?

He took her travelling-cloak from her and held it.

'May I see you off?'

They walked side by side along the principal street of Tonborough.

'Your speech—I thought it admirable,' Mona said, breaking the silence.

'*My* speech!' He turned to her gladly. 'I felt ashamed to speak after you. You are a born orator, Miss Ralston. You played on that audience as a musician plays on his instrument. And what a point you made about Australia! And to say women shouldn't be in Parliament!'

Mona laughed. 'Oh, we are a stage in advance, are we? So short a time ago it was, "And to think women aren't allowed a vote!"'

Stanhope made a movement of impatience.

They turned into a side-street, where advertisement hoardings and sounds of shunting trains betrayed proximity to the station.

'Lady Helen is to meet me,' said Mona in a casual voice.

'Oh! Is she coming to see you off?'

Stanhope found it impossible to say anything about last night's adventure, but he frowned and flushed with annoyance and shame as he remembered it.

'No; she is coming with me.' Mona looked at him sideways, under lowered lids.

'Coming *with* you?' he repeated.

'Yes. I hope she will pay us a nice long visit.'

'Oh—I am glad! That *is* good of you, Miss Ralston! But—how—I mean—er—er'——

Then Mona looked him full in the face.

'Yes, I am carrying her off,' she said cheerfully.

It was a conventional phrase, but it implied much.

'I am very glad,' Stanhope repeated. 'My little cousin needs a friend.'

'I am sure she has one in you,' Mona said, innocently and pleasantly.

'I hope so,' he answered, with equal innocence; 'but a man can do so little.'

'Sometimes he can do everything.'

It was his turn to look at her furtively, to gauge her meaning. And as he glanced a wave of incredulity passed over him. Could it be possible that only yesterday he had been considering that, if his little cousin Helen wanted to escape by marrying him, they might both of them do worse; and had reasoned with himself that he was very fond of her and she was miserable, and that marrying her would open out the prospects of political life? No; it had been only a chivalrous idea—he had never really meant it seriously. He had always held marriage on a higher level than that, thank God!

Men have curious hallucinations about themselves.

'You made friends with Helen last night?' he asked Mona. 'That was why you—deserted us?'

'Great friends! She is very sweet.'

'Yes,' he agreed; 'I am very fond of Helen. She is like a young sister to me. Poor child!'

Mona smiled. Then she put a further test.

'I really felt as if I knew her before—though this is actually the first time we have met. You see, my cousin, Charlie Foster'—— She hesitated prettily, and looked at him with her beautiful eyes.

'Yes?' he asked eagerly.

She laughed and shrugged her shoulders. 'Ah, well,' she said, 'there is nothing settled; they are both very young. But Charlie is a dear boy; he is like a young brother to me.' She smiled demurely.

III.

They entered the station, to be met at the entrance by Lady Helen, her blue eyes wide with excitement, and her white motor-veil flowing and wreathing itself round her face, so that she looked like one of Sir Joshua Reynolds's baby angels among its clouds.

'I thought you were *never* coming—but I took the only car—they can't follow—and I brought only this bag, as you told me, and yours from the hotel, and—and—oh!'

She suddenly saw Major Stanhope.

'I hear you are going with Miss Ralston,' he said, taking her little hand and smiling down at her with kindly and paternal aspect.

'Are you coming too?' she asked.

'I haven't been invited, I'm afraid. I wish I were.'

'You must come and see us,' Mona told him, 'when you are in town. My father will like to meet you. Indeed, I brought a message from him.'

The train came in as she spoke.

'And *may* I come?' he asked, bending over her and piloting her as the passengers passed out, and they threaded their way through. The station-master, recognising Lady Helen and Major Stanhope, hurried up and indicated an empty carriage. The ladies got in, and Major Stanhope shut the door and leant on it. Mona took out her notebook and stood behind Helen, writing something.

'I think I ought to come, too—just to see to your luggage and so on,' said Major Stanhope with sudden inspiration.

'No, thank you, Reggie. We want to talk. And we haven't any luggage to speak of, either of us; mine is to be sent on. And that reminds me; you might go and break it to aunt that I've gone, will you?'

'My dear child!—I'——

'Oh, *you* needn't mind. You've always been a favourite. You'll soothe her.'

'And, Major Stanhope, another thing,' said Mona, coming forward, and taking Helen's place at the window. 'Would you send this telegram for me?' She handed him a leaf from her notebook. He took it.

'And *may* I come?' he repeated, looking straight into her eyes.

'Yes, you may.'

The green flag waved, and the train began to move. Reginald Stanhope stood bareheaded, watching it as it steamed out of the station.

Lady Helen looked curiously at her new friend when Mona turned from the window.

'What was the telegram?' she asked.

'To Charlie, to ask him to dinner to-morrow night.'

The little piece of white and blue and gold Dresden china became pink and blue and gold.

'Mona,' she said—'I must call you Mona, you know—are you *really* interested in politics, or are you just pretending?'

Mona laughed. 'What a little goose it is!' she cried. 'Yes; I'm really interested in politics. But you don't know what politics means.'

'Then there's my last scruple removed,' said Helen. 'Aunt has found my letter by now!' she added; and she bit her little lace handkerchief and looked out of the window, and rippled over with uncontrollable laughter.

THE END.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XI.—BLASE-BONES FROM SANDWURSE.

SANDWURSE is a very wonderful place. It has produced some exalted men, but, like all institutions, it occasionally throws out a prig. This doesn't happen very often, but when it occurs the specimen is a real one. And it was the bad fortune of our hitherto happy platoon to be saddled with one of the species. Our top-hole platoon officer, Lieutenant Blessem, was found fit for duty, and departed, amid the tears of our hut. We loved that man. He was so kind, so considerate, so interested, and he wasn't a sneak. Even Ginger admired him, and that was a compliment from our platoon highbrow. Lieutenant Blase-Bones then blew in.

We saw him approach the hut from our window. What a gorgeous Nut—all brilliantine, brown polish, and brasso!

'Some lad!' muttered Ginger, scenting trouble.

'He looks as if he couldn't help it,' I remarked.

'Looks a ruddy ass,' mumbled Beefy.

Then the door banged, and the sergeant-major shouted, 'Stand to your beds!'

We sprang to attention, and Blase-Bones entered as if he were the conqueror of Bagdad, Berlin, and Timbuctoo. He had a monocle—of course.

'This hut looks like a beah-garden. Open that windah theah,' he said, looking at me.

I obeyed. Twelve months in the ranks had taught me a lot.

'Whose bed is this?' he said, on arriving at Ginger's doss-house.

I must own it looked the bally limit. But even the old commandant had never checked it. The C.O.'s view was that we were there to train and be educated, *not* wearied with pipeclay and eye-wash.

'It's mine, sir,' answered Ginger.

'Clean it up. Look smart!'

With a groan, Ginger leisurely commenced to bundle H. G. Wells, Conrad, Hocking, Browning, and Zola into a long-suffering box.

'Are these your boots?' Blase-Bones asked Tosher.

'Guess they are,' said the Canadian casually.

'"Sir," when you speak to an officer.'

Tosher grinned. Fortunately this levity went unnoticed. And then Blase-Bones arrived at Billy Greens' doss. Billy, as you know, was a parson, highly strung, very nervous, and afraid of all military mandarins. We, who knew him, loved him; for Billy was the biggest-hearted man ever made. We shielded him from a good deal of trouble, and we were shocked when the new platoon officer, realising Billy's nervousness, pounced on him. Here was a chance to show off, and impress the hut that the new platoon commander was a mighty smart fellow!

'Is this your bed?' he asked.

'Y-e-s, sir,' said Billy, his hands twitching.

'Most untidy! What an example! How can you expect to be an officer?'

'I've never been checked be-fore, sir.'

'Hold your tongue! Tidy it up.—And, I say, sergeant-major.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Inspect this hut in an hour's time and report to me.'

'Very good, sir.'

Off he went, swinging his cane in a brainless manner, and leaving behind him a well of hate and scorn. This man had in ten minutes smashed our happy home, and given us a prospect of h—— for the next two months.

'Old Army!' said Ginger ironically, as the door banged.

'No, Ginger; he's the fag-end of the system, but he isn't a patch on the other good fellows,' I answered.

'He's a prize prig, anyway. He's out for trouble; but I fancy we can do him in.'

'Sure thing,' grunted Tosher.

'He's only a boy—a foolish boy,' commented Billy, who was indeed a most tolerant man.

'I'll tell you what he is,' remarked Beefy. 'He's a ruddy inefficient swine, chucked out of some crack battalion.'

And that was about right!

Next day he had us all up for a lecture.

'You know, you fellows need a lot of bucking up. Of course, I can see that, being New Army men, you're a bit handicapped. And I think it's an awful pity, don't you know, that you couldn't have gone to Sandwurse. However, it's my good fortune to be in command.' (How he loved that word!) 'If you will pay attention to me, I hope to pull you through.'

'God help us!' mumbled Ginger, who was at the back.

'What's that?' inquired Blase-Bones.

'I was just saying, sir, how much you'd help us.'

'I see—I see,' he muttered, but quite convinced that Ginger was pulling his leg. However, he had a face of brass, and continued: 'I want your huts smartened up. They ought to be like a ship's deck, with everything in order. And there's too much "fug," too many d—— novels lying around. I saw one yesterday by that beastly fellow, H. G. Wells. If you feel you want to read, get Kipling and the *Morning Post*.'

'Do you permit the *Daily News*, sir?' inquired Nobby, in such a humble (but assumed) manner that Blase-Bones thought Nobby was actually appealing to his profound knowledge.

'Certainly not! But I should be awfully pleased to write you out a list of papers and books, if you care to have it. I'm sure they would help you to understand the war. Another thing! I addressed one man yesterday, and he did not say "sir" when replying. This must not occur again. It's rotten bad form, and I won't have it! Won't have it! Dismiss!'

Ginger rose with a groan. All his Oxford Imperialism had vanished. He wanted to be a murderer and a revolutionary. We took him to the canteen and gave him a drink. He recovered!

'Say, boys, I reckon we've got to get busy,' said Tosher that evening.

'Your proposition?' demanded Ginger.

'Anything from slicing to lynching. I guess the world ain't any the richer for that production.'

'We'll catch him, duck him, and d—— the consequences.'

'Tar and feather him,' suggested Beefy.

'I think you are all very stupid,' remarked Billy. 'Why should you worry yourselves about an atom? He can't go too far. The company officer will see to that. Give him a full rope and he'll hang himself.' Billy Greens was afraid of revolt.

'Well, boys, I'm a lawyer,' submitted Nobby. 'This man may be an ass; but he's got the Manual of Military Law behind him, and don't forget it. We're in the army, don't you know, and this youth would come out top-dog. Again, I'm too jolly lazy to entertain the thought of getting chucked for my commission, and sent back to do orderly man. Therefore, I say, give him rope, and, as the padre says, he'll hang himself.'

'Meantime we suffer,' commented Ginger.

'That suffering, old chap, is not as bad as fighting the Boche.'

'Isn't it?'

'Let's vote for Nobby's idea,' I said. 'We don't want to make bally fools of ourselves. Besides, there's the reputation of the school, *and* the old commandant. I don't think we ought to let the Old Man down. He's been good to us.'

'That's right, John! That's right!' exclaimed the padre, glad to think a budding mutiny was being quelled.

'Oh, very well. We'll study the brute,' concluded Ginger, recalling the lecture on psychology.

For the next fortnight we had a dog's life. The company commander, who was a real good chap, didn't notice it. He was such a perfect sport and gentleman that he concluded his new officer was the same. Billy and I, however, threw our influence into the scales of neutrality, for Tosher and Ginger, when roused, were of violent temper. They were such good pals that we were not a little afraid of their rapidly fraying temper.

At last the storm-clouds burst.

At morning parade Blase-Bones was inspecting the platoon. He was in a bad mood. When he reached Ginger he remarked, 'What do you mean by coming out with such shocking boots?'

'It was wet yesterday, sir. I've tried to polish them. I've done my best.'

'Your best is not *my* best. Understand?'

'No, sir.'

'You're insolent.'

'No, sir. I'm endeavouring to understand you.'

'I know your type. Enough!'

'I shall feel much obliged, sir, if you will cease to be personal.'

'Take his name, sergeant-major.'

Ginger was mad.

'There's dust on your belt. Why?' Blase-Bones asked Tosher.

'I'm real sorry,' answered the Canadian.

'"Sir," when you answer me.'

'You ain't wise, boy.'

'Silence!—Take his name.'

Tosher's hands quivered; then he stood still, his face pale with suppressed anger.

I went through that morning's drill sick as a dog. And the only solution I could discover was that Blase-Bones was either an idiot or mad. But that didn't alter the plight of Ginger or Tosher. I trembled to think what might happen. Being cadets, a high code of discipline was expected of them, and this had been observed under our former platoon commander. Indeed, our platoon had the highest marks in examinations and sports. Yet this awful prig had smashed it all up. If I was sorry for Ginger and Tosher, I was more sorry for the commandant. This affair would break the Old Man's heart. However, I did not know that the colonel had already weighed Blase-Bones up. He was a shrewd judge of character, a man of stern moods, but a just C.O. and a gentleman.

Finally, he *understood* Canadians.

(*Continued on page 186.*)

TO THE FOXGLOVE.

O STATELY foxglove, queen of Devon's flowers!
Regal, yet modest, in thy bracken bowers;
With thee for ever doth my heart and mind
Associate the murmurings left behind
In those dear woods of Devon, where I dreamed
Of things celestial, and a world redeemed.

Thy tall, straight stems, with richly clustered bells
Of purple blooms all blazing down the dells,
Do give enchantment to the scene around,
And furnish bees with happy hunting-ground.
Reared amid beauty, thy charm doth exceed
The choicest flower that's seen in grove or mead.

Thron'd in the woods, O Devon's stately queen,
Adding to June's already perfect scene,
Where'er I go thy memory with me stays,
Still harking back to glorious summer days;
And when to sordid cares I must return,
For thee, O foxglove, will my soul still yearn!

HASLEHURST GREAVES.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

THE war being won, peace being in the making, various nations of the earth enduring the conditions of violent revolution, the world seething with intense unrest, and all looking forward to the future with a glowing hope, but yet with a deeply discomforting apprehension —was there ever a time so critical for man?— there is a pleasant disposition in sundry places to reflect in odd moments on the manner in which the greatest of wars was won. Now, it seems to many of us that the test of speculative or imaginary elimination of the most forceful factors leaves the eventually victorious Allies with some fair prospect of success in every case—but one. If the British Navy had been taken out of the set of pieces, or had lost its place in it, then truly the whole system to which it belonged must have collapsed, and Germany must have wreaked her will disastrously upon humanity. This is universally admitted —by the enemy, as well as by all the victors. It is a self-evident proposition. Therefore, while it can never really be said, and should not be said, that any one country specially won the war, which was won by the closely concerted action of all of them, each exerting its own indispensable influence, it is nevertheless true that the British Navy had far more to do with the winning than anything else; and in that sense it certainly did win the war, and won it, as one might say, in a dozen different ways. This navy is the thing that an island people, seafarers all their time, have built up through ages, whose power, seeming to be consummated at Trafalgar, now rose to a far higher distinction and brilliance of achievement. And, fittingly, with the war won, this navy had for itself the most dramatic scene of all the war, a spectacle of conquest, remembrance and full recognition of which will be everlasting. Stories of battles may shrink, the efforts and the achievements of politicians may be (and probably will be) enormously discounted, other war affairs and factors may come to seem of less and less account, but the story of how the British Fleet sailed out one night and brought the German Navy back captive to the waters of the Forth is one that will not lessen. Its marvel will increase; for even now those few privileged who witnessed the scene find that its wonder and its majesty grow in their minds. The reality is better appreciated now than when it lay before them. That was the greatest scene, the greatest incident, of the war, or any war. It was so wonderfully symbolical. It showed the strength of Britain, and signified the supreme factor in the achievement of the victory. In a thousand years from now the story of how the British Fleet went out to meet the Germans at an appointed place for their surrender and brought them in will be told with a certain dramatic sparkle as it has been to-day, and perhaps in books it will be told with yet more detail and more vigour. If that is agreed upon, a few extra notes—after-remembrances—upon the event may be allowed. They are those of an eye-witness, for it happened that the present writer had the special privilege of spending some days and nights on a first-class British battleship at that time, and was there at the going out of the British Fleet alone, and its coming in again with the German battleships in custody. He saw it all from H.M.S. *Benbow*, one of the best ships of the First Battle Squadron.

* * *

On the day before the surrender, when the German squadron—some seventy ships—was making its most melancholy voyage westward from Wilhelmshaven to an appointed place, a peculiar placidity pervaded the Grand Fleet. There was the sense of something tremendous pending, which was yet not tremendous, of a victory coming which was no victory of an ordinary or even an extraordinary naval sort. There was little to do in the way of preparation, for the fleet is always ready. A number of instructions were issued from the *Queen Elizabeth* by Admiral Beatty. King George and Queen Mary visited the fleet, which was happy and complacent. When night fell, high up in the Firth of Forth, there were some who paced the decks of the *Benbow*, watching the twinkling of signals from the different ships, tracing gray forms, looking over to the lights of Rosyth, and fancying they could still make out (as they had done in the dusk) the lines of the pathetic figure of a fighting-ship whose day is done—so pathetic, as those realise who have for a moment glanced upon the picture of the

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Téméraire as Turner painted it—the original *Dreadnought*, which of necessity had here to remain while all her brood went out for this amazing victory. But it was all mostly quiet and dark. We turned in, thinking. . . . By arrangement I had a call at half-past 2 A.M., and in the barely three hours that had elapsed a considerable change had taken place. There was a general stir. Chains were rattling, signals twinkling from every ship. Half-an-hour later 'I W' was signalled, and the business of weighing anchor began. The destroyers, in the van of what would be the most remarkable procession of battleships ever known, were already spurting away to sea some miles ahead; the light-cruiser squadrons and others of the forward units were pursuing them. Soon it would be the *Benbow's* turn; and a little before four, with no loud commands, no hauling in of gangways, no whistling, scarcely any new sound at all, one felt instinctively the sense of motion—hardly more than instinctively, for these battleships with turbines do their work with a mysterious stillness. The changing relative positions of the lights about afforded the only convincing evidence. But three cables ahead of the *Benbow* was the *Emperor of India;* the *Iron Duke* was three cables aft. Thus in a silent solemnity and in single file did this mighty host of warships move down the Firth of Forth on this dark morning. They were as close together as they dared be; each could easily have hailed the ship ahead or astern. Yet they said on the bridge that from first to last this line of ships of the Grand Fleet extended for some six-and-fifty miles!

* * *

There were many things done in the navy during the war which could not be, and never were, described. We now witnessed some of them. The paravanes were put out. Now, the paravane, about which there was never so much as a whisper until the Germans were beaten, is a war invention. It is something like a big iron fish, as we might say, ten or twelve feet long at a guess, and from davits one is cast into the sea on each side of the ship for'ard. If well and successfully thrown, the good paravane then swims along smoothly some thirty feet below the surface and a little distance from the side of the ship, being fastened to a steel line attached to the bows, and thus towed. The paravane is a mine-catcher. For various reasons, the risk of a warship striking a mine dead on is small; the infernal thing may come in contact with the ship's side, and there is the danger. But now as it floats its under-fastenings come into contact with this paravane's line, and they slip and are guided along it until the mine meets the paravane. At this critical moment its fastening arrangements are guided with a pleasing certainty to the business part of the paravane, which has an appreciable resemblance to the jaws of a well-equipped shark. The mouth of the machine contains the sharpest of teeth, which, thanks to the natural forces applied, cut the fastening and send the mine adrift. About five o'clock the paravanes of the *Benbow*, and presumably those of the other ships at about the same time, were put out. Port paravane was at first a little stupid, and after much improper wriggling in the water, had to be taken up and swung out again ere it would swim properly, as a good paravane should. This is but one small detail—though a very useful one, since it is probable that it saved many ships—of things that they knew and practised in the navy during the war that few friends and no enemy ever heard about.

* * *

It was a still, dark night, a little chilly. The moon should have been nearly at the full, but was closed in by cloudy masses. Better was this for the contemplation of the many lights of different colours marking the 'gates' in the Forth, the booms, the guiding-lines among the mines. On the bridge, some time previously, I had seen the order given for 'Raise steam for full speed as soon as possible,' and here it was at many knots already, the whole line of the Grand Fleet, the mightiest armada by far that the world has known, threading its way through these precarious channels. On the distant shore to starboard there was a brilliant compact array of many bright lights, reminding old sea-voyagers of casinos and the like at gay resorts, in times of peace, as seen from the sea at night. Through the glasses could be seen many parallel rows of small inlets, with wharves attached, just like an extensive series of ocean stables. But here was mystery, for the lights were many and at the full, although the place was desolate, and there was no life about. 'Yes,' said the commander, 'there are the nests of the destroyers, but the birds have flown. Those nests are now all empty for the first time since the war began.' Of course, the said birds which had thus flown were at the head of our advancing line.

* * *

An order came to the *Benbow*, as to all the other ships of the fleet, from 'Q.E.'—which is navally short for the flagship *Queen Elizabeth*—that she should prepare for action! What is more, the order meant exactly what it said; we were not at manœuvres now, and armistice is not peace. Hence a creepy feeling in certain places. There was a general bustle everywhere, and this preparation for battle was quite an impressive thing. The order given positively contemplated the contingency that soon the guns might have to shoot against the enemy. Decks were cleared. The day before I had heard a captain and a rear-admiral discussing the possibilities. 'Well,' said the captain, 'of course it seems all very well arranged, but I cannot quite understand

those poor devils. . . .' 'My old friend,' rejoined the rear-admiral, 'governments and surrenders are well enough, no doubt; but one can hardly believe those fellows can chuck it up just like this. Why . . .' He further expressed his inability to believe. That was the cause of the order to prepare—a certain possibility, as one might say. The guns were manned and the shells were set at hand, with the cages down to the magazine in the smoothest working form. *Benbow* and all the rest could then have fired a broadside. Thus prepared, the tremendous line, very straight, steamed on. Out on wider waters the time came for a new formation, the development of two columns in single line ahead, parallel to each other, instead of the one long, plain, straight line that had forged its way out from the Forth. So there was doubling in and out, and presently there was the full grand spectacle of these twin-lines, though one, according to arrangement, had spread six miles away to port, and on the dim gray horizon could only just be seen. Here in great array were all the battle squadrons, light-cruiser squadrons, the linking ships for the passing of signals and so forth, and the five vessels of what was known as the Sixth Battle Squadron, which comprised the American battleships. These parallel lines of steel and strength made the cage in which the German Fleet, on its surrender, was to be enclosed. It was ready.

* * *

A fog which had hung over the waters of the Firth and the North Sea for nearly a week lifted that morning for the first time. The circumstance helped some cranky sceptics to believe more than they used to do that if God was concerned in the war at all, He was at least with Britain, and thus He blessed her navy on the day of the consummation of its glory with all the sunshine that generous heavens could bestow. To some minds it seemed almost a miraculous thing. The fog had appeared settled and certain right up to the previous night, and alas for the tragedy that it would have been if the greatest surrender in history could not have been seen at all, and had just had to be assumed and accepted as officially announced! But this morning the sun shone delightfully upon a smooth sea. A wide spread of blue with amethyst and saffron, tints of red and opal bronze, filled the sky above. It was anticipated that, according to arrangements, our leading ships would be in touch with the Germans shortly after nine o'clock, the exact spot for this historic meeting being charted at lat. 56 deg. 11 min. N., long. 1 deg. 20 min. W. It is not a custom of the navy to display emotion, but admirals, captains, and others had some difficulty in concealing curiosity when the time came for the Germans to be visible. Presently we became aware that the units ahead had really seen these surrendering German warships, that the enemy did thus positively and meekly surrender, that they had been taken into the custody of the Grand Fleet. Every gaze strained away beyond the port bow whence the surrenderers must come towards us. They came. It was true. We could see them. They rose in the horizon mist like ships of fancy. Out there on the limit of vision there hung a thick even stripe of this white cloud, and beyond it was the other Grand Fleet line, which for the present, six miles away, was invisible. It was in this fleecy setting that the Germans must appear, and one knew they were there when the *Cardiff*, sent out in advance to meet them and lead them in, was seen, marked by the sausage balloon she had flying above her. Then one by one we slowly made out the hulls of the German warcraft. Sun-rays bore upon them, and the ships appeared like small, straight lines, a little whiter than the surroundings, while it seemed that the glistening light was focused on a spot on each, making it shine like a speck of burnished bronze. This was our first vision of this fleet, which, with toil and pride and menace, the Kaiser's Germany had diligently constructed through a generation, and this was its first visit in large measure to our shores. Between our Grand Fleet lines in the appointed way sailed this German Navy; we, steaming still for the time being in the contrary direction, soon had a full sight of it. At the head of the German line was the *Seidlitz*, the *Moltke*, the *Hindenburg*, the *Derfflinger*, and the *Von der Tann;* and then there followed the bigger ships, with the *Friedrich der Grosse* flying the admiral's flag at the head of them. Followed the German cruisers, some way behind; then the destroyers. There is no need for names or particulars, as here one seeks only to convey a few impressions, the main facts having long ago and thoroughly been reported everywhere. Each of the Germans was still flying the German flag with the eagle in the centre of the black cross. It was the last sign of a lost independence and dignity, and its time was short. Such and so docile did that line of the German Fleet appear, as it laboured along, that an enemy with keen remembrance might yet feel a touch of pity for its appalling humiliation. Presently the Germans were all completely within the case of ships prepared for them, and, this being so, an order was signalled from 'Q.E.' to the two lines of the Grand Fleet to 'alter course sixteen points by divisions'—which simply meant that each squadron should turn right about and bring itself to point for home, thus sailing with the captives and not away from them. With a beautiful precision was this movement made.

* * *

Slowly then all sailed towards the Scottish shore—slowly, we say, for the Germans could make no more than twelve knots, and once or twice the Grand Fleet, despite restraint, was moving too quickly for them. Up in the

sky there loomed a big British airship. It hovered over the captives, came low down to them sometimes, and nose first, as if, in keen curiosity, it were peering hard into these strange craft engaged upon so doleful an adventure. When mind and emotions had gathered as much of this remarkable spectacle as was within the capacity of human limit, another was presented which in its way created even more wonder and more awe. The Grand Fleet slowed a little, and the *Benbow* found herself abreast of the tail of the captive line, which consisted of the vast company of destroyers. The tableau was presented suddenly and unexpectedly; it was amazing. Here were the forty-nine German destroyers (a fiftieth having been sunk by a mine on her way across the North Sea), and three times as many of the British kind wrapped themselves about them, crept close to them, shepherded them so wonderfully. And with those two hundred vessels all compact it seemed veritably that the ocean was spattered completely over with them, and an admiral of long experience turned to admit to one who was standing by that even he had seen nothing like it, and felt that impossibilities were now achieved. So all steamed towards Largo Bay, on the north side of the Firth, where it had been determined anchorage should be taken and the Germans boarded. On the Grand Fleet the early emotion had given way to complacency. There was a little private and personal signalling, when high officers felt constrained to pass a sentimental thought to friends on other ships. 'Does this not take you back to old times and sweet memories?' was such a signal that either came to the *Benbow* or left her—one forgets which it was. For with the remembrance of many naval adventures, fine successes, and great displays, this was an hour for thoughts—thoughts of the past. Another perfectly shaped manœuvre, and the line on each side was halved in length and made into a double line for greater compactness. By this a better view was to be gained of the full extent of the grand armada, and the wonder of it all increased.

* * *

The end approached. Orders bearing on it had to be given, and the flagship 'Q.E.' came to be a more continual consideration. Hoisted now at her peak was the ensign flown by the *Lion* at the Battle of Jutland, part of which was shot away. At half-past twelve Admiral Beatty made a signal that will be historic: 'The German flag is to be hauled down at sunset to-day, and is not to be hoisted again without my permission.' This order, the mark of victory, set another emotion running. Now, as the place of anchorage was approached, 'Q.E.,' in all her pride, authority, and majesty, came out of the line, and as the war-vessels passed her by, the ship's company of each in turn, led sometimes by officers standing on the turrets, in enthusiasm gave ringing cheers for the admiral who could be seen standing on his deck and raising his cap for thanks. . . . At last at anchorage. A square was made round the captives, and now we came close to them, and all details could be plainly seen. British officers and men contemplated them, admiring the lines and seeming quality of such as the *Derfflinger* and the *Hindenburg*, and murmuring that they were too good for this—but there it was, and had to be, and must. Two or three of our aeroplanes flew up, capering in the air above the captives. Once or twice an aeroplane seemed to skim the very decks of a German vessel; it would glide just above the water, and leap over the German at the critical moment. A big red sun was setting amid coppery vapours. At three minutes to four it was officially set, and at that moment the German ensigns were to be hauled down, and not sent up again 'without permission.' It was another of the tragic moments. The *Benbow* had been made responsible for the *König Albert*—each German ship thus having a special custodian—and so from the *Benbow* I watched for this German flag to fall. The moment came, and it seemed to drop suddenly, almost with a jerk, like a stone. So fell a dream. And the British officers who shortly afterwards boarded the German ships said that never in life in any circumstances had they seen a set of men so thoroughly despondent as the German officers. Their dejection was utter and complete; they seemed overwhelmed by the humiliation of their position. Yet they were sufficiently courteous.

* * *

One thing only remained to make a solemn and fitting end to a day that for ever will be marked in history as that of a strange and most marvellous naval achievement, better symbolical than any other of the fall of an empire and the triumph of right and justice. Admiral Sir David Beatty was not wanting in the true instinct. Thanks had to be given. From the flagship he signalled: 'It is my intention to hold a service of thanksgiving at six o'clock to-day for the victory which Almighty God has vouchsafed His Majesty's arms, and every ship is recommended to do the same.' The crews and the marines were informed that there was no compulsion to attend, but they also did not lack in thought and feeling. . . . It was dark; it was quiet and still. Only a few twinkling lights were visible on the ships about. The padre, in his surplice, came on deck at six o'clock and took his customary place for'ard, with Captain Waistell on his right, beneath the long, parallel barrels of a pair of gigantic thirteen-and-a-half-inch guns. Officers stood behind the padre and the captain; sailors, marines, and others, with the ship's band, spread round in a half-circle, with the heavy mass of a gun-turret behind them. We read the hymns by the faint light of a few electric bulbs. Above, a few stars

had begun to sparkle in the firmament. An intense solemnity pressed upon this company.

> Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven,
> To His feet thy tribute bring—

beginning of the first hymn that was sung. The music spread over the waters; the Germans would hear this thanksgiving from all the ships that now surrounded them. A prayer, and another hymn ending:

> But, lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;
> The saints triumphant rise in bright array:
> The King of Glory passes on His way.
> Alleluia!

One verse from the National Anthem, and then dispersal. '*Der Tag!*' . . . '*Deutschland über Alles!*' And so this was to be the tragic finish of it all! . . . It does not appear from a consideration of things that we should by very much reduce the British Navy.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE dead man's papers were easily found, for the key of the little cabinet, as he had written, was under his pillow. Before awakening old Marietta, I opened the cabinet and took possession of its contents. With the man Wakeford in the neighbourhood, I determined to lose no time. After securing the papers I roused Marietta, who, in the intervals of tears, helped me to make a thorough search of the room. We found nothing beyond a few personal belongings. Having locked the door, I left the cottage, and made my way in the radiant hush of the morning through the quiet street to the inn. Tony was in bed, but soon joined me in an examination of the papers. Most of them related to ordinary matters of business—jottings regarding his West African affairs and a small balance in the Credito Italiano at Naples, addresses, letters, memoranda, and so on; but among them was a sealed envelope. It was endorsed in my uncle's handwriting, thus: '*Referred to in my letter to E., and found by me two days later when arranging my affairs.—H. F.*' Eagerly I slit open the envelope and drew out the enclosure. It was a single sheet of paper, and when I unfolded it my pulse quickened, for its right edge was serrated, and the first words which caught my eye were two at the foot—'† *Exultabunt Domino.*'

Here was a discovery! The only decipherable words in the old paper at The Bield were the same as those in the paper before us. They were in exactly the same position, and were preceded by the same little Roman cross. Careless, easy-going Hugh Forbes had preserved, probably through sentiment, his copy of the old family paper, the other half of which was presumably in the possession of 'The Searchers.' The letters, as in the paper stolen from my cabinet in Jura Street, were strung together without punctuation; but the writing was legible, and it was easy to arrive approximately at the words. For the reader's convenience, these are separated in the copy of the paper given below. This paper is innocent-looking enough, but over it men have schemed, plotted, lied, and betrayed, and through its lure been struck out of this life:

Anno Redemptoris.
Y^e^ month Aprile. . . . From Gleann Ciuin His house. . . .
Houres to Y^e^ Learg Ghruamach Itts North Jawes & in other
*Houres from Itts Jawes to Y^e^ Saddle and High^st^ P^t^*
of Y^e^ Pass. . . . Now First throe
track till yow do come neare
lyeth among Greate Monta
a Toyle to enconter
Strike to Y^e^ Heart
Sron na Leirg
ontill yow do come
Itt runeth but no
ane neybour Wa
Salute oure Three trustie friends
anent these I did fullie in
from Y^e^ tail
no more
† *Exultabunt Domino*

Several Gaelic words were easily picked out—namely, 'Gleann Ciuin,' 'Sron na Leirg,' and 'Learg Ghruamach.' The first is, of course, the name of my native Glen, in which stands The Bield. Sron na Leirg is the great hill, nearly four thousand feet high, which mounts guard at the north of the Pass, and looks down between Braeriach and Ben Muichdhui to Glen Dee. The third is the Larig Ghru' ('The Forbidding Pass') which links the Spey Valley with the Mar country and Deeside, and climbs toilsomely up the highest mountain mass in Britain, through the wild recesses of the Cairngorms.

It was plain that the writing was part of instructions regarding something; but, alas! it was equally plain that it was useless without the other part. Time and again we read it, backward and forward, from top to bottom and *vice versâ*, but to no purpose. '*Strike to Y^e^ Heart.*' '*Salute oure Three trustie friends.*' Whose heart was to be struck at? Who were the three trusty friends?

'A duplicate of what once was written on the faded paper at The Bield,' said Tony. 'This is what Wakeford wants, and what he won't get, if we can help it.'

'Have you seen him?'

'Not yet. But I had a chat with some of the boatmen, and I've found out that he is coming back to-day. I'll contrive to strike up an acquaintance with him somehow or other.

Leave that to me. He has a villa near here, and with a bit of luck I 'll get inside it.'

'And then?'

'Await developments. Wakeford seems to be an interesting specimen, rich and generous—"*ha molti quattrini e le mani bucate*" ("plenty of money and the hands perforated"), so one of his boatmen told me. I shall be a simple-minded English tourist—a Mr John Robinson—chasing the sun. He may offer me hospitality, especially if he is out for information regarding the man who has just died. In case he knows that we arrived here together, my story will be that I struck up a casual acquaintance with you in the train. All I know about you is your name, and that you came to see a friend who was ill, and who has died since you arrived. I shall not even attend the funeral, so that Wakeford may not suspect that we have anything in common. Of course, he may be a wary bird, and show no inclination for my society. We shall see.'

The safe keeping of the paper was then discussed, and we decided to post an exact copy to Tony's address in London, and another to the colonel at The Bield. The personal documents I put into my suit-case, but the precious paper demanded more than ordinary precautions. We determined to take no risks. Having added another sheet to the paper's wrapping, I took off my right boot, put the document in the middle of the sole, and then pulled the boot on again, resolved that there the paper should remain except at night, when it would be under my pillow. Short of my murder or abduction, the safe conduct of the paper was assured, and in any event the posted copies would be duly delivered.

In the forenoon I had to make arrangements for Hugh Forbes's funeral on the morrow. Tony did not accompany me. From that moment we played the parts of casual hotel acquaintances, our arrangement being that, if he had anything to tell me, he would find ways and means of doing so, either by slipping me a note or seeing me in my room late in the evening. Looking round the dozing village, I was inclined, after I left Tony, to scout the idea of being watched; but I took his counsel and kept a sharp look-out for strangers as I made my way back to the house with the precious paper in my boot.

There I learned from Marietta that no one had called except the doctor and the *parocco*—the village priest; and after I had completed the arrangements and given Marietta generous payment for her kindness to the dead man, I came back to the inn.

Tony had disappeared early in the day to begin his investigations. 'Don't worry about me, Neil,' were his parting words. 'I 'm used to playing a "lone hand." I 'll report in due course, and if I 'm delayed I 'll let you know my movements.' The hours passed, and as there was no sign of him, I felt a little uneasy on his account; but later in the day a note came from him. It ran: 'I 'm not wasting time. Meet me at Bertolini's, Naples, to-morrow evening; and if I don't appear, go straight to London, where I shall join you.'

Much relieved (for I had a thorough belief in Tony's courage and acumen), I went to bed early, after having locked my room door, put the paper under my pillow, and laid my revolver within easy reach. Notwithstanding these precautions, I spent a restless, watchful night—quite unnecessarily, for, beyond the audible slumber of the *padrone*, not a sound came from the house. But I rose vaguely uneasy, determined to meet Tony in Naples with the least possible delay.

An English clergyman from Castellamare, the doctor, a couple of brown boatmen who used to row the invalid out in the bay, old Marietta, and myself were present when Hugh Forbes was laid to rest in the little, sunlit graveyard. Half-an-hour later I was ready to start for Naples, and after many tearful adieux and invocations to the Saints on my behalf from Marietta, I said good-bye to the little paradise of colour and sunshine.

(*Continued on page 198.*)

ST DUNSTAN'S AND THE BLINDED SOLDIER.

By An Officer-Pupil.

I.

AMONG all the institutions in existence for the re-education of men broken in the war, there is none with a more cheerful 'atmosphere, none with more self-reliant and confident inhabitants, than St Dunstan's, the hostel for blinded soldiers and sailors, in Regent's Park, London—'next door to the Zoo,' as some of the facetious pupils will tell the visitor. There is no suggestion of darkness or doom about the place; anything less like the valley of the shadow it would be difficult to imagine.

St Dunstan's in its present form is the creation of Sir Arthur Pearson and the National Institute for the Blind, of which he is the president and the inspiration. By practical experience Sir Arthur knows all about blindness. In the prime of life, and at the height of a career of great business achievement, he lost his sight. What would have been a tragedy for lesser men he has converted into a personal triumph over a misfortune of a most distressing kind, and into a means of the most valuable service in the cause of the blind community generally. When he himself became a citizen of the kingdom of the blind,

he found that what was wanted there was a revolution, and he proceeded to head one, and to carry it through. The principle he worked on was that what blind people needed was not pity and charity; it was just what other people wanted—namely, education and training adapted to their peculiar circumstances, and, after that, opportunity to put the results of their training on the market at a price which would yield the wherewithal to live in decency and comfort.

When war broke out the National Institute for the Blind, which had comparatively lately become the leading organisation of its kind in this country, assumed responsibility for the care and the re-education of all members of the forces whose eyesight should be damaged or destroyed in action. The house known as St Dunstan's was handed over to Sir Arthur by its owner, Mr Otto Kahn, the well-known American financier, for the duration of the war. The work grew rapidly. Workrooms and classrooms have been erected in the spacious grounds of the house, which is now the headquarters of a large and populous establishment, with annexes in several parts of London, and convalescent establishments in Brighton and elsewhere. For the accommodation of officers there are two large houses in Portland Place, one of these having been lent by its owner, Sir John Stirling Maxwell. The officers reside at Portland Place, and pursue their studies at St Dunstan's, side-by-side with their comrades of the ranks.

II.

The plan of re-education follows three main lines. The pupil devotes himself to (1) learning to be blind; (2) elementary study of what the schoolmen call 'the humanities;' and (3) vocational training—that is, the acquisition of a craft or a profession.

To begin with, it has to be remembered that the man newly blinded is very much like a little child; the common, trivial things of life he has to learn all over again; he has even to learn to walk. This part of his new education begins, indeed, before he is on his feet. It begins with a visit in hospital from Sir Arthur, who tells the patient about St Dunstan's, about what other fellows are doing there, and about the infinite possibilities of life for a blind man. Sir Arthur speaks as one having authority. He is able not merely to enunciate precepts, but to show an example. By the end of the first interview the blind man finds life changed and wearing a new aspect. For the first time he is able to contemplate the future not only with fortitude, but with hope also. He finds, moreover, that, in some curious and perfectly definite way, any worries regarding finance and the welfare of his dependants, if he has any, have disappeared. Sir Arthur realises that a man newly blinded must be relieved of sordid cares if he is to make good under the new conditions.

It is difficult to describe the state of mind of the man newly blinded. This, of course, varies according to the nature of the individual. One man is crushed; another, more stoical, takes his punishment with grim resignation; a third, of an imaginative and sensitive temperament, is haunted and tortured by visions of an awful future. There is one feeling which is shared in greater or lesser intensity by all. This is the feeling of loneliness. Cut off from the sight of familiar things, the patient feels himself alone and in a new and terrible world. Like a stricken animal, he has a strong desire to creep away into hiding and to face his fate alone, with no spectators. This feeling of loneliness is not lessened, but is accentuated, by his arrival, say, in London, where sounds and smells arouse old memories and bring home to him in the most poignant manner the extent of his loss. Yet solitude is denied to him by the nature of his case. He is dependent on others for the trivialities of everyday life. The constant necessity which he is under to put his needs into words irritates and depresses him. Longing to be left to wrestle alone with the evil that has befallen him, his physical dependence galls him. The fact that those who attend him in hospital are zealous to do his bidding and to anticipate his needs does not help, in the initial stages, to reduce the sense of impotence and dependence.

It is while he is in this supersensitive frame of mind that there occurs the episode of the watch. In the course of his first interview with Sir Arthur the patient is presented with a watch, on whose dial the hours are so marked that the time can be told by touch. When his visitor has departed, leaving him interested but sceptical regarding the possibilities which life still holds for one like him, the blind man remembers the watch. He pulls it from under his pillow. Yes, it is true, he can read the time. Thank Heaven, there is one thing he can do for himself, one thing less to worry other people about! He feels somewhat like a child who, amid strange surroundings, discovers a familiar and a valued toy. And the newly blinded man resembles a child in a strange world. The episode of the watch is important. It marks a definite stage in the progress of the blind man's education. It marks also the dawn of independence, the first promise of relief from the eternal rôle of the suppliant. There are many other stages in the process of learning to be blind. These are reached and passed rapidly when, once clear of hospital, the man takes up life at St Dunstan's. The atmosphere of that place—an atmosphere of activity, bustle, and cheerful noise—soon dispels, or at all events mitigates, the sense of loneliness. The new-comer, finding that every hour of the day has its lesson or its task or its recreation, finding that other fellows in like case to his own are cheery, and busy, and full of hopes and plans for the future, regains his sense of proportion, finds

out the course of study which best suits him, and settles down to learn life all over again, not now in the spirit of desperate resignation which at one time seemed the best that he could hope to attain to, but in the certain knowledge that the job is worth doing, and that he is fit for it.

III.

The curriculum at St Dunstan's includes two subjects that are compulsory. These are the reading and writing of Braille and the use of the ordinary typewriter. A thorough knowledge of these two subjects is essential for the man who desires to adopt a profession. It is a valuable possession for the craftsman who intends to conduct a business of his own, and it has obvious advantages as affording a means of recreation and culture, and as enabling the blind man to communicate with his friends by correspondence. Braille and typewriting are the first steps in the liberal education provided at St Dunstan's, or in what we have called the study of the humanities. After all, to teach a man to read is a great matter. Has not Carlyle described this as the highest function of a university? Braille is a system of embossed writing which can be read by touch. The characters of the alphabet, numerals, punctuation-marks, &c. are represented by raised dots, one to six in number, arranged in certain relative positions. There is no intellectual difficulty in the way of acquiring a theoretical knowledge of this system; indeed, since many of its rules are arbitrary, a good memory is perhaps a more valuable aid to the student than highly developed reasoning faculties. In order, however, to become expert and rapid readers, most men require patient and prolonged practice. It is a case of training the touch so that the fingers readily recognise the embossed characters; the reader has, so to speak, to put his eyes into the tips of his fingers. Personal experience would suggest that the horny-handed son of toil, or, at all events, the artisan who has been accustomed to the skilful use of tools, has, in the matter of Braille, a definite advantage over the person of more clerkly training, whose fingers have been used for tasks no more subtle than the holding of a pen or the fastening of a collar-stud. Some of the ladies who teach Braille have occasional experiences of the most gratifying kind. For example, one may have allotted to her a lad who, judged by normal standards, must be considered illiterate. His dialect alone seems to impose a hopeless barrier between teacher and pupil. Yet in the course of a month or two this unpromising subject may not only master the system, but may also develop a literary interest in what he reads. The gratifying aspect of such a case is that there has been introduced to the delights and the consolations of literature one who, in ordinary circumstances, might have lived and died in ignorance of anything more inspiring than police-court and sporting reports. The delights and the consolations of literature are more valuable to the blind than to any other class of people, and to provide the blind man with the means of access to these is to do him an inestimable service. Here it should be mentioned that the National Institute for the Blind and the National Library for the Blind possess large numbers of books printed in Braille, covering a wide range of literary interest. The contents of these libraries are at the service of all graduates of St Dunstan's.

The more strictly utilitarian accomplishment of typewriting is taught in the most thorough manner. The method does not vary much from that employed in the recognised schools where typewriting is taught, but in the case of the blind man personal tuition is essential, and great patience is demanded on the part of both teacher and pupil. A very substantial inducement is held out to the student, for, when he has passed a test in speed and accuracy of typing, he is presented with a first-class Remington typewriter. A certain number of St Dunstan's men acquire a knowledge of Braille shorthand, and supplementing this with very high technical skill as typists, qualify as correspondence clerks and secretaries. In these cases what we have called the liberal education impinges upon the vocational training which we now propose to describe.

Before we pass on to that subject, however, reference should be made to some of the other activities of St Dunstan's which are in the nature of what are called, in the language of the young ladies' seminary, 'the polite accomplishments.'

Every man who has a talent for music is encouraged to develop it under competent tuition. For this reason one may hear in every respite from work sounds, pleasant and unpleasant, of vocalists, pianists, violinists, and the blowers of brazen instruments practising with ardour. The care of the body is also attended to. The most popular form of recreation is perhaps rowing, for the pursuit of which admirable facilities exist close at hand in Regent's Park. The rag-time band, the amateur opera company, the dances which are held once or twice a week, the racing crews, the tug-o'-war teams, and so on are all recognised as valuable institutions in the life of a society whose members are striving towards the goal of normality.

IV.

Among the occupations for which complete training is provided at St Dunstan's are massage, poultry-farming, carpentry, telephone-operating, boot-repairing, basket-making, rug-making, and netting.

Students of massage go through the regular course and pass the recognised examinations. The course is a long and stiff one, and it is matter for satisfaction that up to date the failures before the examining body have been nil. The blind masseur is, as has been proved, quite

as efficient as his sighted colleague practising this art. St Dunstan's has provided masseurs to several of the military hospitals, and their services have given complete satisfaction. There are also a number of St Dunstan's masseurs in private practice in London and elsewhere. These men make good incomes, and massage ranks high among the occupations suitable for the blind.

Poultry-keeping is taught at St Dunstan's by experts and on the most approved lines. As an occupation poultry-farming appeals strongly to officers and men who have been accustomed to life in the open air. In addition to acquiring a sound theoretical knowledge of the care and management of poultry, the St Dunstan's farmer learns to distinguish breeds and birds by touch, to weigh fowls in his hands, to handle eggs, and to make pens and runs. He is taught also how, by taste, smell, and touch, to ascertain the composition and the value of foods. When he has completed his course and has satisfied the examiners, the St Dunstan's poultry-farmer is set up in business with a suitable place and an adequate stock of birds. It may have been noticed that one of the passengers on board the *Galway Castle*, when she was torpedoed, was a South African corporal, who was homeward bound from St Dunstan's with all his stock for the establishment of a poultry-farm. Luckily both the corporal and his mother, who was accompanying him, were saved, but all his pretty chickens were destroyed at one fell swoop.

Telephone-operating may seem a strange vocation for a blind man. As a matter of fact, it is quite easily learned by men of intelligence, and many great business houses employ St Dunstan's men in charge of their private exchanges. Boot-repairing, carpentry, rug-making, and basket-weaving are all industries at which the blind man may earn a modest living. The cobbler's shop is probably the most fascinating sight at St Dunstan's. All visitors are amazed at the deftness and the speed which are shown by these blind workmen, and by the certainty with which they go about their tasks. Netting does not rank as an industry, but it is taught and encouraged as a pleasant occupation for idle hours. Hammocks, fruit-nets, and various net-bags are manufactured at St Dunstan's, and these meet with a ready sale. Some of the occupations mentioned are supplementary one to another. The poultry-farmer has his carpenter's shop, from which he can turn out articles of commercial value; the boot-repairer may also do a good deal as a basket-weaver or a rug-maker; and the netting of hammocks, &c., provides a pleasant and profitable occupation for the employment of odd half-hours which would otherwise be wasted in idle moping.

In connection with all the subjects taught there is a system of tests or examinations. The principle is that every workman turned out by the institution should be competent. Scamped or second-rate work is not tolerated, for it is recognised that only through complete efficiency can the blind worker hope to hold his own against sighted competition. It would be easy to exploit the blinded hero as a commercial speculation, but any tendency towards that sort of thing is sternly discountenanced. One result is that when the authorities want a place for a telephone-operator, or a shorthand-typist, or a masseur, they go into the market with a clear knowledge that they can deliver the goods they promise.

An interesting feature of the instruction given at St Dunstan's consists in the employment, as teachers, of men who have themselves been blinded in the war. Pupils who show special aptitude for such work are given employment as instructors of their comrades. The blind teacher has proved a success from the technical point of view; his moral value as a stimulus to his pupils is obvious.

v.

Very important work is performed by the After Care Department. This department keeps in touch with St Dunstan's men after they have gone out into the world. It supplies at cost price to those who require them the raw materials of their industry, and it markets for them the finished article. A vigilant eye is kept on the work as it comes in for disposal, and should a fault appear, it is at once pointed out to the workman. Should the fault persist, an expert is sent to visit the man, to explain wherein his work is defective, and to show him how to regain perfect execution. Experience proves that a fault once established in the work of a blind man is very difficult to eradicate; hence the need of vigilant supervision and immediate correction where necessary. In many other directions the After Care Department exercises a beneficent influence. Its work will go on long after the war is over. It is designed to persist during the life-time of him who shall prove to be the last surviving pupil of St Dunstan's.

A considerable number of those who pass through St Dunstan's are able, with the aid of what they learn there, to resume the business or professional careers which they abandoned at the call of the country. Evidence accumulates of the success achieved by these pupils, both officers and men. By former students St Dunstan's is already represented in the law and the Church, and through its masseurs it is closely associated with medicine. It is probable that in the future its representation in the learned professions will grow. The range of its influence extends throughout all parts of the Empire, and in Canada particularly there is a very active After Care organisation under the direction of a former pupil, resident in the Dominion. A number of soldiers of several Allied States are or have been among its pupils, so that the

reputation of St Dunstan's may be said to be world-wide.

Life at St Dunstan's has its humorous side. A famous story of the early days is concerned with an adventure which befell a young officer student while dining down town at a well-known hotel. In the true spirit of St Dunstan's, he disdained assistance in making his way downstairs, but he had miscalculated the number of steps, with the result that he took the last flight at a bound, and arrived full tilt in the arms of a dignified hall-porter. 'Very sorry, porter,' he explained apologetically. 'You see, I'm blind.' 'I see, sir,' murmured the dignified one in a confidential tone; 'but we can't have you here in that condition. I'll call a taxi and send you home.' An incident of recent occurrence is remarkable in another way. An officer homeward bound from St Dunstan's to Portland Place was making his way across Regent's Park through a dense fog, which had paralysed traffic, but did not, naturally, affect him. He heard approaching the halting steps of some wayfarer who obviously was in difficulties. The blinded officer hailed the unknown with a cheery 'Who goes there?' and dismally through the fog came the response, 'British officer on leave from France, fed up and lost in London.' There followed a brief colloquy, and then the St Dunstan's officer took the sighted comrade by the arm, guided him through the park and across the Marylebone Road, and there gave him his route to the haven where he fain would be. The incident suggests an addendum to the Scriptural speculation as to the consequences that ensue when the blind act as leaders of the blind.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XI.—*continued.*

GINGER and Tosher, with an escort, of which I formed part, were before the colonel. The Old Man, I could see, was pained and sad. This was the first real 'dust-up' in the school. Blase-Bones gave his evidence. Then the colonel sorrowfully raised his head and quietly asked, 'Well, men, what have you got to say?'

'I regret, sir, having committed a breach of discipline, but the officers in my own regiment never addressed me in such a manner. Lieutenant Blase-Bones apparently has a contempt for the New Army. I belong to the First Hundred Thousand, and I decline to be treated in this way. The commission is nothing to me, sir, and I desire to be returned to my battalion. This officer has not heard a shot fired in the war.' Thus Ginger.

Blase-Bones turned ghastly white.

'Is that all you have to say?' inquired the 'com.'

'Yes, sir.'

'And your defence?' he asked Tosher.

'I'm just real sorry, colonel, to waste your time. But since this foolish boy blew into our shack, there's been nothing but cursing and muttered revolution. Why, sir, we were the happiest bunch of kids in the British Army when Old Bobby Blessem was boss of the show.'

'You mean Lieutenant Blessem, I presume,' said the colonel, correcting him.

'I guess you're right, colonel; but you know in the Western world we talk free and mean no offence.'

'I quite understand,' answered the C.O. tactfully. 'Go on.' There was a twinkle in the corner of the C.O.'s eye.

'I'm a Canadian, sir. I'm here to give the Old Land a lift against these blasted Huns. But I ain't here to be knocked around by flannel-headed hobos.'

'Just a minute, Johnson,' said the colonel. 'I am asking for your defence, and as a future officer you must realise that expressions of opinion have no bearing on the case. You are charged with dirty equipment and insolence. Please keep to the first.'

'Sure, sir! My belt was clean as it was for the Prince o' Wales's inspection in France. What's good enough for the son of a king is good enough for any two-pipped child in this institooshun. As for insolence, I reckon we Canadians ain't out to grovel at the feet of snobs, though we don't mind givin' a "sir" now and again to a white man like yourself.'

'But don't you see that a young officer, unacquainted with the Canadian temperament, might misinterpret your attitude?'

'Maybe, colonel; but it's up to you to educate this child. I'm no chicken in the fighting business. Out West I make ten thousand dollars a year. Seems to me that your old machinery's all wrong. And I guess you can't do me in so long as these things are hanging around my figure,' concluded Tosher, throwing the Military Medal and the D.C.M. on the table.

Blase-Bones was trembling. I felt sorry for the ass.

There was a strange silence in the room for a couple of minutes. The colonel was outwardly studying conduct-sheets, but in reality he was weighing up in his own mind how he could maintain justice without letting an officer down in front of the rank and file. It was an awkward position. Much depended on his decision. He knew there was a whole Canadian Government behind Tosher, and a House of Commons behind Ginger. He also knew that if he muddled the issue, the War Office might promptly lift him out of his job. The com-

mandant, as one of the old school, was nobly striving to bring the Manual of Military Law into line with the blunt (but honest) democracy of the New Army and the Canadian Force.

At last he looked up at Ginger and inquired, 'Will you take my punishment?'

'Yes, sir.' Ginger had complete confidence in the C.O.

'And you?' he asked Tosher.

'I guess I will, colonel, if it doesn't mean time in a stone-breakin' institooshun.'

'Very well! In my opinion there's been a great lack of tact on the part of your officer, just as there has been a great lack of sense on your part. It is not for you to reply on parade. If you have a grievance, come to me. I'm paid to keep everybody in order. I'm going to punish you for that. If there is no discipline, there is no army. You, as future officers, must realise that. Both of you will be confined to camp for a week. Understand?'

'Yes, sir.'

'But,' said the colonel, 'I request your platoon commander to apologise to you here in my presence. You are good soldiers. You have both been honoured by the King. Your officer has no right to cast aspersions on the New Army, and to conduct his work in a manner calculated to stir hostility. I won't have it.—Please apologise, Mr Blase-Bones.'

'I'm—exceedingly sorry. I'm afraid I've made a—mistake. I hope you will pardon me,' muttered the crestfallen subaltern.

'Fall out, men,' said the C.O. kindly.

We were marched out, Ginger and Tosher quite well pleased with the colonel's verdict.

The C.O. knew his job.

That night Colonel Eat-All went to his quarters weary and worn. The affair had made him most unhappy. He was rather afraid of what the Canadian *might* do. However, on opening the door of his hut, he was surprised to see a beautiful bowl of red roses standing on the table. He called his servant and asked where they came from.

'Don't know, sir. When I came back after tea they were there.'

'That's all, thank you.'

The colonel went forward and picked up the bunch of flowers. There was a tiny label attached. On the label he read: 'To our Dear Old Colonel—from two Defaulters.'

Something fell on the old man's hand. It was a tear.

. . . . . .

'Battalion Orders [A week later].

'Lieutenant Blase-Bones, having left to re-join his unit, is struck off the strength of the Battalion.'

(*Verb. sap.*)

(*Continued on page 207.*)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

STEEL SOLDIERS FOR FRONT-LINE TRENCHES.

IF the war had lasted much longer, there is little doubt that we should have witnessed attempts to employ what may be termed automatic soldiers for the defence of front-line trenches. Many inventors were working with this object in view when the armistice put an end (it is to be hoped permanently) to any need for such devices. Among these inventors was a Danish engineer, who has patented an automatic fighting-machine for the defence of trenches, which was illustrated lately in *Popular Science Siftings*. The device consists of an outer stationary cylinder, telescoping into which is another with a domed top, both being of shell-proof steel. When out of action the dome of the inner cylinder is level with the ground. If a position has to be defended it is made to rise eighteen inches, thus appearing above the top of the trench, and machine-guns in the dome pointing at different angles begin firing in the direction from which the enemy is approaching. The domes are capable of rotating through a short arc, so as to cover the entire field in front of them. These automatic soldiers are spaced about three yards apart, and they can be worked by wireless from several miles behind the firing-line. Trials with the device are said to have given very promising results.

THE 'BABY' TANK.

It has long been known that the tank played an important rôle in the victory of the Allies on the Western front, this being especially true of the 'whippet' tanks of the British and the Renault tanks of the French. The latter were also largely used by the American Army, and an illustrated description of a Renault or 'baby' tank recently appeared in an American journal. In general the construction is similar to that of the earlier and larger tanks, the body, which is about thirteen feet in length, with a width of three feet, having the usual caterpillar belt on each side. At the forward end is a seat for the pilot, whose legs project into the low front, where there are pedals for working the brake, the clutch, and the accelerator, the steering and gear levers being worked by the hands. Just in front of the pilot's face are slits one-eighth of an inch wide for him to see through, these being in a hinged door that can be raised if desired. Behind and above him is a revolving turret, under which the gunner sits on a broad leather

strap, and works a machine or quick-firing gun. Some of these tanks, it may be noted, have been fitted with a short-barrel seventy-five-millimetre (three-inch) gun. Observation slits are also provided for the gunner, who can swing himself round with the turret and fire in any direction. A door over the pilot's legs forms the entrance to the tank, and there is an emergency exit in the back of the turret. The hindpart of the body accommodates the motor, the radiator, the tanks, and the reduction gear. Steering is effected by disconnecting one caterpillar belt or allowing the clutch to slip, when the other belt slews the tank round. Speeds up to seven miles an hour are obtainable. These tanks will negotiate shell-holes, and pass through water as much as three feet deep; while they are said to be capable of climbing inclines of something like fifty degrees with the horizontal. Their weight in fighting-trim is about seven tons.

BUTTERFLY'S STRANGE PROTECTIVE DEVICES.

A wonderful collection of Australian insects has been formed by Mr F. P. Dodd, of Kuranda, Queensland, who has also made a careful study of the habits of many of the eight thousand specimens he and his sons have got together. *Everylady's Journal* describes this collection in a series of articles, one of which contains the following interesting account of a rare butterfly, which, throughout the various stages of its existence, is endowed by nature with strange protective devices. '*Liphyra brassolis* [Mr Dodd had the honour of revealing this particular butterfly to the entomological world] begins by being an uncommon caterpillar. Instead of a soft, flexible skin, it has a hard, rigid, shell-like covering; and instead of living on green leaves, it feeds on the larvæ of the deeply interesting green tree-ant. Into the nest *Brassolis* walks uninvited, and, clamping itself to the floor to protect its soft underparts, it is safe, for the ants' thin, sharp mandibles cannot penetrate the tough skin of the intruder. . . . When its time comes to change into a chrysalis it effects another very unusual performance by detaching itself from its outer skin and snuggling up inside it, so that if you pick the skin up and shake it, it rattles like an acorn with a loose kernel. But perhaps the most extraordinary feature of *Brassolis* is the manner in which it is protected in its next stage. When the perfect insect breaks out of its prison, it is a tender, helpless object. Here is the chance for revenge, and the ants hasten to take it out of the stranger. But what is this? A butterfly that is white instead of a rich brown and black! The truth is that Nature has powdered not only the wings but the legs, face, horns, and vulnerable parts of the body with an outer covering of white scales that are loose, but somewhat adhesive, and stick to the ants' horns (antennæ), legs, and jaws, so they are soon in a sorry and ridiculous plight. They hobble ludicrously about, opening and closing their now feathery-looking jaws; and by the time they have cleared their antennæ, jaws, and legs of this clogging material, their apparently helpless victim has negotiated the passage, found the exit, and attached itself to some projecting twig till its wings have lengthened and hardened enough to carry it. The protecting scales, which have so marvellously served their purpose, and are no longer required, fly off at the first few strokes of the wings, and the king of all butterflies—as regards life-history—flits away in its garb of rich brown and velvety black.'

FISH STOPPED BY ELECTRIC CURRENTS.

Where rivers from which fish are taken in large quantities are used for irrigation, as on the Pacific coast of North America, a huge loss takes place through millions of the young fish passing into the irrigation channels and thence on to the land. It is true that the difficulty can be got over by the use of gratings or screens, but this plan only cures one ill to introduce another—the need for frequent removal from the screens of weeds, leaves, and other débris. Recently, however, an electric arrangement has been invented by Mr H. T. Burkey, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, whereby the fish are stopped without putting any obstructions in the irrigation intakes. It was found that by placing a metal plate or rod at each side of a channel and passing an alternating electric current between them, the intervening water became highly charged with electricity. One pair of such electrodes alone is not entirely effective; but several pairs placed at intervals, with electric currents progressively increasing in strength, completely stop the fish from getting past. Presumably the fish, finding the shocks grow stronger and stronger as they proceed, are at length induced to turn back. The amount of current used is very small, and the cost of working the apparatus almost negligible when compared with the saving in fish.

AGRICULTURAL RAILWAYS.

Among the many problems recently investigated by the Ministry of Reconstruction is that of transport in rural districts, the need for adequate means of carrying agricultural produce and passengers between villages and the nearest railway stations having been emphasised in the replies from county councils and other public bodies to a circular letter sent out by Dr Addison asking their views on reconstruction matters. After careful study of the requirements and the available transport systems, the department concerned has recommended a network of light rail tracks with a two-foot 'gauge,' and these, as they are designed to foster agriculture, have been given the appropriate name of 'Agrails.' To some people, rails only two feet apart may seem to form too small a track to serve any

useful purpose. Such is by no means the case, however, many small railways used in factories and for carrying out important works being of two feet gauge, while hundreds of miles of this width have been employed for military purposes at the various 'fronts.' Passengers have been carried for years past on railways having much narrower gauges. The agrails are to be laid by the sides of roads, where these are wide enough, or over ditches, so as to reduce to a minimum the amount of land required. Single lines are proposed, with frequent passing loops, and a speed of twenty miles an hour is suggested. Where electricity is available, it will probably be used for traction on the principle of the electric tram. In other parts steam or oil motors will be employed, and on branches to the various farms the trucks may be hauled by horses. Some form of container that can be loaded at the farm and easily transferred to ordinary railway trucks is almost certain to form part of the scheme, while the introduction of vehicles adaptable to either agrails or roads is not improbable. Presumably the system will be self-supporting, while at the same time lowering the cost of transport and expediting deliveries. Military material is being utilised at Biggleswade by the Board of Agriculture for an experimental scheme on the above lines.

BEECH-NUTS AS A SOURCE OF FOOD.

A great shortage of edible oils and fats is still prevalent in Holland, and to help in easing the position, school children have been employed in gathering beech-nuts, from which considerable quantities of oil can be obtained. In addition, the cake coming from the filter-presses makes excellent cattle food. According to the *Zutphen Gazette*, the recently appointed Dutch Minister of Agriculture estimated the quantity of nuts available at over two thousand two hundred tons, from which nearly four hundred tons of oil could be extracted. The children were to be paid at the rate of about twopence farthing for every pound of nuts; while the owners of the land were to receive 5 per cent. of this amount as compensation, and to have a prior claim to purchase at a fixed rate the cattle cake made from nuts gathered on their property.

THE GRAND CANAL OF CHINA TO BE PUT IN ORDER.

Most of us have learnt something about the Grand Canal of China in our youth, and know that it is by far the longest in the world, extending as it does from Hangchow to Tientsin (the port of Peking), a distance of nearly one thousand miles, and crossing on the way two of the world's largest rivers—the Hoang-ho and the Yangtse-kiang. For about one hundred and thirty miles north of the latter river the canal is still navigable, but thence to Tientsin it has become choked with mud, and is generally derelict. A project is now on foot to reconstruct the northern sections, and this work is to be done gradually as funds are available. For the time being only about one and a quarter million pounds can be devoted to the work, which in the first instance is to consist of putting in order a section one hundred miles in length. The carrying out of the project has been entrusted to American engineers.

WHITE-PAINTED TANKS ECONOMISE PETROL.

Owing to the high price of petrol, the loss from evaporation has become an appreciable item in the cost of this commodity when large quantities are stored in tanks. The British Red Cross Society, being extensive users of petrol for their ambulance-cars, and desirous of studying economy, have made numerous experiments with a view to minimising this wastage. As is well known, the loss by evaporation varies with the temperature, and one way of reducing it is to sink the tanks into the ground. In this position, however, it was found that rapid corrosion soon led to the formation of small holes, through which leakage took place. Experiments were then carried out to ascertain what was the best method of securing a minimum temperature for surface tanks. With this end in view a number of steel tanks, one covered with tin-plate, and each of the others painted a different colour, were placed at a distance of three feet from a powerful electric arc light. The rise in temperature after fifteen minutes was carefully noted. The tin-plate gave the best result, the difference in temperature being only 18·4 degrees; next came aluminium paint with 19·7, and then white paint with 21·9. At the other end of the scale dark green gave a difference of 38·9 degrees, and black 52·6 degrees. The general conclusion arrived at was that white paint would prove the most satisfactory, having due regard to comparative cost and efficiency.

FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON.

The speed of a shell when leaving the muzzle of a gun of ordinary dimensions ranges up to three thousand feet, or considerably over half a mile, per second. What was the muzzle velocity of the shells fired into Paris in the spring of last year is not accurately known, but it is believed to have been about a mile per second. According to an article in the *Journal of the Royal Artillery* by Major J. Maitland-Addison, a shell with a muzzle velocity of five miles a second, if fired at the correct angle, would become an attendant satellite of the earth, going round it in a little under one and a half hours. Should the speed be increased to seven miles a second, the shell would go off into space altogether, and presumably could be sent to the moon, *à la* Jules Verne, if it were correctly aimed.

A BOON TO THE IMPORTER AND EXPORTER.

Again and again have British consuls urged upon those engaged in foreign trade the importance of preparing catalogues in which prices and quantities are quoted in the currency, weights, and measures of the countries with which it is sought to do business. The labour involved and the time expended in the preparation of such catalogues have hitherto been great deterrents to many traders; but the publication of the first volume of Mr James Robertson's *Dictionary for International Commercial Quotations* makes every difficulty vanish, and reduces the time and labour involved to an almost negligible quantity so far as the countries of Europe are concerned. With this set of tables before him, even the office-boy can at once ascertain the equivalent of, say, three shillings and eightpence half-penny or thirty-five shillings and elevenpence in the coinage of any European country at any likely rate of exchange; with this volume on her desk, the junior typist can almost instantaneously translate the British price per yard into francs per metre, the price per hundredweight into roubles per pood, the price per gallon into kroner per litre, and so on. The translation of foreign rates into their British equivalents can be effected just as readily, so that the importer is benefited quite as much as the exporter. In both cases ample provision is made for fluctuations in exchange, and an absolutely reliable method of checking the results obtained is given. We understand that two similar volumes dealing with America and the East respectively are in active preparation; also waistcoat-pocket abridgments adapted for use in individual countries. Provided with these tables, which are a miracle of ingenuity and of patient, persevering industry, the British trader dealing with foreign countries can give a quotation or compile his price-lists in the money, weights, and measures of the foreigner with ease, accuracy, and quickness; the commercial traveller abroad can with equal facility quote on the spot to any prospective purchaser of his wares; while both can readily interpret quotations expressed in a currency not their own.

AFFORESTATION.

That a well-planned and properly co-ordinated scheme of afforestation on a large scale should at once be undertaken in this country is a commonplace with those who realise the amount the nation is losing every year through its neglect of forestry. The essential features of such a scheme are well set forth in a little book on *Afforestation* written by Mr John Boyd, Crown Forester. He indicates the necessary preliminary measures to be taken; shows how agriculture and forestry may work into each other's hands, as it were, to their mutual benefit; and discusses with adequate knowledge the vexed question of game. He also offers valuable practical suggestions on 'various problems which are bound to arise in connection with the inauguration of any scheme of afforestation—questions as to where planting operations should commence, of altitude, shelter, and aspect, and soil quality;' he shows how the natural herbage of an area may be used as a reliable index of its tree-bearing capabilities, and rounds off a most useful little manual with a series of notes on the varieties of trees best adapted for different localities, altitudes, and meteorological conditions.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

JAGTAP'S FINESSE.

By Arbory Glyndon.

'IF it be the will of the gods that I die before you, will you marry again?' This was the question which Doraiungum Pillai put to his wife one evening when lowering clouds and bellowing cattle proclaimed a stormy night to follow. And Sivagami, with true feminine instinct, parried the question with another: 'If I die before you, will *you* marry again?' The obligation of courtesy rested with Doraiungum, who was sincerely attached to his wife, and he declared that if it should be his cruel fate to become a widower, he would remain one to the end of his days. Sivagami made a similar promise, because she loved her husband faithfully, and so the compact was sealed with mutual understanding and honest intention.

Now, the couple were in the spring of life and comely in appearance. They were satisfied in the knowledge that they had been educated in English schools and belonged to the progressive section of their community. Hence Doraiungum's solicitude, for, according to Hindu custom and usage, there are three inflexible rules which determine the conjugal outlook of an orthodox Hindu woman: she cannot choose her husband; she may not remain unmarried; and once married, she may not marry again. But Sivagami had disregarded the law of widowhood three years ago. She had been left a widow in her eighth year, and Doraiungum became her second husband when she was seventeen and he twenty-two years old. He was spoken of as a fortunate man. His lands in Chitorpatti were wide, and yielded a desirable income; his wife was handsome and intelligent. Certain it is that they were contented, for the wall of love was built high around

them. It was not with Doraiungum as with so many other men of his caste. As a rule, the Hindu marries, not for companionship in his destiny of pleasure and pain, but to acquire a slave who will bear him children and be subservient to his rule.

The prosperous and happy pair lacked just one thing—the gods had not pronounced their benison on the comfortable home. But why should they despair? Without doubt Doraiungum would have a son to take charge of his obsequies, and make easy his passage to the other world when the time came for him to perform the journey. He was regular in his pilgrimages to the shrine of the powerful god Subramaniya at Palni. On occasion he would dress in orange-red clothes, put ashes on his face, shoulder his *kavadi* or offering of milk or fish, and set out, preceded by a man with a bell and another with a tom-tom, to seek the blessing of the deity. For Subramaniya is an autocrat, and he who would approach him must do so in the guise of a beggar, in all humbleness and humiliation, to make his votive offering. Sivagami, too, had made her vows to the great Venkata Rama at the temple of Tirupati; and who is there greater to supplicate for progeny? Surely their united prayers and offerings would obtain for them the gift of children.

But there is no happiness for man! We are reminded constantly of the capricious lease on which we hold life. Time sweeps us along in its swift-flowing stream, and sooner or later we meet the barque which is to carry us out to the Great Beyond where, perhaps, our joys and aspirations are of a higher and purer order. We can only conjecture; the gods alone know—and they will not tell. Happiness may endure for a season, but sorrow comes surely as night follows day. It is all *Karma*, the law of cause and effect, the rule and order of our fate. Suddenly Doraiungum sickened of a fever, and a few days later died, in the month of Karttika, about the time of the *Dipavali*, or Feast of Lamps.

Sivagami was left with a goodly share of this world's possessions and a face and form of much beauty to bemoan the early departure of her dear husband. Her grief was real and deep. She forbore from the loud expressions of frenzied sorrow enjoined by custom and tradition, and her conduct gave rise to much scandalous chit-chat amongst the neighbours, who complained that she was so grossly stupid that 'she had not a word to say, but only wept.' His people came to burn the body, but Sivagami would not permit them to do so. She desired, she said, to keep watch over the corpse until nothing but the bones remained, and then to have them with her while she lived, for she was still his faithful wife. In this matter she was obdurate. She had a pit made at a reasonable distance from the house, into which the body was removed with tender care, and she took up her abode near by in a raised structure, such as the watchers of fields sit in at night to scare away birds and beasts. When the disintegrating forces of nature had done their work, and only the bones were left, Sivagami gathered them together and brought them to her house, and went through the ceremony of purification after contamination by the dead. All men wished to marry her, but none would she have. She still wore her little gold *tahli*, the ornament which is a sign of marriage with Hindu ladies, and she said to all, pointing to the bones, 'I have a husband.' Truly, Sivagami was a faithful wife!

Now, rumours of Sivagami's beauty spread far, and when the Raja of Bundipura heard them he greatly desired that she should enter his zenana. To that end he selected from among his most reliable retainers an envoy, and loaded him with costly presents for the lady. The Court astrologers were consulted, and they fixed an auspicious day during the Pongol festival, which celebrates the winter solstice. Accordingly on that day—about a year after Doraiungum's death—the envoy set out to express the royal sentiments. But the astrologers must have erred in their calculations, as they sometimes do, for the envoy met with the same reply as others had received. Pointing to the bones, Sivagami said, 'I have a husband.' The envoy returned abashed, but his account of her beauty so infatuated the Raja that he determined to pay court in person. And thus it came about that in the palace at Bundipura there was much commotion over the preparations for a long journey to Chitorpatti, in the Dakshinapatha or Southern Country, where the widow resided.

In the Raja's employ was a man who abused even the permission some men have to be ugly. His name was Jagtap. He was a wizened but astute little creature, one of the multitude of sycophants in Oriental Courts, and what he lacked in appearance he made up for in cunning. Jagtap was unmarried, and he saw no reason why he should not be mated to a rich woman, if he mated at all. Here wealth and beauty were found together. The combination was alluring; for what is more to be desired in this world than a beautiful wife to welcome you home, and her money to keep you company when you are out of it?

Jagtap approached the Raja with his petition: 'Maharaj, your slave would like to see this woman.'

The Raja was amused. 'What is the use of your going?' he asked. 'You are a pauper. You have nothing to boast of but your face, and that is an unenviable possession.'

'True, Maharaj,' replied Jagtap; 'but it is my face. It was not made for me, perhaps; but I have lived with it for forty years and know its faults, and, such as it is, I have learned to endure it. I have no thought of marriage, but merely wish to look upon this wonderful woman who lives with her husband's bones, and, if the great

king will permit his slave to go with him, I shall also see another country.'

The Raja thereupon agreed.

Jagtap retired to his house to formulate his plan of action, for the passing idea had developed into a fixed purpose, and he knew, from what he had heard, that it would be necessary to resort to finesse to win the widow. In the evening he told his mother to put up a bundle of rice and condiments against the journey, which was to begin on the morrow. That night he spent some hours away from home, on a secret mission; and on the following day, with his bundle of rice and a mysterious basket, he set out in the Raja's retinue for the widow's country.

They duly arrived at their destination, and began negotiations on behalf of the Raja's suit. Valuable presents were offered, and refused; praises of the Raja and his virtues, arguments setting forth the felicity of such a union, all fell on deaf ears. And it was equally futile when the Raja pressed his suit in person. Sivagami was true to her bones, and would not permit him to take their place.

Meanwhile Jagtap had kept discreetly out of the way. When the royal train left Chitorpatti a few days later, carrying away the disappointed and chagrined suitor, it left Jagtap behind; and that evening he visited the woman's house for the first time, accompanied by his mysterious basket. He had timed himself to arrive when it was dusk. He asked Sivagami's father for a night's shelter, as he was a weary stranger from the north, on his way to the great Subramaniya's shrine at Palni. The request was granted, and food was placed before him and a sleeping-mat provided.

Jagtap partook of the food, and after spreading the mat, opened his basket and extracted therefrom the greater portion of a human skeleton, which he placed beside him, reverently and with many deep sighs.

Sivagami's father was astounded. 'What is the meaning of this?' he asked.

Jagtap replied that they were the bones of his dear wife; they went wherever he went.

'*Appa, appa,*' exclaimed the old man, 'this is wonderful! My daughter keeps the bones of her late husband; look for yourself.'

Then said Jagtap, 'I promised my wife that I would never marry again if she died before me;' and Sivagami declared, 'I made just such a promise to my husband.'

After this exchange of confidences the family retired to rest, but Jagtap kept awake. At midnight, when all were asleep, he stealthily entered the women's quarter and cautiously removed the bones which were lying beside Sivagami. Then he gathered together the bones he had brought with him, and, carrying both sets, groped his way in the dark to the kitchen, in the most retired part of the house, and quite out of view of strangers. There, near the hearth in the south-west corner, which is known as the side of the god of fire, he placed both skeletons, and returned to his mat, chuckling over the success of his adventure.

Early in the morning he awakened the household with the violence of his grief. 'My wife is not here. Where has she gone?' wailed Jagtap. Sivagami also discovered her loss, and began weeping. The other people of the house searched, and found the two skeletons together near the hearth. Then fresh lamentations broke out because female bones were found lying near male bones.

There was a great uproar. Jagtap left the house proclaiming loudly to the neighbours that his wife's bones had been decoyed by Sivagami's husband's bones. But he returned in a couple of hours and informed the family that he had visited a *darsana* (a man who gets inspired), and from him learnt that the bones had fallen in love with each other at the command of Yama, the god of the dead, who was displeased with the absurd promises of the living parties; and the *darsana* was of opinion that in the circumstances it was fitting that the husband of the wife's bones and the wife of the husband's bones should marry, so that together they might propitiate the deity. The suggestion was odious, Sivagami said frankly. Jagtap tried all his powers of persuasion. 'I have been true to my wife,' he said, 'withstanding many overtures of marriage; you have been true to your husband; but the gods have married them and mocked us. Why should we repine any longer? We are both people of deep affections, and your constancy and beauty have turned my liver to water. Let us marry and live for each other, leaving our dead partners to their ghostly affections. It is our *Karma;* let us enjoy the blessings of the gods, who have thus brought us together.'

When persuasion failed, Jagtap threatened. He would seek justice in a court of law, and then the good name of Doraiungum Pillai would be disgraced for ever. The hearth was nearer to Sivagami's apartment than to Jagtap's couch; both skeletons were found there; so what clearer proof could be had that he had been wronged by her husband? There was ample ground for legal proceedings, which would necessitate the employment of *vakils*, or Indian lawyers, who would swallow all the money that Sivagami possessed.

Such arguments were unanswerable, and so Jagtap obtained by a simple ruse what the Raja of Bundipura, with all his wealth, was unable to procure.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st.* All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd.* For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd.* To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE BLOWER OF BUBBLES.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *Mr Craighouse of New York, Satirist; The Man who Scoffed;* &c.

PART I.

I.

SNOW was falling in Sloane Square, quarrelling with rain as it fell. Lamps were gleaming sulkily in Sloane Square, as though they resented being made to work on such a night, and had more than a notion to down tools and go out of business altogether. Motor-cars were passing through Sloane Square, with glaring lights, sliding and skidding like inebriated dragons; and the clattering hoofs of horses drawing vagabond cabs sounded annoyingly loud in the damp-charged air of Sloane Square.

It was Christmas Eve in Sloane Square, and the match-woman, the vender of newspapers, and the impossible road-sweeper were all exacting the largesse of passers-by, who felt that the sixpenny generosity of a single night atoned for a year's indifference to their lot. People were wishing each other a merry Christmas in Sloane Square, as they struggled along under ungainly parcels. The muffin-man was doing an enormous trade.

And I looked from my window and prayed for Aladdin's Lamp or the Magic Carpet, that I might place a thousand miles between myself and Sloane Square.

There was a knock at the door.

'Enter the Slave of the Lamp,' said I, and the door opened to admit—my landlady, Mrs Mulvaney.

'Will you be dining in?' she said. Her Irish accent hardly helped the illusion of the all-potent slave.

'And why not?' I asked.

'Ach, nothing, sor. I only thought' ——

'An unwomanly thing to do, Mrs Mulvaney.'

'You're afther being a strange one, dining alone on Christmas Eve.'

'Then join me, Mrs Mulvaney.'

I swear she blushed, and I felt more than a little envious of the nature which could convert such a vinegary attempt at condescension into a gallantry.

'F'what would I be doing, taking dinner wid a child like you?'

I was twenty-five, but Mrs Mulvaney looked on all men as equally immature.

'And have you not got no friends?' she went on, but I stopped her with a gesture.

'Thank Heaven—no!' I said. 'I am one of intellectuality's hermits. An educated man in London is like the bell-cow of the herd—a thing apart.'

'You're a great fool, I'm afther thinking.'

'The foolish always damn the wise,' I answered, with an attempt at epigrammatic misquotation.

Mrs Mulvaney heaved a sigh. Its very forcefulness recalled the nautical meaning of the verb.

'You'd be a sight happier outside,' she said. 'Holy Mary knows I wouldn't be driving you into the streets, but I'm worried you'd get cross wid yourself at home.'

To get rid of her, I put on my coat and went out. Perhaps she was right; things would have been intolerable at home. Home! Such a travesty of the word! The sickly lamplight of Sloane Square was preferable.

'Merry Christmas, guv'nor!' said the road-sweeper.

'Merry fiddlesticks!' I growled, and gave him sixpence. I tried to avoid the vender of newspapers, but he spotted my fur collar with the instinct of a mendicant, handing me a paper and his blessing.

''Appy Christmas, milord!' said he.

I paid him a shilling for his diplomacy.

Thinking to escape the match-woman, I altered my course, but with the intuition of her sex she contrived to put herself directly in my path.

'It's a cauld nicht,' she moaned, in a rickety, quavering Scottish voice—'a cauld, wintry nicht. Ye'll be haein' a wee box o' matches, aw'm thinkin'?'

I gave her twopence for them, and she shivered with cold as her skinny fingers clutched the coins. I can think of no excuse for my parsimony except the fact that I didn't need the wretched box—matches were not yet a luxury of the very exclusive.

Yes—in all Sloane Square, on that damp and foggy Christmas Eve in the year 1913, I doubt if a more morose, self-satisfied, cynical human being plunged into the mists than I. I was unhappy, and revelled in my very unhappiness.

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If it had been in my power, I would have sent a cloud of gloom into every home and over each hearth in London. There was something splendid, something classical, in my melancholy; it was like Hamlet's, but greater than Hamlet's, for he knew the reason of his mood, while mine was born of an intangible superiority to my day!

It is not easy, even now, to write of those days. The figure that crosses the screen of memory reminds me of Chevy Slyme—a debt-paying, respectable Chevy Slyme, forsooth!—but just as sulkily swaggering, just as superior, and not quite so human; for Chevy, at least, inspired the friendship of Mr Tigg.

II.

Unconsciously following the bus route, I emerged eventually on Piccadilly, and was jostled and ogled and blessed and cursed with the greatest heartiness. Somewhere near Bond Street I collided heavily with a young man who was trying to negotiate the crowd and at the same time lose nothing of the shop windows' display.

'A thousand devils!' I muttered, recoiling from the impact.

'A thousand pardons!' he said, raising his hat. The graceful lilt of his voice was peculiarly reminiscent; his smooth brow and silky fair hair were both familiar and elusive.

'One moment'—— He gazed into my face with a searching look, keeping his hat poised in the air as if the better to concentrate his thoughts. 'Not the Pest?' he said.

I nodded, and, if the truth be told, felt not a little pleased at the sound of the old *nom d'école* earned when I was at Westminster.

'And how,' I said, 'is the Blower of Bubbles?'

For answer he replaced his hat at a rakish angle and shook my hand with both his for what seemed a full minute, the crowd parting good-naturedly like a wave encircling a rock.

'My dear old Pest,' he said, 'we shall dine together.'

'I'm sorry, but'——

'There is a perfectly vile restaurant half-a-mile from here, that has the best violinist and the worst cook in London.'

'My dear chap'——

'Of all the luck! Think of my running into you on Christmas Eve!'

And just then I noticed that we were no longer standing still, but proceeding up a side-street, arm-in-arm, while his disengaged hand indicated the passing scene as if it were the most gorgeous bazaar of the Orient. He spoke with extraordinary rapidity, except in uttering certain words, when he would make a slurring pause, as a singer will let a note melt into a pianissimo, then race on again with renewed vigour. It was a fascinating trick of speech, and, added to the subtle inflections of his voice, never failed to startle one into the closest attention.

I turned to him once with some remark on my lips, and noticed that his eyes were dancing with merriment.

'What is it, Pest?' he cried. 'Out with it!'

I smiled gloomily; but still it was a smile.

'Why,' I said, 'aren't the lamps in Sloane Square bright like these?'

He didn't answer. Probably he knew the truth would have hurt.

III.

What a hole to dine in on Christmas Eve! Such waiters—such guests—such food—such wine!

I believe the proprietor owned three such establishments, each, in a triumph of irony, called 'Arcadia.' The very linen of the waiters drooped disconsolately, and the whole place reeked of cabbage and wet umbrellas. My spirits, which had risen momentarily from their classic depths, sank like the sands of an egg-timer.

'My dear fellow,' I said, 'you can't mean to dine here?'

An oily waiter ambled up to us and wrung his hands in a paroxysm of welcome.

'Your tabil, Meester Norman,' he said in some nondescript foreign dialect, 'iss ready.'

Good heavens! The Blower of Bubbles had even ordered dinner in advance! With the feelings of an unwilling martyr, I followed my friend and his escort past tawdry millinery saleswomen, dining in state with their knights-errant of the haberdashery stores; by a table where a woman was gazing admiringly at a man with a face as expressionless as a pumpkin; through a lane of chattering, laughing, rasping denizens of the London that is neither West End nor East End—of people whose clothes, faces, and voices merged into a positive debauch of mediocrity.

When we were seated and had ordered something from the waiter, I turned to Basil Norman for an explanation.

'What is it?' I asked. 'An affair with a seamstress, or are you just looking for "copy"?'

He laughed and lit a cigarette.

'Pest,' he said, 'this is a caprice of mine, a tit-bit for my vanity. You would have chosen the "Trocadero" or the "Ritz," with all the tyranny of Olympian and largessed waiters with whom it is impossible to attain the least pretence of equality. I prefer "Arcadia," where I am something of a patron saint, and am even consulted by the proprietor.'

'You play to humble audiences.'

'Quietly, Pest—the proprietor might hear you. He is a very Magog for dignity, I assure you, in spite of his asthma.'

'I gather, then, that you are a regular diner here?'

'Hardly that. But I am a little more consistent than most of his patrons. To be candid'—he leaned towards me as if it were a secret of the first magnitude—'it's his cook.'

'His what?'

'His cook. Really, I'm afraid he's hardly first class.'

'I am certain of it.'

'He would have made an admirable medieval Jesuit, but—as a matter of fact, I wonder Steinburg'——

'The proprietor?'

'Yes. I don't know why he keeps him on. He says the fellow has a couple of blind children, and if he were dismissed under a cloud he would have trouble in securing employment. But that's not business. The fellow's an ass, isn't he?'

Whereupon his face beamed with delight, and his gray eyes twinkled like diamonds. My comment on the matter was stifled by the arrival of *hors-d'œuvre*. I had no idea that one tray could hold such a variety of unpalatable things. At the table next to us a woman laughed boisterously, her shoulders, which were fat and formless, vibrating like blanc-mange.

'Ah!' said Basil Norman; 'Klotz has arrived.'

He indicated a low platform, where a dingy pianist, pimply of countenance and long of hair, was strumming the barbaric discords that always accompany the tuning of stringed instruments. A violinist, with his back towards us, was strangling his instrument into submission; while a cellist, possessed of enormous eyebrows and a superb immobility of pasty-facial expressionlessness, sat by his cello as though he had been lured there under false pretences, and had no intention of taking any part in the proceedings—unless forced to do so by a writ of habeas-corpus. A fourth musician, who seemed all shirt and collar, blew fitfully into a flute, as if he realised it was an irrelevant thing, and was trying to rouse it to a sense of responsibility.

'Which,' I asked, 'is Klotz?'

As I spoke the violinist turned about and caught my host's eye. They both bowed—Norman cordially; the musician, I thought, with restraint. The fellow stood out as a man apart from his accomplices; his high forehead and dreamy eyes were those of an artist, though a receding chin robbed his face of strength. He was the type one sees so often—able to touch, but never grasp, the cup of success.

'Klotz,' said Norman, 'is superb. He has the touch of the artist about him. His tone is not always good, and sometimes he scratches; but when he is at his best he does big things. So many people can perform at music—just as so many write at words—but Klotz plays with colour. His art has all the charm of a day in April. He will caress a phrase according to his mood, like a mother crooning to her child. To know how to hesitate before a note in a melody, as a worshipper hesitates at the entrance to a shrine, is Art, and an Art that cannot be taught. It is so with painters, writers, musicians—they must have that sense of colour, that instinct that brings each subtle nuance of expression into being.'

I began to feel bored.

Suddenly the orchestra became animated and burst into a waltz, one of your ageless, rhythmic compositions, that might have been the very first or the very last waltz ever written. Supported by wailing strings and the irrelevant flute, the enjoyment of the diners took on fresh impetus. The lady with the shoulders became a vibrating obbligato. The pumpkin-faced man beamed fatuous delight, an electric light behind him giving the odd effect that he was illuminated inside like a Hallowe'en figure. A girl, who might have been pretty if she hadn't rouged, took a puff from her toilet-case and powdered her nose. She felt that the evening was commencing. Over the whole scene my melancholy brooded as a ghostly presence. To me it seemed like the dominant seventh in a chord of surfeiting commonplaceness; once it was heard, the whole pitch of the evening would alter to another key.

Fortunately the dominant seventh remained unheard.

The waltz stopped, and we turned our undivided attention to dinner.

'Klotz,' said my host, pouring me a glass of wine, 'should have made a mark, but'——

'Damn Klotz!'

'That has been done, Pest. The Bricklayers' Union, or something equally æsthetic, took exception to him for some reason or other, and prevailed upon its sister-cabal to debar him from the big orchestras. To offend your Union, dear boy, is to accomplish the total eclipse of your future. Even genius to-day is subject to regulations. Klotz is in a worse position than a clerk with a Board School education trying to secure employment in a London bank.'

'Confound it!' I said, 'there must be some spheres reserved for gentlemen.'

His twinkling eyes steadied, and a dreamy look crept into them. 'Pest,' he murmured, 'some day England is going to thank God for the gentlemen—who were educated at Board Schools. Listen!—the cellist is playing Saint-Saëns.'

Dinner—or the mess of foodstuffs dignified by the name—was almost finished when Klotz, the violinist, started one of the rare melodies which Wagner permitted himself—the Song to the Evening Star.

It was being beautifully played—even I would have admitted that—but I could not account for the troubled look that crept into my companion's face, driving the gaiety and the whimsicality from it like a cloud obscuring the sunlight.

'Klotz,' he said anxiously, 'is in great sorrow.'

'How the deuce,' I muttered, with a feeling of creepiness stealing over me, 'can you tell that? Do you read it in his face?'

He shook his head. 'Listen!' he said; 'can't you hear it? Can't you feel the tears in it?'

And in spite of myself I remained silent, held irresistibly by the double fascination of the German's artistry and the sense of mystery engendered by Norman. The last sob of the G string quivered to its finish, and the crowd applauded perfunctorily, then applied themselves to the more essential things of life—food, wine, and noise.

Rousing myself from the reverie into which I had fallen, I turned to Norman, and found his chair vacated. I started. He had reached the platform, and was talking earnestly to the violinist. Half-contemptuous and half-interested, I watched the pantomime as they talked. Norman's hands were emphasising some point, and every gesture was a pleasure to the eye; the musician was protesting, but with steadily abating determination. Then the scene came to a climax, and the German disappeared.

Holding the violin in his arms, Basil Norman mounted the platform, the fingers of his left hand picking quiet, pizzicato notes from the strings.

'My friends'—— His voice travelled like sound on the ocean at twilight; the room subsided into silence, and diners craned their necks to see him. The woman with the shoulders brought them to a standstill, like an electric fan that had lost its current.

'My friends'—what a charming voice the fellow had!—'I do not want to bring a note of sorrow into your happiness. You are here, like my companion and myself, for enjoyment; but Herr Klotz . . . his wife is very ill; she is perhaps dying; and, my friends, it is very hard that he should play while his wife is dying . . . on Christmas Eve . . . in a strange country. You are English, and I know you are kind. I have sent him home, and promised that I would take his place, as well as I can take the place of such an artist. For you who work so hard, it is not fair to spoil your happiness on this of all nights—but you will forgive me? Good!'

And his face had a whimsical, tender look.

A murmur of sympathy rose from the crowd, then died away as he raised the violin in his hands and brought from it a tone that breathed over them like a benediction. It was Gounod's '*Ave Maria*,' and the pianist's fingers were mothering the keys as they had not done since his ambition evaporated like a cloud on a summer day.

It was exquisite—haunting. It was a prayer to Mary, but a prayer sung in a field of daisies and violets. There was sorrow in it, but it was the grief of a girl over a shattered dream. It was mature artistry, yet was born of sunshine and throbbed with the primrose sweetness of youth. It touched one like the face of a beautiful child.

Still caressing the violin, he repeated the '*Ave Maria*,' whistling a unison. With almost any one else it would have been commonplace; with him it was a sound more pleasing than any flute, and only accentuated his sense of emancipation from the thrall of years. He played '*Still wie die Nacht*,' 'Old King Wenceslaus,' '*Méditation*' from Thaïs, '*Intermezzo*' of Mascagni; and whatever he did, or however hackneyed the piece, he surrounded it with a joyousness that trembled on the brink of tears.

I looked at my watch; it was nearly midnight, and the evening so dreaded was almost at a close. He had put down his violin with a gesture of finality, when the prolonged outburst of applause changed his decision, and, with another of those rare smiles, he took the instrument once more.

> Maxwellton braes are bonnie,
> Where early fa's the dew,
> And it's there that Annie Laurie
> Gi'ed me her promise true. . . .

The violin seemed to speak the words; and I'll swear there wasn't a woman in the place who wasn't recalling the sweet innocence of her first love. He had hardly finished, when the man with the face like a pumpkin jumped to his feet, and I rubbed my eyes.

The fellow had changed. His face had expression. Confound it! there was something rather splendid about his features—a kindliness—a——

'Young feller, m' lad,' he was saying, 'I knows I speaks for hevery one when I says we ain't 'eard music like that there since we was knee-'igh to a grass'opper, and I knows you won't take it hamiss if we was to pass the 'at and'——

I held my breath. What would the Blower of Bubbles say?

'You 're a brick, sir!' His voice was a mellow contrast to the other's. 'My friends, this gentleman has suggested that we pass the hat for our poor friend Klotz.'

'I didn't neither,' protested the benefactor. 'Leastways'——

But the woman of the shoulders cut him short by placing two shillings beside him. It was tactful of her, a kindly thing to do, and again I was amazed. There was a womanly, motherly look about her as she turned away, and her eyes were radiant like stars in a mist.

I think I gave ten bob—it must have been a considerable amount, for the girl who would have been pretty if she hadn't rouged looked straight into my eyes and said something that sounded like a blessing. I hope it was; she made me think of a little sister I once had.

And then we were walking together again in the street, and the crowds were thinner than before. I cannot remember what we talked of, but I know I said to him, 'Where did you learn to play like that?'

And he answered, 'My dear old boy, music must be loved, not learned.'

Then we were in Sloane Square, at my flat, and I was thanking him, or he was thanking me—I forget which; and he promised to call at noon next day to take me to Klotz's home. . . . And the lamps in Sloane Square seemed duller than before.

Selfishness does not die in an hour, but the bachelor who looked from his window that night was a different man from the one who had spoken to Mrs Mulvaney. He was thinking . . . and much is accomplished in itself when a man is made to think.

A distant clock struck one.

(*Continued on page 218.*)

THE LADIES' GALLERY.

By W. H. Moyes, Author of *The Mystic's Legacy, The God Stone,* &c.

THE only opportunities the fair sex had of listening to debates in the House of Commons that was destroyed by fire in 1834 were obtained by climbing into the garret above the Chamber, and 'peeping down the ventilator.' But a great change came over the scene when the new St Stephen's was designed, for a Ladies' Gallery was added to it. The precaution, however, was taken to protect this gallery in front by stone pillars and a grating, or 'Grille,' the subject of much subsequent criticism.

The green chairs in the gallery are ranged tier above tier, and the occupants used to sit behind the famous brass grating, resembling, as was once said, 'so many lionesses at the Zoo.' But the view of the House from it is a fine one, the ladies being able to see nearly everything that goes on below. Some visitors were in favour of the retention of the 'Grille,' because behind it they could sit at their ease, or read, or even talk quietly, the demand for silence being often more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The existence of the grating also rendered it possible to leave in the middle of dull speeches, which could not decently have been done had the gallery been an open one. The defence of the 'Grille' was undertaken by some members of Parliament on the ground that if it were removed they would be unable to speak with the same freedom as before, owing to nervousness resulting from the battery of bright eyes above. When Mr Herbert (now Lord) Gladstone was at the Office of Works he proposed to take away the central portion of the grating; but he was soon compelled to admit that he could not find any agreement on the subject, either among the members or among their lady friends.

As comparatively few ladies know where the gallery is situated, it may be explained that it is reached by means of a lift from the Speaker's Court; and as it is exactly opposite to, and somewhat above, the level of the Strangers' Gallery, it commands a good view of the Chamber, except that portion which includes the Speaker's chair, immediately beneath it. It is lighted by gas from the ceiling, contains thirty-six seats, and is divided in the centre by a gangway. By its side, but separated from it, is the Select Gallery, under the charge of the Speaker's wife, which affords accommodation for sixteen ladies, although as many as thirty have been allowed to use it on great occasions.

The occupants of the Ladies' Gallery have many privileges which are not granted to those of the Strangers' Gallery. A room, for instance, is set apart for their use when they require tea and other refreshments. They are also permitted to dine with their friends the members, and to take tea with them on the Terrace overlooking the river—an extremely pleasant promenade in the summer months. Many of the most eminent and best-dressed ladies of London and the provinces have availed themselves of the opportunity presented by the 'five o'clock,' as it has been called, and the scenes witnessed on the Terrace from Westminster Bridge and passing steamboats are frequently of a picturesque and animated character.

The Terrace is practically divided into three sections. That nearest Westminster Bridge is reserved for those entertained by the Speaker's wife; the largest portion is devoted to the use of members and their lady visitors; and the remaining part has been described as the 'Desert of Sahara,' being intended 'for members only.' Few prettier sights could be imagined than that presented by the Terrace on a sunny day, when the tables are crowded with men and women; and the resources of the refreshment department are severely taxed, especially when (in normal times) strawberries and cream are served by the waitresses.

The spectators on Westminster Bridge have probably wondered sometimes at a sudden stampede of the members from the tea-tables, when the ringing of electric bells and the calls of attendant constables require their presence in the division-lobbies. Occasionally the occupants of passing boats on the river mercilessly chaff legislators enjoying themselves with their fair companions on the Terrace, by shouting, 'Why don't you get to work?' and by making other pertinent and impertinent inquiries and observations; but it seems to make little impression, and the same scenes are repeated summer after summer.

When visiting the Ladies' Gallery of the

House of Commons for the first time the ticket-holder should take the precaution to get there early, and so secure a good seat. The order of procedure in the House may be thus explained. The Speaker, robed and wigged, and attended by the Sergeant-at-Arms in Court dress, carrying the mace, enters the Chamber with the Chaplain, who reads the prayers. The galleries are then opened; and if there is no private business, questions are put by members to Ministers, who are badgered about home, colonial, and foreign affairs for three-quarters of an hour. Then the 'Orders of the Day' are taken, and the real work of the House begins.

On certain great occasions ladies have been known to wait for admission to their gallery for from three to six hours. When all-night sittings have occurred, others have remained in the gallery until four or five o'clock in the morning, while a few have kept their seats there throughout the night.

Sometimes ladies make diplomatic arrangements in order to withdraw their husbands from the floor of the House at a reasonable hour. On one occasion, some years ago, a note came fluttering down from behind the 'Grille.' It alighted in the Press Gallery, but it was evidently intended for one of the members of the House, for it contained the doting inquiry, 'How much longer, duckie?'

The story has also gained credence that, before the 'Grille' was erected, a lady was apparently so much carried away by the eloquence of a young member that she threw her handkerchief into the political arena. Some years ago every eye was attracted to the 'Grille' by the sudden excited and very audible exclamation of a little boy (who, in the company of his mother, had been eagerly watching the arrival of members), 'There's papa!' His name is handed down to posterity as Master Dillon, and 'papa' was none other than the well-known Irish Nationalist leader.

The Suffragettes made their first serious demonstration in the same gallery under memorable circumstances. The question of women's enfranchisement was under discussion, and after 'an inflammatory speech' by Mr Cremer, Mr S. Evans rose at almost the end of the sitting for the obvious purpose of talking out the motion. Cries of 'Coward!' were raised by some of the women behind the 'Grille,' as well as 'We won't have our motion talked out!' While this extraordinary scene was proceeding, a flaming-red banner, bearing the inscription, 'Votes for Women,' was projected from the gallery. For a moment Mr Evans was nonplussed; but realising then what had occurred, he resumed his speech, amid constant interruptions from the occupants of the gallery. Perhaps, however, the most exciting spectacle was that witnessed just outside the entrance to the Ladies' Gallery, where a party of police officials were busily engaged in showing the offenders to the lift, while a burly constable followed behind with a heterogeneous collection of hats, bonnets, and other feminine gear. The banner which had played such a conspicuous part in the scene came into the hands of a journalist, but at the request of the Speaker's wife, it was given her on the following day, her desire being to keep it as a relic.

The 'Grille' was removed when Sir Alfred Mond became First Commissioner of Works. He received many congratulations for the promptitude with which he carried out the decision to abolish it; and ladies highly appreciate the greater freedom with which they can now listen to debates on the floor of the House, no longer a 'prohibited area' to members of their sex.

In future the 'Grille' will adorn the Central Hall of the Houses of Parliament.

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN I arrived at Naples I was driven through the ill-paved, noisy streets up to Bertolini's, the caravanserai whose charm of situation is probably unequalled in Europe. There I found no trace of Keene-Leslie, nor was there any message from him; but as his note had asked me to meet him in the evening, his absence did not perturb me. I secured a room, and did nothing all forenoon except feast my eyes on the glorious panorama from the hotel terrace—the domes and the towers of the great, beautiful, evil city, bathed in warm spring sunlight; the giant mass of the Castello dell' Ovo, dominating Santa Lucia, stretching into the sea like some huge saurian; nearer, the frowning Castle of Sant' Elmo and the magnificent Convent of San Martino; the sparkling multi-coloured expanse of the bay dotted with lateen sails; here and there great ships, outward bound or making the port; Capri's twin violet peaks in the distance.

There had been a heavy shower during the previous evening. The scented breeze on the height, purer than along the shore, was deliciously cool after the rain, and in its fresh fragrance I idled the morning away. In the afternoon, as there was still no sign of Tony, I spent the time sauntering about, contentedly waiting for

him. Everybody seemed to be out-of-doors. I strolled along the Strada di Roma, looking at the shops and the carriages, and then went aimlessly along lesser streets, to carry away a confused impression of vistas of balconies and light-green shutters rising above a sea of heads; a noisy, chattering crowd; noisy fiacres; noisy, importunate flower-sellers; noisy street urchins—swarms of them; noisy rumbling wheels; noisy beggars of all ages, none of them picturesque, some of them mangy-looking; noise everywhere, steady, continuous, deafening. From the turmoil I was thankful to escape to the cool, quiet sanctuary of the Museo, with its glories of ancient Greece and Italy, its famous 'Resting Hermes,' its great inscrutable marble gods and emperors; and there, under the spell of the place—although I am neither a connoisseur nor even a dilettante—I lingered until nearly sundown.

Naples has an evil reputation, but her lovers say that it is unmerited, and that a person of sense is as safe there as in London. Still, one hears ugly stories of robberies with violence, of strange disappearances, of the incredible tyranny of the Camorra, and the open defiance of the law by that strange and sinister secret society. But, just as in London there are places which a man, alone and ignorant of the language, does well to avoid, so in Naples, unless courting trouble, one will steer clear of purlieus such as the Porta Nolana or the Porta Capuana in 'La Duchessa' quarter. This much I had learned from Keene-Leslie when we were passing through Naples. I remember his adding—quite unnecessarily, I thought—an injunction to avoid making casual acquaintances, and to refrain from advertising the possession of money or money's worth.

I had nothing much to lose in the way of jewellery or anything else (unless the paper in my boot could be counted valuable), and in the evening, under a sky whose starry brilliance made the swarms of electric illuminations look tawdry, I made my way to the gaily lit and crowded Villa Nazionale, the public garden between the Riviera di Chiaja and the waters of the bay. The air was soft and balmy, and feeling pleasantly tired, I took a seat among the trees and listened to the band. How far away, in every sense, was Glen Ciuin with its lonely rain-swept hills, I thought, as I watched the sparkling current of light-hearted Neapolitans flow past, a gay, cheerful, talkative crowd, a mosaic of smart toilettes, pretty faces, bright specks of blue uniforms, Bersaglieri with their cocks' feathers, fat, comfortable *bourgeoisie*, dark-eyed, graceful women, slender, well-set-up men of the better classes; life, colour, and movement in the warm Southern setting where 'winter is but a word,' with the orchestra's melodious waves ebbing and flowing in the soft, windless air.

An elderly cleric sat down near me, and leaned back in tranquil enjoyment, beaming contentedly through round, dark-rimmed spectacles, his hand softly beating time on his knee to the swing of the melody.

The music ceased. He turned a broad, smiling face to me, politely murmuring something in Italian.

'*Scusi! Non parlo Italiano!*' I said, regretting my inability to converse with the good-natured-looking old gentleman. He had a long, humorous mouth, black twinkling eyes, and a physique which must have been exceptional in his younger days, before his frame filled out to a more than generous amplitude. I put him down as a country priest, a man of genial and easy temperament, on good terms with himself and his flock.

'*Inglese?*' he asked in a rich, deep, bass voice.

'*Si, signore.*'

Ah, he could speak English, a little, but a very little! French, perhaps, I knew? I had only a happy-go-lucky acquaintance with that language, but he was at home in it, and politely contrived to make my dot-and-carry-one attempts at conversation seem quite intelligible. He had been in England many years ago. *Mon Dieu!* how cold it was! He had seen those *brouillards*. *Quel pays affreux!* Did I admire Naples? *Naturellement*, all Englishmen love their own country best. *C'était très juste, d'ailleurs* Perhaps I lived in London?

I told him that my home was in Scotland.

Ah! He had known some Scotsmen. But he had forgotten their names. He had hoped one day to see Scotland, but his travelling days, he was afraid, were over. He was a *curé de campagne* in the North. *Mais—on ne devait pas le dire*—his heart was Southern, and now and then he came here to get the sun—to make holiday—*une petite vacance*. But two or three days were enough. Naples was too noisy. So he continued in his musical bass until the crowd began to disperse, when he rose and with a courtly bow gave me good-night. His broad back disappeared in the throng, and soon afterwards I returned to the hotel. There, to my disquiet, I found that Keene-Leslie had not appeared. I waited on the terrace for him in a lovely nocturne wrought by the myriad lights of the city and the moonbeams shimmering on the bay, but though it was late when I turned in, there was no sign of my friend. Mindful of his injunction to me to return to London, if he failed to meet me at Bertolini's, next morning I was seated alone in a compartment of the North train. It was within an ace of starting, when a porter hurriedly unlocked the door. Who should stumble in but the elderly priest of the previous night, puffing and blowing, and considerably ruffled in mind and body! It was some time before his portly frame recovered its placidity. He did not

recognise me until I gave him a '*Buon giorno*,' when he apologised for his short-sightedness. He had nearly missed the train through a dolt of a hotel porter, whom he apostrophised with unclerical vigour until sheer want of breath forced him to stop. Recovering his equanimity and his breath, he produced an *Osservatore Romano*, and read it steadily through his pundit's spectacles for half-an-hour or so. Then he laid it down to engage me in conversation, for which he had an indefatigable zest. I could not follow more than half of his rapid French, although he showed great ingenuity in trying to carry me along with him. The talk was concerning current Italian politics, of which I knew a little, and the time passed pleasantly enough; but I was always mentally scrambling after one remark when he was half-way through his next. This was a little tiring, and I was not sorry when he produced a well-filled cigar-case and handed it to me.

'Except good music, tobacco is my only luxury,' said he. 'I own to a weakness for a good Manilla. You will, I think, like this brand. It is of as good a leaf as ever caught the sun. Sometimes I am ashamed of my weakness, but when I recall what I suffered when I gave up snuff, I refuse to face a farewell to my cigars.'

We lit up, and he settled himself in his corner, puffing away with the most obvious enjoyment. After a minute or two he laid his cigar down as if he had forgotten something, produced his breviary, and began to read his office.

I took up his newspaper and tried to translate a few paragraphs; and when next I looked his way, the breviary was face downward on his knee, and his head was comfortably tucked into the corner of the compartment. His breathing was deep and regular, his eyes closed in placid, child-like sleep.

It was then that I happened to notice his Manilla between the fingers of his right hand, which was hanging over the edge of the seat. As the cigar was still alight, I leaned over and, without awakening him, gently removed it. While doing so I was struck by a peculiarity about his hands. They were very large and broad, and covered with a freakish coat of thick, coarse, dark hair from the wrists almost to the middle joints of the fingers. There was something jarring, even repellent, in them—the monstrous suggestion of a hairy savage animal imprisoned, peering out from the sleeve. I trifled with the fantastic idea for a moment, and then settled myself in my corner to the enjoyment of my cigar. A quarter of an hour or more passed, and my fellow-traveller showed no signs of awakening. On the contrary, he began to snore gently, neither raucously nor unpleasantly, but with a placid rhythm which grew positively infectious. I caught myself nodding. The rumble of the train became a lullaby; my eyelids were weighted with lead; a gentle lassitude stole up my legs. I grew drowsier and drowsier. The carriage and the peaceful, broad, clean-shaven disc of my companion's face swung round slowly and back again, to stop with a sudden jerk as I hovered on the border-line between sleep and wakefulness. I hate sleeping in the day-time, but in the end I gave up the struggle, stretched my legs out luxuriously on the seat, and did not open an eye for hours.

How long I lay blinking at the roof of the carriage I cannot tell. For a long time I was only half-awake. A strange disinclination to move clutched me, but with an effort I mastered it, and sat up, dizzy and irritable. My throat was parched, and for the first time in my life I had a splitting headache. I must have caught a chill, I thought, for I was shivering, aching in every bone, completely unable to rally my wits. Dusk had fallen; the carriage was in semi-darkness. A moment or two passed before I remembered the genial cleric. Then I peered into the farthest corner of the carriage. It was empty! The priest must have gone out at some station without wakening me. Curious, I reflected, for usually I am a singularly light sleeper. My flask was in my suit-case, and feeling the need of something to pull me together, I turned to the corner where I had left it, when a sudden fear lifted me to my feet. One swift look round the carriage showed me that my suit-case was nowhere to be seen! It had been lying opposite me when I dozed off. Of that I was ruefully certain. I searched the compartment, but it was not there. Then I dived my hand feverishly into my inside pocket. The pocket-book had vanished, and in a sickening flash I realised that I had been 'doped' by a drugged cigar; that the man in rusty clerical black was probably no more a priest than I was. I had been watched, and the paper was being tracked by crafty and dangerous men. My skin was like ice!

The cryptic paper! I tore off my boot, and drew a long breath of relief. It was still there. Having quickly replaced it, as the train was slowing down, I had just time to button my boot before the lights of a station filed past. It was Civita Vecchia, where there was a stop of a few minutes. My head was still throbbing, and feeling very limp, I stepped out on to the platform for some much-needed fresh air, with a faint hope that the stout figure of my fellow-traveller might be espied somewhere in the train or in the station. Needless to say, I saw nobody with the least resemblance to him, although I nearly missed the train by searching too long. Alone again in the compartment, I thanked my stars that I had taken the precaution to hide the paper in my boot. Either the wily old scoundrel had been in a hurry or he was no ordinary Continental train thief, for my

watch and sovereign-purse and some money had not been touched.

I lodged a complaint with an official and left my name and address, but I never saw my suit-case again. Its loss, though annoying, was more than balanced by the knowledge that the rascal had not laid his hands on the paper; but I realised that I was only at the beginning of a dangerous game, and I kept a wary eye on all comers.

The rest of the journey, however, passed without incident, and in due course I heard again the welcome roar of London. From my hotel I rang up Tony's address, and found that he had not returned. Then I turned in, dog-weary, but with a soothing sense of 'something attempted, something done,' for the precious paper was under my pillow. I had won the first trick.

(*Continued on page 213.*)

THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER IN WAR-TIME.

By PETER RINTOUL.

> Still let thy mind be bent, still plotting where,
> And when, and how, the business may be done.
> HERBERT.

COMMERCE has long been regarded as the first material bond of society—a chain of gold that has, in all times, bound men of all nations together in common interest. Indeed, the remarkable commercial growth and development among the foremost world-Powers during the past thirty years was so far-reaching as to be considered by many of our leading publicists as the great antidote of civilisation against war. But when Europe in the summer of 1914 was tipped into the seemingly impossible, it became at once apparent that the vast and intricate commercial interests of the hour did not hold the world in their grip; that the barbaric passions of men were, with volcanic violence, yet to devastate market-places and turn busy counting-houses into desolate ruins.

No class of men deplored this turn of events more than commercial travellers. It meant the interruption of the exchange of merchandise on a large scale between nations and between individuals. Nevertheless, with the breaking of the international bonds and the withdrawal of all the accredited representatives of the enemy Powers, the home producer, freed from the economic depression of free imports, at once sprang into his own. Likewise the British commercial traveller began to enjoy conditions remembered only by old 'road' men—survivors of a time when competition was not so exacting, and profits were not a percentage on a large turnover, but substantial things.

But while the return of less competitive days, in the first years of the war, favoured alike worker, manufacturer, and commercial traveller, curiously enough, unlike the industrial worker and the manufacturer, the commercial traveller—most conspicuously during last year—did not experience the continuity of good fortune.

Apart from the thinning out of their ranks in favour of His Majesty's forces, the need of commercial travellers largely vanished by reason of the world shortage of material and Government control of foodstuffs. While no class of men are more essential to the promotion and the maintenance of business, the state of war nullifies the gradational findings of a state of peace and renders the occupation of commercial travellers of no national importance—a classification to which the majority had (and perhaps rightly so) conscientious objections. Still, the indispensability of the commercial traveller as a business-getter was eclipsed under war conditions. At the same time, there remained 'on the road' a considerable—perhaps a rather surprising—number of 'commercials.' Their activities, however, were diverted from the offensive to the defensive. The objective was not to sell, but to portion out to retailers the goods in which they dealt. The connection between the manufacturer and the retail merchant being established, this apportioning can obviously to a large extent be accomplished by correspondence. So it is; but the connection between the distributer and the manufacturer at one time was not established, and therefore firms are to-day reaping the harvest that has grown up out of the spadework done by their representatives in other days. Fortunately for the commercial traveller, many 'houses' have considered this, and have made monetary acknowledgment as a grateful recognition of past services, and, incidentally, to cover the inevitable pecuniary loss sustained by him while on military duty. But whether or not such services have been acknowledged, in this or any other way, the fact remains that 'commercials' who during the war made railway journeys (often anything but pleasure-tours) were even then of value to their firms. At the same time they were of considerable importance in holding together the business connections within the nation. Their influence in this respect, it has been somewhere suggested, has not been appreciated in the Mother Country, and it has been left to the Colonies to show in a practical way their idea of what they consider the national worth of a commercial traveller. At a large meeting of members of the Sydney C.T.A. Club recently, Mr Denison Miller, governor of the Commonwealth Bank, appealed to the commercial

gentlemen there to assist, while soliciting orders for their respective firms, in raising the sixth Australian War Loan. In Canada the financial authorities adopted the same method, and secured the assistance of the organisation of commercial travellers. Therefore, while their actual services during war-time cannot be considered as on the same footing as before the advent of food control and Government super-protection, commercial travellers are not altogether what their category under conscription might lead some to believe—mere cumberers of the ground.

There are, however, other aspects of war-time experience. One of the most important innovations is the large influx of lady 'commercials.' As in other commercial and industrial pursuits, they have caught 'the manners living as they rise.' Their collegiate appearance seems to have caused misgivings among commercial men, and fears have been expressed that their positions may become permanent. Probably in some cases, since women have re-established to our generation their capacity to do work, such fears may be realised; but, generally speaking, they are vicarious travellers, their predecessors being their husbands, brothers, and in some instances their fathers—on active service. That one of the largest commercial travellers' associations in the United Kingdom, with several thousand members, has no more than six lady members enrolled may be accepted as an indication of the situation, affording as reliable a forecast as is possible of an indefinite future. But in the present abnormal conditions, when goods take no selling, the sex qualification is at a discount. To the average male commercial at any rate, especially if he has reached twoscore years and ten, the female competitor gives little or no concern. He keeps 'the noiseless tenor' of his way. The final adjustment of affairs, however, will require to await the day of common freedom, when the younger generation have the sword of Damocles removed from over their heads.

The curtailment of travelling facilities is another war-time obstruction on the path of the commercial traveller. One becomes so accustomed to being wheeled throughout the country in comfortable carriages on endless rails that excellent service is accepted as normal management. But some there are who at the least disturbance of railway routine expatiate on the amount of inconvenience inflicted upon those whose business lies 'on the road.' Others, again, who have sufficient imagination—and 'commercials,' as a rule, are not lacking in that distinction—realise that the inconvenience has been a mere bagatelle in comparison with the enormous aid rendered to the war purposes of the nation, and cheerfully accept the short service. Since the fateful autumn of 1914 all roads have led to France; and when the statement of Sir Herbert Walker, chairman of the present Board of Railway Control, is recalled—that on one part of our railway system (the London and South-Western) fifteen thousand special trains were run carrying troops alone, not including special trains bringing men to and from camps at week-ends; and that two thousand five hundred ambulance trains brought wounded men, soldiers and sailors, to London, all within a period of eighteen months—the wonder is how a regular public service has been maintained. But, after all, the lessened service has not told as heavily against the commercial traveller as it would appear. The trouble is not quite so acute as the railway guide suggests. Where the commercial traveller has the advantage—an expensive enough advantage—is in being able to double back, for those who are acquainted with every highway and bylane of a railway map may catch railway connections not indicated in the time-table. When this resource fails, small country towns are omitted; otherwise it would be impossible to complete a usual journey in schedule time. Where it is possible, however, when country towns and villages lie from two to five miles apart, the knights of the road endeavour to overcome the difficulty by completing the calls on Shanks' nag. This venture in favourable weather is often not the least enjoyable part of the business of a bagman. One may even *pro tem.* adopt the rôle of 'uncommercial traveller,' and contemplate the singing lark overhead, the tenants of the field, the beauty of the leafy vale, and here and there the pointed summit, or one of the marvels of modern science, a daring flight of aircraft.

It is on such tramps one meets occasionally, apart from the solitary sportsman, odd and old-world specimens of everyday humanity, travellers, too, in this 'wilderness of a world.' At the moment I remember two—a flaming tinman attending to the shortcomings of leaky kettles, and a packman sitting by the hedgerow studying his Bible, for his own spiritual edification, or perchance, according to the measure he had received, to mete it out again to his cottage patrons.

Such overland excursions, however, may only be undertaken by 'commercials' whose samples are light or who sell from lists. Those burdened with impedimenta require to accommodate themselves to the varied regularity of the iron way. This, with the possible prospect of fireless waiting-rooms in winter, may be, to say the least of it, somewhat discouraging, especially to lady travellers.

Travellers must consider their own personal requirements if satisfactory work is to be accomplished. Nothing engenders the spirit of confidence like a good lunch or dinner. Thus, the chief personal concern on a journey, apart from the contents of the note-book, is a good 'table,' and, of course, a comfortable bed—preference being usually given to the former. But since the day of rations dawned satisfaction is obtain-

able only by those singularly characterised by the loftiness of their patriotism or the fewness of their wants! It must be observed, however, that the reason why the average 'commercial' requires a good meal is because irregularity of meal-times is one of the disadvantages ever associated with commercial travelling. In the average hotel the bill of fare is moderate compared with pre-war days; but in cities, and in the vicinity thereof, one can give commercial hotels but faint praise.

At any rate, compared with the average table now set before us, the commercial traveller who was privileged to dine with George Borrow—according to the customs of the times, the privilege was on the side of Borrow—partook of a veritable Lucullan feast! It will be remembered that when Borrow was about to leave the inn where he had for a time served in the stables, the proprietor, regretting his going, entertained him to dinner before his departure. Borrow thus tells the story: 'At four o'clock I dined with the landlord in company with a commercial traveller. The dinner was good, though plain, consisting of boiled mackerel, rather a rarity in these parts at the time, and fennel sauce, a prime baron of roast-beef after the mackerel, then a tart and a noble Cheshire cheese; we had prime sherry at dinner, and whilst eating the cheese, prime porter, that of Barclay, the only good porter in the world. After the cloth was removed, we had a bottle of very good port, and whilst partaking of the port I had an argument with the commercial traveller on the corn-laws. The commercial traveller, having worsted me in the argument on the subject of the corn-laws, got up in great glee, saying he must order his gig, as business must be attended to.' . . .

In these days, however, the after-dinner capacity of the commercial traveller to dispose of chance wayfarers opposed to his views on the corn-laws, Preference, or like subjects can hardly be expected to equal that of the jovial C.T. who honoured with his company and defeated with his logic the word-master in the wayside inn!

But while culinary delights are rare, they are not altogether non-existent. There are some parts of Scotland where the personal element obtains; where, for example, unpretending Highland hospitality has outlived these grim years. Yet withal there is no extravagance, nor otherwise than the desire to be obedient to the spirit as well as the letter of the law. On the Banffshire coast, for instance, may be found such a 'home away from home.' It is known among 'commercials' as an ideal week-end rendezvous, especially for travellers from the South. In the winter months the appetising table, log fires, and other creature comforts dispel the gloom of the short, sullen days. One has a glimpse, as it were, of pleasant past times, and—the bagman is himself again!

When the world again returns to industry and peaceful living, the commercial traveller will be face to face with fresh circumstances and new conditions. Some there will be who will blunder into a commercial paradise; but the rule of the road, as heretofore, will be high endeavour to uplift lapsed connections and make new ones; while the representatives who have been continuously in touch with their clientele, and have shared with them the war-time difficulties, will, no doubt, stand well in the opening of the new era.

There are expectations in commercial circles, however, that the strain of over-competition will not assert itself after the war to the same extent as it did prior to its commencement, mainly because the home markets, it is predicted, will be more British than they have been during the past seventy years. The prospects of the commercial traveller—the pleasure and the profit he will derive from his calling—will therefore depend, in no small measure, on the ability and the efficiency of the home manufacturer to produce an article that will not only meet the requirements but satisfy the demands of the British public.

BEFORE THE BATTLE.

By F. O. O.

I.

THE heavy lorries rumbled and bumped over the uneven *pavé* that covered the long, straight road. There was just enough light left for their drivers to see the shadowy forms of the trees that bordered it, or to draw in still farther to the side of it, as a returning convoy loomed gigantic and threatening out of the growing darkness ahead of them. Ten o'clock, and only six more miles to cover—they were in good time.

A red glow as of sunset lightened the sky before them, becoming rapidly brighter as they advanced till the pale ribbon of the road grew red from its reflection. The leading driver turned to his mate.

'Town's afire again, Jim,' he shouted above the roar of the lorry.

'Always is now,' replied the man who sat by his side. 'All the better—give us light to work by.'

They could see the fire plainly now, and the broken towers and chimneys of the abandoned town sharply silhouetted against it. Every now and again the heart of the fire would heave, and

a fountain of sparks would scatter from it, as a shell burst in the burning buildings. The Germans had no intention of allowing the fire to be put out.

The leading driver gripped his wheel more tightly and pushed his accelerator-pedal down to its full extent. It is nervous work driving a lorry into a bombardment; there is no chance of hearing the shell coming, and at any moment one may land alongside. And the lorries were laden with ammunition for the big guns.

The convoy crashed over the cobbles of the town, with a roar that re-echoed from the empty, ruined houses, drowning the noise of the bombardment itself. There was no need for caution. The town was as brightly lit as by daylight; the fire was so close that burning timbers fell right across the track. They raced along the deserted main street, turned sharply to the right across the bridge that spanned the sluggish river, and pulled up with a shrieking of brakes as a figure stepped out of the shadows and held up its hand in front of them.

It was an officer from the battery.

'You can't come to much harm under the lee of these houses,' he said. 'One lorry at a time can come up to the position; it's a couple of hundred yards round the corner. I'll show you the way.'

The first lorry moved off, turned into a narrow alley between two rows of what had once been dingy cottages, and finally emerged into an open space surrounded by high, jagged walls, behind which towered the ruins of a big foundry. At the noise of its coming a couple of dozen men appeared silently through a gap in the wall, and fell upon the lorry. In a few seconds they were filing, ant-like, back again, some bearing a hundred-pound shell upon their shoulders, others carrying the square cartridge-boxes in pairs between them.

'We're in luck to have this fire to unload by,' exclaimed the officer. 'We'll get a few hours' rest before the show begins, after all.'

The fire grew brighter, fanned by a light breeze and encouraged by the steady shelling of the enemy. One by one the lorries came into the yard, to be set upon by the never-failing stream of men, who emptied them with an orderly method born of long practice. Each lorry, as soon as it was emptied, backed out to give place to the next. In little over an hour the convoy started back on its perilous journey, looking forward to a few hours' rest at the siege-park before setting out again for railhead to refill.

II.

The unloading gangs disappeared with the last of their burdens through the hole in the wall, and the officer followed them. It was like passing suddenly from daylight into some sea-cavern, an illusion fostered by the feel of the broken bricks and mortar under foot. Overhead great gaps in the shattered roof showed changing patches of the crimson of the fire-lit sky; elsewhere all was dark save for the feeble glimmer of the scattered hurricane-lamps, round which monstrous shadows flickered. At almost regular intervals the ground and the tottering walls shook to the bursting of a shell somewhere close at hand, and then a loose tile or fragment of metal would fall with a crash which stood out upon the background of low sounds that filled the place. One was conscious that men were toiling unseen in the gloom. Sometimes a sharp order, sometimes a low chorus—'Here she comes—now then, once more, heave!'—made itself heard above the general hum of labour. At infrequent intervals the flash of an electric torch revealed for an instant a knot of figures grouped round a huge formless mass of metal, whose polished parts glinted in the sudden light.

Slowly one's eyes became accustomed to the gloom, and the scene began to unfold itself, first in its main features, then, little by little, in its more intimate detail. One found one's self in a great casting-shed, the main building of the foundry. Although roof and walls were breached by shell-holes, enough of the building remained to afford excellent cover for its present occupants. Four sliding-doors were set in one of the walls, and behind each of these stood the forbidding bulk of a great howitzer, so placed that its muzzle would point through the doorway when the door was opened. Two of the guns were already in their final position, and round these toiled their detachments, putting the finishing-touches to their charges, and laying round them the curious apparatus of hand-spikes, rammers, and loading-trays necessary for their service. The remaining two guns were being hauled into position with ropes and tackles, foot by foot, over the unequal floor. The men, stripped to the waist and grimy with the filth of the abandoned workshop, which floated round them as a black dust-cloud, lay back on the ropes like a well-trained tug-of-war team, obedient to the word of their leader.

Three men wended their way over the uncertain floor, one holding the shafts of a wheelbarrow, the other two steadying upon it an ungainly machine, all wheels and chains and cranked handles. They neared the first gun, and half-a-dozen men relieved them of their burden and lifted the machine on to the trail of the gun. The artificer staff-sergeant and his crew appeared from the gloom, and in a few seconds connected up a pipe-line and a pressure-gauge. There was a slight hissing sound as the valve was released. 'Right away!' exclaimed the artificer.

Two sturdy gunners had manned each handle of the compressor, and at the word they started turning furiously. The light of the lanterns shone on their bare skin, down which poured little rivulets of sweat, leaving tracks that gleamed

white against the dust that covered them. It is hard work pumping air against a pressure of a quarter of a ton or so to the square inch. Now and again a fresh man sprang in to the task, catching the circling handle as his mate released it. The artificer, watching the pressure-gauge, held up his hand. 'Good enough!' he said. The pipes were disconnected and the compressor carried to the next gun.

III.

From the darkness behind the big howitzers came an occasional heavy sound of clanking metal, the curious half ring, half thud of shell falling against one another. Here in the gloom, relieved only by the strangely reflected glow of the fire without, men were busy cleaning the shell that had been unloaded from the lorries, divesting them of their protecting battens, and ranging them in order for convenient feeding to the guns. Sometimes, when the fire blazed up more brightly than usual, a glimmer of light fell upon the long rows that stretched away into the darkness on either side, hundreds upon hundreds of yellow-painted, wicked-looking projectiles, fifty tons and more of steel and high explosive ready and eager to wreak destruction upon the targets that awaited them.

One could easily form an idea of their possibilities. A German 5·9 battery, almost the exact equivalent of these hidden guns, was firing with easy deliberation into the town, apparently at random. Sometimes its shell fell far away among the ruins, the roar of the burst echoing and re-echoing like a peal of thunder. Sometimes they fell quite close, shaking the crazy factory to its core, with a crash, followed by a long-continued rain of débris that clattered upon the broken tiles and upon the remains of a corrugated iron shed which stood in the yard. Too close to be pleasant, some of these shell, had there been anybody with sufficient leisure to heed them.

And all about the factory, wherever the least damaged walls seemed to offer the best protection, men were busy making piles of the wooden boxes that contained the cartridges. These cartridges are always a source of uneasiness. A hostile shell may often fall among a pile of projectiles, and do no particular damage beyond scattering them and rendering them unserviceable. But if it falls among a pile of cartridges it is pretty certain to set them on fire; and modern propellants burn with a fierce blaze which it is practically impossible to extinguish. The wise battery commander, therefore, distributes his cartridges in small groups to avoid the risk of an unlucky shell starting a fire that may destroy all his ammunition, and so leave him incapable of further action.

At the farther end of the casting-shed a line of light revealed an ill-fitting door, hastily replaced upon its hinges by the battery wheeler. This door opened into a fair-sized room, dimly lit by a couple of candles, each stuck into the neck of a bottle. It had evidently been the drawing-office, for, although every trace of furniture had long since disappeared, probably to supply fuel for the scattered billets in the town, the floor was still strewn with torn blue prints and fragments of patterns, and the walls covered with elaborate calculations in pencil. The room had escaped damage, save in one corner, where a shell-splinter had torn a hole in the outer wall, a gap that had been roughly plugged with a couple of sandbags. The ceiling was discoloured with mildew, and quivered ominously whenever a shell burst anywhere near the foundry; above it could be heard a scurrying of rats between it and the rafters. But, taking the place all round, it made a very good fighting-post—a far better one, in fact, than the battery, accustomed to improvising such places in all manner of strange corners, had learnt to expect.

IV.

One end of the room was completely occupied by a large table, contrived from a coach-house door mounted on two low pillars of sandbags. It was on one corner of this makeshift table that the candles stood, illuminating a collection of maps, range-tables, and instruments of all kinds. Seated on a cartridge-box before these was the battery commander, busily engaged with pencil, protractor, and scale. A sheet torn from a field service pocket-book lay in front of him, covered with notes as to times and targets. These the battery commander was checking for the last time.

'Zero to plus eight, target M14a26 to M14a98; rate of fire, one round per gun per minute,' he muttered. 'That works out: All guns switch eight degrees left; Number One, one eight three-five elevation, one-five minutes right, and the rest of them as I've got down here. The rest follows pretty naturally. That seems all right. It's about half-past eleven now, and the show starts about dawn, I suppose. As soon as we've synchronised and got zero time we're all ready, bar the guns, and they won't be long now.'

He went on with his checking, and the telephonist hidden in the shadows at the far end of the room, who had raised his head at the sound of the major's voice, leaned over towards his mate.

'We'll be relieved in half-an-hour,' he whispered hoarsely. 'Give brigade a call; they're very quiet lately.'

The man spoken to put his fingers on the key, buzzed the call, and put the receiver to his ear.

'Carnation?' he inquired. 'Convolvulus speaking. Line all right?'

'O.K.,' came the reply. 'Hold on, Convolvulus. Here's a message for you.'

The telephonist reached out for his pencil and message-form.

'Go ahead,' he said.

For some seconds he wrote in silence; then he spoke again into the instrument.

'Coming back. Begins: From Carnation to Convolvulus, 11.33 P.M. AAA. Forecast for twelve hours ending midday June 7th. AAA. Wind south to south-west, light, some haze early, clearing later. AAA. Fine, possibly some showers towards end of period. Ends.'

He put down the instrument and handed the message to the major, who read it with interest.

'Good!' he exclaimed. 'Let's hope it's correct. Hallo! What's this?'

The door opened to admit a man covered in white dust, and with a despatch-case slung across his shoulder, who paused on the threshold and saluted.

'Come in,' said the major. 'Have any difficulty in getting through the town?'

'Only by the railway crossing, sir,' replied the despatch-rider, unslinging his message-case as he spoke. 'They're dropping a few gas-shells round there, but nothing to hurt.'

He opened the case and took an envelope from it, addressed, 'O.C. Convolvulus—Urgent,' which he handed to the major. The latter opened it and unfolded the paper it contained. The message was a brief one. 'O.C. Carnation to O.C. Convolvulus. Zero time 3.15 A.M. June 7th, 1917. Acknowledge,' was all it said.

The major signed the envelope and gave it back, as his receipt for delivery, to the messenger, who saluted and left the room. Then he glanced at the number scribbled on the message, and wrote a note on a pink form, which he handed to the telephonist. It bore the words: 'Carnation. Your M 173 acknowledged 11.47 P.M. 6/6/17. Convolvulus.' The telephonist took it, and transmitted it to brigade.

As he did so the door opened once more, this time to admit the second in command.

'Battery ready for action, sir,' he reported.

'Thanks, Hawkins,' replied the major. 'Is all the ammunition properly stowed?'

'Yes, sir,' said Captain Hawkins. 'We can open fire in three minutes after you give us the targets.'

'Good man!' said the major. 'Tell the men they've about three hours to get all the rest they can in, and then come and lend me a hand to check this programme for the last time.'

V.

A few minutes later the two men were sitting at the table immersed in calculations, when the telephone buzzed suddenly. The telephonist took up the instrument.

'Yes, Convolvulus speaking. Yes, he's here, sir. Very good, sir.' Then, turning to the major, 'The adjutant would like to speak to you, sir.'

The major rose from his seat and took the receiver from the man's hand.

'O.C. Convolvulus speaking,' he said. 'Yes, is that you, Gibbs?'

'Yes, sir,' came the reply. 'The colonel would like to know how you are getting on.'

'All well,' replied the major. 'Guns in position and everything ready. Any fresh orders?'

'No, sir,' said the voice. 'Will you synchronise now?'

'Right-o,' assented the major. 'Hand me my watch, will you, Hawkins? It's on the table, beside my note-book. Thanks. Fire away; I'm all ready.'

'I'll give you 12.9, sir. It's just eight minutes past now.' A silence in which the ticking of a watch could be plainly heard; then Gibbs's voice again: 'Thirty seconds to go—twenty—ten—five—now!'

'Thanks,' said the major. 'I got it. Nine minutes past midnight. Good-bye.'

He put the instrument down and laid his watch on the table. Then he wrote, 'Fourteen seconds fast,' on a slip of paper and put it behind the watch. 'The time of flight to the first target is twenty-two seconds,' he said. 'That means that we must fire the first round at eight seconds before 3.15 by this watch. Just three hours to go.'

Perhaps it should be explained that all operations are worked out to exact time, and that a few seconds' error in the bursting of the shell which compose a barrage may mean all the difference between success and failure. Hence this meticulous care with regard to time.

The room relapsed into silence, broken only by the heavy breathing of Hawkins, who, like a wise man, had taken the opportunity of snatching an hour or two of sleep, and had curled himself up in a corner. The major busied himself in writing half-a-dozen letters, not knowing when such an opportunity might occur again. The two telephonists took well-thumbed and much-torn books from their pockets and proceeded to read them—for the twelfth time at least—interrupting their reading every few minutes to test the line.

The fire, whose flicker had penetrated even into this secluded spot, had died down by now, and with it the activity of the hostile artillery. Everything was very quiet. An occasional burst of fire from a field battery far away, or a faint distant chattering of machine-guns, was all that disturbed the almost uncanny silence. It seemed that the world itself stood still, awaiting anxiously the fury of the coming dawn.

VI.

It was not till a quarter to three that Hawkins yawned and sprang to his feet, awake in an

instant with the consciousness of work to be done. He glanced at his watch anxiously.

'Plenty of time,' he said. 'Lord! I was dreaming that I was on leave, and dining at the "Troc." I think I'll get the battery into action, sir.'

'Yes, do,' said the major, folding up his letters. 'Let me know when you're ready to fire. Here's the target list.'

Hawkins left the room, and in a few minutes the sounds of the battery getting ready could be heard. The big doors were swung back with a clatter; orders passed; the heavy thud of the big shell being well rammed home told of the loading of the guns. As the hand of the watch pointed to three Hawkins appeared once more.

'Battery ready to fire, sir,' he reported.

The major nodded. 'Stand easy,' he replied; 'you've got about a quarter of an hour.'

Hawkins saluted and left the room, leaving the door open behind him.

The minutes passed with leaden feet. It was still pitch-dark. Nothing could be seen through the open door but the hurricane-lamps, hung by the sights of each gun, and throwing an uncertain light upon the detachments that sat motionless around them. The major gazed at the hand of the watch before him, smoking placidly. There was no more to be done. The attack upon the Messines Ridge would open in five minutes now; its issue lay upon the knees of the gods.

Every minute seemed an age in which each soul in the battery had ample leisure to examine his own actions. Had all been well done? The honour of the battery depended on each man's achievements. The slightest detail left undone might mean failure now—the failure not of the individual, but of the unit. Would the order to fire never come?

The hand of the watch crept to fourteen minutes past three.

'Hook lanyards!' called the major sharply. The 'Numbers Four' of the detachments hooked the long cords into the friction-tubes and stretched them out to their full extent. The rest of the men sprang to their places and stood as if carved in steel. One could have fancied that the ticking of the watch drowned every other sound. The hand crept slowly round the dial. Thirty seconds before 3.15—twenty—fifteen—ten—'Fire!'

And as the word sounded the four big howitzers spoke together with a roar and a flash and a hot blast of dust and acrid smoke. The battle had begun.

JOHN BROWN.

By R. W. CAMPBELL, Author of *Private Spud Tamson; Dorothy, V.A.D., and the Doctor;* &c.

CHAPTER XII.—THE NOISE OF WAR.

THE best way to understand war is to grasp the thoughts and the feelings of the soldier in action. Our newspaper correspondents have attempted to interpret the soldier's feelings for us, but have failed, mainly because they are not soldiers, and their stuff is written in comparative comfort. It is fashionable to 'write up' the soldier advancing to the cannon's mouth as if he were going to Brighton for a week-end. This is ridiculous, for this reason, that the soldier is just human, and when facing death he experiences all the symptoms of an invalid who is about to undergo a serious operation. But to make the whole thing clear to you, let me reproduce a little discussion we had in our hut one night.

It was Beefy who broached the subject with a casual remark to the effect that when he went over the top at Loos he felt as if he wanted to go home—quick.

'That's just how I felt,' said Billy Greens.

We gathered round the last speaker and asked him to go on.

'Oh, well, let me be frank, and say I was never in such a funk in all my life. I am sure many more felt the same, but, of course, we never said so. What heartened me to go on was the remark our colonel made as he went over the top. He said, "Look here, men; the Boche is just as frightened as we are, so come on." This idea gave me comfort. Still, my knees were groggy, and I believe if I had met a Hun then it would have been a bad show for me.'

'What made you go forward?' I asked him.

'Discipline, and the knowledge that if I funked, my name would stick in the mud for ever. I am not a hero, and I believe thousands feel like that. We are really a race of pacifists; but, for all that, I believe that a pacifist nation in arms is much more deadly than a nation nurtured on the themes of Bernhardi. None of us is in this business because he likes it. Personally, I loathe the whole scheme. It is ghastly. Still we, apparently, can only end it by fighting, and that is why I and many others are in.'

'What frightened you most, Billy?'

'Oh, the noise—the terrible noise. If it weren't for the high explosives I believe war wouldn't be half bad. But it is the noise

which has a demoralising effect on the educated brain. It stuns, unnerves, and creates a thousand fears. Mind you, I don't think it has the same effect on a navvy, a miner, or any sort of manual labourer. These men have no nerves, and for that reason I think they are the best private soldiers. The duller the brain, the less the suffering. But modern war is a terrible thing for the highly sensitive and highly skilled.'

'Did you reach your objective all right?' asked Ginger.

'Yes. I saw the C.O. ahead, waving us on, and I went. The man seemed so brave that one really couldn't let him down, so we just followed. But I was still nervous. Then I saw the C.O. fall. He was shot through the stomach. I went mad. I wanted to kill some one. When I got to the first line of the Huns I saw a big fellow skulking away. I shot him—*dead*. After that I wanted more. God forgive me for the feeling, but I 'm sure it was the primitive lust to kill. It 's in us all. Education seemed but a veneer. When it was all over I went into a corner and prayed. Ugh! it 's a horrible business,' concluded Billy.

'Yes, we all have much the same experience,' added Nobby Clarke. 'Personally, it wasn't the thought of death that worried me, but the secret fear of getting a stomach wound, and being left out in No Man's Land. And I believe almost every officer and man has the same secret dread. The reason, I think, is that an abdominal wound is usually fatal or crippling, and a man does not like to picture a bayonet or a lump of shrapnel in his tummy. If a scientist could devise a light bullet-proof abdominal belt, I believe that men would go forward much quicker and more confidently.'

'Do you think the Hun has the same fear?' I asked.

'I think the Hun is even more afraid of a stomach wound than we are. Man to man, he is not our equal in bayonet-fighting. It may be lack of training, but I imagine it really is due to the fact that he is flabby and no sportsman. For example, in the one bayonet-fight which I was in, not one of the Huns stood up to us. They flung their rifles away and squealed like pigs. Cold steel to a German is worse than gas or shells. The Hun is terror-stricken when he sees the knife of the Gurkha.'

'Who do you think are really best with the bayonet, Nobby?' Billy asked.

'I imagine the Russians are really top-dog. You see, they are primitive, and educated to the knife. Like all semi-civilised peoples, the Russians can stand the most awful punishment. The Bulgarians are also good. Still, it *is* a fact that the Irish can beat them. In that little scrap between some Irishmen and Bulgarians during the retirement in Macedonia, the Irishmen won. The Irish, like the Scots, are fiery, almost mad, in action. Once they are roused, nothing will stop them.'

'What was your experience, Ginger?' I asked, switching the discussion back to its original point.

'The five minutes before going over were worse than the whole day's fighting. We had too much time to think, and my imagination was running riot. I didn't feel like a soldier. I felt like a lamb going to the slaughter. What really impressed me was how men could live in such a barrage. Worse; the thousands and thousands of bullets which were whistling over and splashing against the parapet seemed to whisper death was near. Of course, I had forgotten that it takes about a thousand rounds to secure one dead man. However, it is wonderful what example and training *will* do. I believe that, no matter how funky a man may feel, if he has been to a good school he immediately thinks, "What will they say in school if I make a bad show?" Training is also useful. Months of discipline tell. But the greatest asset is the bearing of the officer and the N.C.O. Fortunately we had a splendid company commander. He could mask his feelings. I believe the man was suffering just as we were suffering, yet he walked down the line smiling, cheering, and inspiring. When the time came to go, he was first over, and we followed like deer.

'Once we were over, I seemed to be too excited to suffer from nervous troubles. The noise, the shouting, the running, and the sight of the Huns bolting somehow carried us along. The flight of the enemy also raised the sporting instinct, and we followed as if out shooting hares. Again, I did feel a *true* hate of the Hun. Belgium and Serbia seemed to flash through my brain, with the result that I was out for results. One Hun fired at me point-blank, but missed. I shoved my bayonet into him. To me it was the most awful physical sensation. I felt sick, but I withdrew automatically, as if I had been at bayonet drill. There was no more time to moralise, for I was fighting for my life. It isn't a healthy business. I believe we, as a nation, abhor it; yet somehow I feel, without bragging, that, once at close quarters, we can always beat the Hun.'

'Yes, Ginger; and the war has proved that we are not the decadent nation many thought we were,' I remarked.

'By no means, John. Trafalgar, Waterloo, Inkermann, and Tel-el-kebir are mere skirmishes compared to Ypres, Loos, and Cambrai. Nelson's or Wellington's men never endured the sufferings of the men to-day. It is really wonderful how this city-bred, over-civilised nation has stuck it out. But another war of this kind would send the world insane. It 's the noise, the *awful* noise, that is playing the devil with the nerves of all.'

(*Continued on page 221.*)

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE LAST TRAIL

By F. St Mars.

PART I.

I.

THE snow was gliding down very silently and mysteriously, imperiously imposing a universal silence, as if the Witch of the North had her finger on her lips and was whispering 'Hush!' while she chloroformed the world with ice and cotton-wool.

The night was trying hard to be very dark, but could not, because of the ghostly glare of the snow. Yet you could not see very far; not out beyond where the snow reached on the mud-ooze of the estuary and (since the going out of the tide) glass-like ice began; inland no farther than the sea-wall where the bent, gnarled tamarisks stood, with their heads to the wind and their arms held up in front of their faces, as it were; not far on either hand along the snow-slope of the pebbled shore.

Hst! Listen! What was that?

A bark, guttural, hoarse, full of an unutterable yearning, came suddenly out of the night, on the lap of the wind, and a form, long, low, indistinct, and dark, which, silently and almost unnoticed, had been canvassing along the speckled band of high-tide line, as suddenly switched off all movement, and became as still as if the cold had all at once stopped the action of its heart. But it was not that form which had barked.

The snow fell on, and a curlew, somewhere out on the mud-flats, called dismally, 'Cour-leep! cour-lee!' as if it had heard the sound, and, getting ready to fly, sought to warn all other curlews hidden in the night to get ready likewise.

Then the bark came again, quite close now, only just on the other, or marsh, side of the sea-wall—not the bark of a dog, one felt that; felt, too, the indescribable mystery of wildness underlying it.

And then something jumped up, appeared smudged, a deeper dark against the dark of the sky, on the top of the sea-bank, and began trotting smartly up and down, whisking round at the end of its path, and returning again and again, with a neatness and a celerity that were characteristic.

And all the time the long, low, dark form on the high-tide line remained motionless, as if petrified. And where it stood, as if it had chosen that one and only spot in the whole scene purposely, it harmonised so exactly with the snow-mottled, dark line of seaweed that, unless it moved, it was entirely invisible.

At last the something on the sea-bank jumped down, and a little, vagrant, cloud-chased patch of moonlight, which came hurrying along the shore, caught that something, and revealed it for a moment, clear as clear. It—she—was a vixen.

At the same moment another something took its place on the top of the sea-bank, and—yapped. And that something was a dog fox—her lover. Far away another dog fox could be heard barking somewhere in the marsh, and at the sound of it the first fox snarled wickedly.

Then the vixen began nosing along high-tide line. She knew that the sea, which can be generous in its gifts sometimes, especially after a storm, often throws up free meals there. But this time she found something that she did not want, for suddenly she discovered herself face to face with a form, very long and low, with absurdly short, sturdy legs, a sinuous, brown-black body, and a flat, cruel head. It was a polecat, the weasels' and the stoats' big cousin. Doubtless he was there on the same errand as the vixen.

Seeing that he was detected, the polecat arched his back, and, bristling, gibbered viciously. He did not trust foxes at any time, but foxes in love might be even worse than usual. And they were.

Perhaps the vixen wanted to test her lover. Perhaps she was a little above herself. Who can tell? Anyway, with a wave of her fine brush, she crouched for attack, skirmishing, light as a rubber ball, as the polecat began to retreat towards the tamarisks. He was feeling distinctly uncomfortable.

Next moment the dog fox joined forces with the vixen, and began leaping high in the air as he sprang in and out, snapping, and away again before you could wink; but he was dealing with one of the bravest beasts in all the wild, and at the fifth jump he knew it.

Striking as a snake strikes, from an arched loop to a flattened line, the polecat, whose temper is proverbially bad at the best of times, got his bite home, and when the dog fox leapt back, he

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—took the polecat with him, pinned to his throat.

It is true that the vixen's white teeth were buried in the polecat's flank, but it would take more than that to unlock the determined long beast's hold. The vixen lost her grip as the dog fox began spinning and rolling—for the polecat bites to make his teeth meet—and she never had a chance to get it again.

Without a sound something topped the sea-bank, stood staring for an instant, and then, dropping on the shore, drew one streaking, reddish line towards the dog fox. It was the other dog fox, he who had barked his distant answering bark, and he was not one to waste his chances.

The polecat loosed his grip and galloped away, leaving them at it—fighting like fiends. He passed the vixen on his way, and she got out of it. She was several millimetres too interested in the fight to trouble about *him*, and had not the slightest wish to argue with him alone, in any case.

II.

He had gone perhaps three hundred yards—taking good care to hug the sea-bank and the line of evergreen tamarisks, where were holes and twisted root and wave-made caves, out of which no fox would care to turn him—when a noise, rapidly approaching him, suspended his step 'twixt rise and fall. It was a mighty noise, most alarming there, in that place, with the magic of the snow and the spirit of the estuary lying heavy over all. Also, it was an indescribable sound. The distant ruffle of drums, which a king gets on a visit, a tropic rain-shower on a forest, a south-west gale thundering through an oak hanger—what you will. Anyway, it was wonderful.

The polecat cocked one eye over his shoulder on the line of retreat, then stared ahead with neck low.

It was dark, in the sky at any rate, except when the moon flashed out like a searchlight—which was not then; but that which came through the air could be seen plainly. It was as if a barn was being hurled across the heavens low down. A black mass it was, travelling like the wind, and with a noise like tempests gone astray. Indeed, it was a most amazing spectacle. No wonder the polecat cringed—flattened.

In a breathless breath it was upon him, roaring, whistling, dazing, above him, over him. In another breath it was gone—dwindling into the dark—the biggest, closest-packed flock of teal that ever you saw.

If you tell a naturalist that so many teal could fly together, and so close packed as that, in a huge solid mass, bird almost touching bird, he would perhaps—smile! But if you told one or two old and experienced wildfowlers that, they would not smile; they would believe—for they know. They have seen it.

The polecat's head shot up as the whizzing rush of birds went by, and he listened. Then he whisked round on his tail, almost treading on it, it seemed, and set off after them at his odd, sidelong gallop. The mighty sound of their passage had stopped, and so, he argued, had they.

Came he soon to a low, pebbly bar, and a big cove beyond, fed by an inlet through the bar. The cove had many fingers, and they were rush-fringed. The cove itself was bearded with that species of marine grass which tries to conquer most estuaries, and which, not being learned, I call 'wild-duck grass.' All the scene was white. And all the scene—cove, bar, and fingers—was alive—crawling with teal.

It was at this point that the amazed polecat's mouth watered so much that he had to lick his lips. But he lost not more than long enough to get the geography of the scene fixed in his brain, before he got right down to business. I mean, he seemed about to sink through the snow and vanish completely. This was because Fate does not choose to turn the polecat white in winter, as it does some of his relatives. Therefore his brown-black nondescript uniform was conspicuous, unless, indeed, he chose to pose as a shadow of bush or grass, or what not. And this was what he did do, with the result that somehow, wonderfully, without the many hundreds of teal eyes noticing it, that shadow contrived to move itself one hundred and fifty yards along that bar—just below the crest on the far side—one hundred and fifty yards to the gap, where, low down, within an inch of the trickling water, it lay almost among the teal, without ever having given itself away as anything more than the shadow of some big stone.

Then that shadow turned again into a polecat, and shifted through half-frozen slush and water, to the accompaniment of noises like treading upon glass, in less than the tick of a second-hand on a watch. You *have* to do that with teal. Even so, they did not wait; they shot, sprang straight up, as if fired from springs—simultaneously. The polecat just managed to grab the foot of one beautiful, gold-spectacled, red-headed, little, fourteen-and-a-half-inch drake, and that only by leaping his highest possible leap.

The death-flutter of that drake—for the polecat can slay quickly as a trained swordsman when he likes—was drowned in the cataclysmal roar of wings that followed, and, ere the noise had dissolved high away in the night sky, he and his prey were lost together among the reeds.

III.

Together they went from sight, but not alone.

As if the roar of wings—those fastest wings of all, nearly—had called it (which perhaps they had), there appeared over the edge of a dike a flat, dark, wedge-shaped head, and eyes that, as the head turned, gleamed. Anon unto the head was added a shape, long, and so low in the snow that it seemed to be gliding on its belly. It

might have been the polecat himself, but it was not. Fate must have sent it, for it was a polecat too, and a lady into the bargain.

One year and many months our male polecat had sought for a wife, and had not found one—polecats do not haunt every field these days, nor every county. One year and some months this female polecat had hunted the wild for a mate, and devil a husband could she find. Both had wandered far in the process, far even for restless beasts, far, even unto this flat and wind-swept place at last—neither knowing. *And neither knew.* If she had lifted her head above the dike even five seconds earlier, she might have seen at least his tail vanish. If he had but paused just once only to look round, he might, he would, have seen the glint of those eyes—like wrist-watches of soldiers who make a night attack—flash above the dike. Fate gave a woggle to their lives, and—they did not. Within a hundred yards of each other, after so long, and—neither knew!

The female shape came out, and hunted about along the inlet shore—she looked like an ant from afar—as if she were a hound questing. Then, a well-marked form, low across the spotless waste, she turned away, and the snow haze gradually swallowed her up. And even as she did so, bells broke out—bells inland, bells of some low marsh church among bent, gale-tormented trees—clearly, beautifully, through the silence: bells of the night. Both beasts heard them, and stood listening, with flat heads up on long necks. Then the female went, and the two that had come within a hundred yards of each other, within a hundred yards, after so long, drew farther and farther apart every instant. Perhaps Fate laughed—or was it a red-throated diver crossing the night sky?

IV.

The polecat did not eat all that teal. It was his custom—a bad tribal habit, indeed—to sip a little and go elsewhere. In deference to the snow, however, he took more than that. It is not quite clear whether, by the same token, he, like the mole and some others, was possessed of an astounding appetite; he certainly slew more than his share as a beast of about twenty-three inches from sharp nose to bushy tail-tip.

For this reason, therefore, the polecat did not reappear immediately after the meal. He cleaned first; as a warrior specialising much in subterranean warfare, cleanliness was with him, more perhaps than with most wild things, a religion. And, secondly, he gained, or tried to gain, some closer knowledge of a thing unknown, that ran about the reeds like a rat, but not a rat, what time he was doing grisly work with the teal. This thing had ruby eyes, and it was a brown wedge. When he tried to follow it, he would have sunk into the rotten ooze if he had not learnt how to throw himself backwards, and if the ooze had not been sheeted with thin ice that crackled atop. The thing might have been a goblin by the way it reduplicated itself, turning up behind when it ought to have been in front, and in front when every sign proved that it must be behind, and by the way it seemed able to run about upon the surface of the very water itself.

At the end of half-an-hour's floundering, the polecat discovered three things: firstly, that he was wet and cold (he clinked icicles as he walked), and not so clean as he had been; secondly, that he was no nearer catching that goblin, or whatever it was, than he had been at the start; and, thirdly, that he did not know from antediluvian relics which was the way out of those reeds.

In another ten minutes he had more or less got over the first difficulty, bar the icicles; in another ten, more by luck than good judgment, he solved the last. And the thing, which was a bird, by name water-rail, or officially *Rallus aquaticus*, grunted gibingly after him, as it were a bull-frog, as he went. But—and this is where the shoe squeezed—that had given the female polecat fifty minutes' start of him at the least, and fifty minutes may be as good as fifty hours in devious wanderings, where these beasts are concerned.

V.

The polecat, hugging the dikes and hollows where the fingers of water crept inland to the marshes, manœuvred almost unseen down to the shore of the inlet. He put up three lapwings—whose eyes must have been miracles of keenness—which went away, complaining shrilly to all the night. He watched seven little spidery dunlin—at least, I think they were that particular kind of shore bird—running about on the mud-ooze as if it were solid ground, and was deceived into mistaking them for widgeon duck by a yodling call that they made. He crept up to a snipe, running about in a little pan of wet; but the snipe had miraculous eyes, like the lapwings, and dissolved, rasping, into the night.

Then he turned along the shore—*the wrong way*, the very opposite to that taken by the female. It was an exasperating thing, because they were the last two living polecats in that county, and one felt now that they could never meet, and the race of polecats must be doomed to die out in that part for ever. A watcher, had there been one, would have been tempted to shout out, 'The other way, you fool! The other way.' But it was no good. The idiotic beast persisted in his course, and everything seemed hopeless. And then it was that Fate took a hand in the game; or, if it wasn't Fate, I do not know what it was.

The polecat came to a grayish post. He had seen it for some time, as he ambled slowly along. It had seemed to him almost as if it shone with a faintly luminous phosphorescence; but perhaps

this was fancy. Anyway, the wind was blowing from him to it, so he was at a disadvantage. The post, as is the custom of most posts—and there were plenty, sea-washed and tottering, about—did not move. At least, it did not move until he came within about a yard of it. Then it did.

He heard something whiz past his eye, and dodged, if I may so put it, before he thought to. It is a way they have to get into in the wild if they desire to remain alive—acting first, and thinking after. Then he was two yards away. I say 'was,' because the dodge and the jump seemed to our eyes almost simultaneous.

Thereafter he turned and regarded that post with a light in his eyes, and found that it had changed into a heron, and he knew that the whiz was made by its pointed beak on its coiled spring of a long neck. The heron got up and flapped heavily, on great umbrella-like wings, back to the place the polecat had come from; and the polecat, after stopping apparently to think of the wonderful escape of his eye from the plunged assegai beak of the heron, followed his assailant.

I fancy, however, that he judged the heron's observation height by his own lowliness. Anyway, the long-legged bird saw him coming all the time, although it did not appear to, and when he had got nearly close enough—but it would have been risky to tackle old friend heron, in any case—flapped away into the snowy night, grating 'Cra-ank! cra-ank!' in a voice like the rattling of rusty dungeon chains, as it went.

And the polecat struck the trail of the lady polecat, even as, in his rage, he made to gallop after the great bird.

VI.

For about ten seconds he looked as if he had been struck by lightning and incandesced. For the rest he flashed to wild excitement, running that trail with something of the fury of an ant. Not, mind you, that he really appeared to be following that trail at all. Except in the hollows, he kept about forty yards to one side of it, roughly; but that was because the wind had blown her scent to one side for that distance.

But there was only the high-pressure, nearly bursting excitement, which fairly oozed out of that polecat at every stride, to show the amazing change that the striking of that trail had made within him. The obvious proof of that change came when, forgetting the strict rule of hugging cover, he made to cut across the open space between one stiffly rustling, reed-choked dike and another, and—met a *man*. (I wonder what he was up to there, that night of all nights.)

That man *was* surprised when, without warning and for no reason that he could see, of course—how was he to know that he stood bang across that magic trail, barring the way?—a long, low, dumb, dark beast slid out of the rushes and the night, and started climbing up his leg. He accuses it of trying to reach his throat, which was quite likely. Now, that man had a gun of sorts, a fourteen-bore, double-barrel muzzle-loader, and it was loaded, but he could not fire at a beast on his leg, you see. Wherefore he kicked and yelled, and the beast slid down his leg, and—made his teeth meet in the first thing he could lay hold of. It happened to be the man's leg, and the 'bitee' acknowledged the fact with a howl that did more towards frightening the polecat than any action could have done.

Next moment the man had clubbed his gun, and with a thud the polecat dropped, all consciousness knocked out of him. He came round in a second or two, being only stunned, and found himself lying, with his mouth full of snow, looking up at the man skipping grotesquely ten yards away, wrestling, apparently, madly with his gun. As a matter of fact, that gun, being a muzzle-loader, had taken advantage of its owner's diversion of attention for a moment, when he clubbed it, to decant its caps, and without those caps, or fresh ones—fumbled for in pockets with cold fingers—it could not be fired. Muzzle-loaders always do that sort of thing—and half-a-dozen others—at critical moments, as you may have noticed.

It seems that animals hate to have things pointed at them, and it is certain that they loathe man to stand still and aim. Perhaps it is too suggestive of the cat tribe about to spring. Anyway, they become all suspicion at once, and mostly they remember appointments elsewhere. And so it was with the polecat—he quitted. He cannot have feared the man very much, or else he would not have attacked him; but all his suspicions—never very much asleep—were aroused by that attitude of aiming, and he vanished into the reeds in the snap of a finger.

In the reeds he was rather useful, because he turned out of them—quite a warm, dry bed she had made against the storm—a hare. The man had found his caps by that time, and the polecat knew it. The thundering report that followed, and the squeal of the hare that followed that, told the polecat the facts, and sent him the best part of a quarter of a mile almost without stopping; but he held the trail—more or less—all the same.

VII.

When the polecat did stop, it was because he had to. Caution was needed. The trail had led him to a farm, one of those long, low, crouched, thatched collections of buildings that mark the marshland farm, where wind is always the prevailing factor in life, and shelter there is none.

The polecat did not much approve of meddling with man's works. A long and bitter experience had taught him to stick to the wilds, and the wilder the wilds the better. But just then he would do anything to please a lady. Never-

theless, there was no need to be a fool over the job, and his caution became extreme.

Selecting the moment of a wild and roaring snow-flurry, he peered through the lower rails of the yard gate, and nearly dropped in his tracks where he stood, for a cream-coloured beast, hunched, squat, and gnome-like, was dancing, it seemed, with a snow-devil by the icicle-festooned water-trough. That beast was only a rat, in point of fact; but in that scene, with his slit ears, stump-tail, and mange-patched hide, he looked something much worse than is conveyed merely by the word rat. Moreover, there was nothing in the polecat's experience to prepare him for cream-coloured rats.

Now the trail of Miss Polecat led to the water-trough. Many trails lead to the little unfrozen water to be found on such a night. Wherefore the polecat held on his way, flat to the snow, pressed into it almost.

As he slid between the lower gate-bars the polecat was aware of three noises at once, snatches, as it were, of sound in the infernal dry howl of the wind. One was the resonant pealing of church bells again; another, another peal—of laughter, in the farmhouse, behind the farm buildings round the yard; and the third, the click of the lowest bar of the gate, which was loose.

He cursed that lowest bar of the gate, for the rat spun instantly on its stump-tail, and sat, hunched, still, silent, and 'at attention.' Perhaps that old rat knew that bar clicked—they are cunning enough for anything.

The polecat 'froze' in his tracks, peering through the falling snow, and in a second or two the rat gave three hops, and—was nowhere! That is a way rats have, but it savours of magic, all the same—black magic and evil.

(*Continued on page 238.*)

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XV.

NEXT morning I rang up Tony's rooms again, and found, to my relief, that a telegram, despatched from Boulogne, had arrived from him. It gave instructions that I should be asked to meet him on his arrival by the boat-train at Charing Cross in the afternoon. I was there to the minute; but when the long train drew up, although I searched the stream of passengers expectantly, there was no sign of my friend's tall figure. The crowd thinned, and, much disappointed, I had reluctantly turned to leave, when a hand was laid on my arm. I wheeled round and confronted a stooping, spectacled, middle-aged person, with a ragged, grizzled moustache and whiskers. He met the question in my eye with a smile. Then, to my amazement, he seized my hand and shook it warmly, and a welcome voice greeted me with, 'Looking for me, aren't you, Neil?'

'Tony!'

'My speech bewrayeth me. Confess, however, that my little rig-out took you in.'

'Until you spoke, it did, completely.'

'Good! I am gratified, for this is the first time I have used it. It has done me well enough, considering its simplicity. It was most useful in my bolt from Italy.'

'Your bolt?'

'Yes, old son. I fled from that sunny clime without even collecting my luggage. Indeed, my departure was so informal that I did not bid good-bye to my host, Mr Wakeford. A keen-witted knave! His name ought to be "Wide-Awakeford."'

I knew Tony. His whimsical words were not to be taken at their face value, and I thought that, under the gray eyebrows of his disguise, his eyes looked tired. Something had happened.

'You have the paper?' he asked anxiously.

'Safe and sound; but it was a near shave!'

'Excellent! Come along to my rooms, and after I get a tub and a change, we'll swop experiences,' said he, as he led the way with a careful, elderly step, leaning heavily on his umbrella-handle, the picture of a rather untidy, harmless-looking, uninteresting nondescript. Nothing in his appearance called for a second glance.

At his rooms he ran through a pile of letters and some telegrams; and half-an-hour afterwards he was himself again, clean-shaven and alert, tingling with vitality. His eyes, the light of adventure in them, had lost their strained look. He held forth to me from the hearth-rug, his back to a comfortable fire; and this is the gist of his adventure.

After he left me at Ubriano, with the paper in my keeping, he laid himself out to make Wakeford's acquaintance. In the light of what happened, he was convinced that Wakeford was on the same game. The launch lay alongside the landing-stage, and near it Tony dawdled about in the sun, keeping a wary eye around him. He had not long to wait before his man appeared—handsome, lithe, black-avised. 'Reminded one, somehow, of a panther,' was Tony's comment. He gave Tony a polite 'Good-morning,' and the two interchanged commonplaces about the beauty of the bay. Wakeford spoke perfect English, and was obviously interested to meet a fellow-countryman.

They chatted for some time, and a chance remark by Tony in admiration of the launch prompted the apparently hospitable Wakeford

to invite his new acquaintance to an hour's sail on the blue waters of the bay.

'I felt I was getting along all right,' Tony continued. 'There was just a chance that he might show his hand, so I went on board the launch and had a pleasant hour. I made myself agreeable, and he asked me to luncheon. I introduced myself as Mr John Robinson of London, enjoying a short holiday in Italy for the first time, and in this rôle posed as grateful for his attention, and accepted the invitation.

'As you know, Neil, I am not given to rhapsodising, but the Villa dei Cipressi is a dream, a delight, a fairy phantasy in colour and setting. Imagine an ascent from the beach by hidden winding pathways to a magnificent garden in three terraces, all around the music of innumerable cascades glittering in the sunlight, leaping and dancing down to a great marble reservoir, out of which they take their final plunge into the blue depths below. As for the garden itself, the only attempt at formality was a splendid avenue of cypresses—hence the villa's name. The rest of the garden had the effect of a lovely wilderness. Its want of formality was studied, no doubt, but the result was a wealth of colour beyond description—cyclamen, narcissus, iris, violets, roses; its polychrome in the mass in vivid contrast to the sombre flames of the cypresses. The Villa dei Cipressi, Wakeford told me, is one of Vignola's creations. It is on the crest of the cliff, and commands one of the fairest views in the world.'

'"Where every prospect pleases,"' I murmured.

'Yes. I'll come to where "man is vile" in a minute. The villa is built round a turf court, relieved by the silver spray of a fountain. A wide loggia runs round the first storey, and below it a veranda—an ideal spot for a lotus-eater; but I shouldn't call Wakeford and Co. lotus-eaters. Both loggia and veranda are decorated in Pompeian red by one of the Zuccari, and the whole effect of the frescoes against the jade green of the cypresses is entrancing. Wakeford must have plenty of money or the command of it. Looking at his luxurious *ménage*, I recalled the boatman's description of him, "Plenty of money and with the hands perforated." He has at least one virtue. He is an accomplished gastronome. The *colazione* was as artistic as the villa, and as characteristically Italian. Although there was a bewildering choice, there was no suggestion of Midas' profusion. After the spaghetti we had king prawns, then *alodolli* stuffed with mushrooms, and some excellent *Lachrima Christi*. Between truffles and a *capretto* I chose the latter, with it a salad to the accompaniment of foaming Asti; after that a delicious flip of eggs, cream, and wine (I forget its name); a libation of Vino Santo; then a fresh sheep's milk cheese; and we finished with figs, strawberries, and peaches. The salad is a precious memory. Never again for me the British abominations of sugar and hard-boiled eggs—nothing but fresh olive-oil and a little vinegar, and the bowl with a touch—just a hint, a suspicion—of a clove of garlic. I got the *recette* for this. Beyond an exciting experience, it is the only thing I carried away from the villa. We were waited upon by a very big and broad Italian, clad in the subfusc of the orthodox English butler. He moved about with the precision and silence of a well-oiled machine. Mark this man, Neil. Wakeford addressed him in Italian (of which I have only a working knowledge), calling him "Benedetto." At first he seemed to me to be the acme of respectability. He might have sat for a portrait of an archdeacon. Stamped all over him, from his bald dome to his toes, was, "Behold one who has served only in the 'best families.'" But I was leaving nothing to chance, and while I kept up a flow of small-talk, I took a mental photograph of his little black eyes, his blue shaven chin, his great creased face, his long, thin mouth, with its perpetual shadow of a grin at the corners, and his large, hairy hands—— Why, what's the matter with you?'

I had jumped excitedly to my feet. 'I think, Tony,' I said, 'that I know this capable butler. I can give him a certificate at least for versatility. I have met him.'

'The devil you have! Where on earth did you run across him?'

'He tracked me in Naples, and did me the honour of travelling for an hour or two with me. But go on. I'll tell you my yarn afterwards.'

Tony gave a long whistle. '"*Arcades ambo.*" Otherwise, a pair of beauties! I'll hurry through my yarn and get yours. To go back to the luncheon. My host was wary, and did not refer to Hugh Forbes, except in the most off-hand, casual manner, when we were half-way through the meal. By the way, he plied the wine freely. I didn't object. (If he meant to loosen my tongue, I thought I might risk drinking level with him.) He believed, he said, that there was an Englishman in the village who was very seriously ill, and that he had no relatives. He had two or three times thought of calling, but he felt diffident about it, and put it off. Probably it was now too late. I murmured something polite and conventional, but I felt sure that he was watching me for all he was worth. I said nothing about Hugh Forbes's death, and waited for Wakeford's next move. However, he changed the subject, and asked me if there were many people at the inn. Very few, I told him. No one whom I knew except a Mr Ford or Forbes. That was you, of course. I said that I wasn't very sure if I had got hold of the right name, and that I had met you by accident in the train. The ingenuous Wakeford remarked sympathetically that he thought Forbes was the name of the poor man who was ill, and that perhaps the gentleman

at the inn was a relative. I told him that I had no idea, but that I might ask you, if I saw you again. Just then I happened to look up, and intercepted a glance from Wakeford to Benedetto. A spark of steel in Wakeford's dark eye shone for an instant and vanished, but the servant's big face was a picture of stolid immobility as he deliberately turned and busied himself noiselessly at the sideboard. The incident was trivial-looking, but an indefinable sixth sense told me that a signal had passed, and the knowledge of it rang in my skull like an alarm-clock. However, I kept a tight grip on myself, and I don't think my face betrayed me. Wakeford sheered off the subject, and turned the conversation to a score of other matters, talking very well on art, letters, current politics, and so forth.

'After luncheon Wakeford led the way to the veranda, where he crowned his excellent entertainment with cigars and *certosa verde*. I can give honest praise to everything about the villa except its inmates. We went into the grounds, and very soon I heard the hum of a motor-car somewhere near. It stopped—quite close to the house, it seemed to me. Wakeford made no remark about it; but in a few minutes, when we returned to the house, a servant—not the sleek Benedetto—presented himself, and said, "*Una persona vuole vederla, signore*" ("One wishes to see you, sir"). Wakeford rose with an impatient gesture, apologised to me for leaving, and on my suggestion that the length of my visit might be inconvenient to him, assured me that his business would not detain him longer than a few minutes. Off he went, and I seized the opportunity to scribble a note to you, telling you to go on and not to wait for me if I did not turn up at Naples. Then I stepped out to the terrace and sauntered among the flowers, until I got close to the gate. There was a big motor-car waiting, with no one in charge, but by good luck I got a ragged village urchin to deliver the note to you at the inn. This done, I strolled leisurely back until I found myself about a hundred yards down the slope from the front of the house, beside a cluster of myrtles, flanked by a stone parapet, below which was a steep, winding path down the cliffs to the sea. While there I heard the sound of voices. They came from below me, and, without attempting to conceal myself (for I wished to avoid any appearance of eavesdropping), I looked over the parapet. Two men were standing a few yards away. Luckily their backs were to me. I drew back into the myrtle clump, for in that swift moment I had recognised my host and the huge Benedetto. Wakeford's hand was on the other man's shoulder. One thing was clear. Their relationship was not that of master and servant. The voices went on, subdued and earnest, until suddenly my senses were strung taut. I heard my own name. As I told you, I have only a working knowledge of Italian, but what I heard was certainly Wakeford's rather high, eager voice asking, "Have you any doubt?" and the other man's reply in a booming bass, "Scarcely a shadow. It is a hundred to one that he is Keene-Leslie."

'Then Wakeford rapped out, "*Lo pigli un accidente!* If he resists"——

'I did a little rapid thinking, for the two men had turned, and were coming up the slope into the garden. I concealed myself among the myrtles, and watched them walk hurriedly past towards the house, mount the steps, and disappear.

'What was to happen if I resisted I didn't wait to find out. On the contrary, I did a record sprint towards the gate. The car was still there. There was no one in sight. I ran my eye over the big, powerful Fiat, and made up my mind on the spot to commandeer it, calculating that I might get a minute or two of a start before they found out that I had cleared. They would see my hat in the hall, which might help to throw them off the scent for a few moments. Still, it was going to be a near thing. I switched on the current, gave the handle a couple of turns, jumped in, and rammed the lever. The car got under way. Its head was facing away from the village. However, I dared not risk losing any time by turning it, and as there was a rise for a hundred yards or so in front of me, I don't mind telling you that I sweated with anxiety, for the road was flanked by the grounds, and I had to pass in full view of the windows of the house. Near the top I heard a shout, and next moment Benedetto rushed out from a side-gate, wrath and apprehension in his face, his arms wide open, his hands clawing the air, menacing me, and all the time his great voice bellowing, "Help! Help!"

'He was about six yards away, right in front, and I went straight at him. He dodged with a nimbleness astounding in a man of his bulk and years. I thought I had bested him, but the car hadn't enough way on, and he contrived to clutch it and swing himself on to the step. When he was half-turned to me, trying to steady himself, I stood up and let drive for all I knew with my heel on his ribs. He gasped and wavered. I let him have another. It knocked the wind out of him. He fell and rolled over twice in the dust like a shot rabbit. The car was swaying too much for safety, but I managed to steady it, and a swift glance back showed me the old villain picking himself up. I regret to say that none of his bones appeared to have been broken. But when turning round I caught with the tail of my eye a movement—a dark momentary flicker high up against the white of the Villa dei Cipressi. Instinctively I ducked, half-a-second before the crack of a revolver, and the wind-screen of the car was shivered by the bullet in a line with

where my head by rights should have been. I kept down, you bet; and Wakeford—for,' of course, it was he—fired again, but by this time the car had crested the rise and leaped forward. I took every ounce out of her, and in ten minutes I think I must have covered as many miles, mostly downhill.

'Luckily, there were few people on the road. One or two groups of peasants split into two, staring open-mouthed as I shot past like a driven grouse. A cart forced me to slow down, and a herd of goats at a nasty corner had a narrow escape from being made minced meat of; but I was lucky, and every minute gave me confidence. I hadn't the remotest notion where I was going, except that I was putting the leagues between me and the sinister villa. A small town checked my rush; but once I was past it, there was a long stretch of straight road. I let her out again.

'Then came an exhilarating run. The sport of it, and the knowledge that I had a good chance of winning, got into my blood. The car behaved magnificently. I take off my hat to the makers. The ground whizzed from beneath me; the houses were mere flying blurs of red and white. After half-an-hour I steadied down to a good ding-dong forty miles an hour, keeping to the main road for the sake of speed, and at last, hatless, dusty, parched, but with a hundred miles between me and the Villa of the Cypresses, I slowed down and began to take my bearings.

(*Continued on page 227.*)

MECCA THE MYSTERIOUS.

By Ernest Phillips.

THAT the sacred city of Mecca would be drawn into the ambit of the war was one of the last things any student of affairs would have expected. Situated in the heart of Arabia, remote, inaccessible, guarded by a rigid fanaticism so determined that it visits death upon any Christian who dares to penetrate its mysteries, the centre and capital of the faith of Islam, the holiest spot upon earth to over two hundred million Moslems, more impregnable in its isolation than ever Lhassa was, by one of the most curious turns of fortune's wheel Mecca has been made an ally of the Entente. Nor was the alliance of Mecca a merely passive sympathy with the struggle against the Central Powers. The Arabs rose and threw the Turks out of their country. The Sultan was stripped of his last shred of power in the Holy Land. The Grand Shereef of Mecca assumed the title of King of the Hedjaz. The Ulemas, or Wise Men, issued a proclamation setting forth the misdeeds of the Young Turk party and claiming that the new régime in Turkey was a violation of every canon of Koranic law. And on top of all this, the Mayor of Mecca—fancy it!—sent a telegram to the Lord Mayor of London, congratulating the British Army on their gallant fighting in France, and expressing the profoundest hope for our final conquest of the enemy.

Of all men, the German Emperor must have been least pleased to read that telegram. When he pranced through Jerusalem on a white horse and took the world of Islam under his wing, the Kaiser had visions of a great scheme of Oriental expansion. The Germans have never been successful as Oriental colonists. None of the Great Powers had fewer Moslem subjects than Germany before the war. Great Britain had nearly a hundred millions, or one-half the total number; Russia, France, Italy—all had vast Mohammedan possessions; but Germany was never able to plant her flag successfully in Islamic lands. The Kaiser's trip to Syria was part of a great scheme to redress the balance. Allied with Turkey, the nominal head of Islam; controller of the Bagdad Railway, which would carry German influence through lands that were the cradle of mankind, establish it on the Tigris and the Euphrates, and spread it throughout Syria and Arabia and the Persian Gulf, he doubtless had in mind the creation of an Eastern empire which would rival India, and probably dreamed of the day when, in Constantinople, or Bagdad, or even Mecca, he should be crowned emperor of a greater dominion than any of the Osmanli Sultans ever owned.

The revolt of the Arabs was the death-knell of these hopes. The Sultan's command of a holy war against the Christians fell on deaf ears. Like the massacre of the Armenians, it was a devilish device. It would have plunged India, Afghanistan, Morocco, Algiers, and Egypt into a maelstrom of bloodshed. It was Arabia that, standing steadfast to the cause of the Allies, saved the world from a storm that would have shocked civilisation. And to-day Arabia, by standing firm, has won her freedom. She has thrown out the hated Turk; she has swept her land clean of the last obese pasha from Stamboul. Moslem Arabia united with Moslem India in praying for the success of the Allied cause. It is the fashion to disparage the diplomacy of the Allies. Whatever it may have cost us in the Balkans, it saved the world from the horrors of a Moslem rising at the call of the Turk.

And what about Mecca? None of us knew it had advanced so far on the road to progress as to own a mayor. Think of it—Mecca the mysterious, Mecca the sacred, which, in its whole history, has not been seen by fifty Christians, and which to-day may probably

boast that it has not been seen by a single living Englishman! Is there any other city in the world of which this claim could be made? It is extremely doubtful. For Mecca is thrice holy. It was the birthplace of Islam. Mohammed was a native; it was there he taught and preached and prayed, and founded a faith which was to have greater influence upon mankind than all other faiths save one. But Mecca was holy before Mohammed elevated it into the capital of a new empire. Built into the wall of the Caaba, or Temple, was a stone which the Arabs claim was sent from heaven by the angel Gabriel. They maintain that Abraham visited the city, and sojourned within it. Near by is the well of Zemzem, the spring revealed to Hagar when she and her son Ishmael were cast out in the wilderness. Not far off is the mountain of Arafat, where Adam and Eve met after their expulsion from Eden. Mohammed sanctified all these legends and traditions, incorporated them in his new religion. Then, by a master-stroke, he invested Mecca with eternal sanctity by decreeing that every Moslem, once in his lifetime, should visit it on pilgrimage; and to this he added the terrible warning that no Christian should behold its sacred mysteries and be permitted to live.

Is it to be wondered at that men's thoughts all over the world should turn to this city of fable and romance? Moslems visit it by millions. They go from India, Afghanistan, Persia, the hill countries, Turkestan, Egypt, Soudan, Central Africa, Hausaland, Morocco, the Sahara, the Red Sea coast, from distant China and Malaya. Caravans from Damascus convoy thousands; pilgrim-ships from India land the faithful at Jeddah, whence they march overland; Arabs and Persians tramp across Mesopotamia; the Egyptian caravan follows the route by the Red Sea shores. Devotees from the Himalayas, from the great cities in Central Asia, from the heart of the Sahara or the wilds of Kurdistan, take years to do the pilgrimage, begging their way, dying by thousands, but happy even in their death if they have but lived to see the Caaba, to press their lips on the sacred stone, to don the *ihram*, and say their prayers, 'Labbeyka,' 'Here I am,' within the cloisters which once echoed to the voice of Mohammed himself. In all the world there is nothing in any religion or any faith at all equal to the great pilgrimage to Mecca. And when the pilgrim has done the round of the holy sites, when he has prayed and sacrificed, when he has shaved and cast his stone at the Devil, when he has filled his bottle at the sacred well of Zemzem, he returns with the title of Hadji, to be the wonder and admiration of his family, and to boast in his declining years of the days he spent in holy Mecca.

How many Englishmen have seen Mecca? It *is doubtful* if the number comes to a round dozen. It is questionable if more than a score of Christians of all nationalities have been there and returned alive. Dozens, perhaps scores, have tried it. They have learned Arabic; they have studied the rites of Islam; they have joined the caravans in disguise; they have braved the dangers of the desert; they may even have got inside the city; but their disguise has been penetrated, and their corpses, mangled and torn, have been thrown from the city walls. An Italian named Varthema managed it safely in 1503. A Frenchman named Le Blanc was successful in 1554. A German soldier named Wild went as slave to a Persian in 1607. The first Englishman to do it was Joseph Pitts. He was sold as a slave at Algiers and went with his master in 1680. Then there was a native of Biscay, Leblich, who went in 1807 as a friend of the Sultan of Morocco. A Russian named Seetzen did the pilgrimage in 1809. Burckhardt, the Swiss, after studying Arabic at London and Cambridge, went and returned in 1814, and his book is still the classic story of the pilgrimage. Finati, an Italian, who joined the Turkish Army and became a Moslem, was there the same year as Burckhardt. Roches, a Frenchman, who lived in Algiers and became a Moslem, went in 1841; and three years later a German named Wallin went as a Moslem doctor, equipped with a knowledge of twenty-nine languages. Then came Sir Richard Burton, a captain in the Indian Army, master of twenty-six languages, who went as an Afghan pilgrim, and wrote a book on Mecca as fascinating as any novel. Von Maltzan (German), Bicknell (Englishman), Keane (a Whitby sailor), Snouck-Hurgronje (Dutch), Courtellemont (French), and Wavell (an Englishman, since killed in the war, who visited Mecca ten years ago) practically exhaust the list of pilgrims; though a British soldier named Keith, a private in the 72nd Highlanders, taken prisoner by the Turks and forcibly converted to Islam, not only lived in Arabia, but was actually for a time governor of Mecca!

Such is the fascination of Mecca. We may wonder if recent events will lead to the opening up of this remarkable city. The Hedjaz Railway brings Medina (the burial-place of Mohammed) into touch with the West. Mecca is not far distant. The Arabs are the greatest of all the peoples of Islam. They are the heirs of a civilisation which kept alive the learning of Europe when it was all but extinguished elsewhere. And now the hour is at hand when European travellers may wander at will through Mecca as they do to-day through Cairo, or Bagdad, or Delhi? Will it be possible ever for a Cook's tourist from Britain to stand beneath the shadow of the Caaba and hear the cries and groans of the pious Moslems; hear, as Burckhardt heard, forty languages spoken in one day; see, as other travellers have seen, frenzied pilgrims blind themselves so that the

last image on their mind may be the scene of Mohammed's life and work? None of us can answer these questions, but it seems tolerably certain that the casting out of the Turk may lead to a closer union between Britain and Arabia, and that the iron law which closes these holy cities to all who do not acknowledge the sway of the Meccan camel-driver may be so far relaxed that, in some way, these sacred shrines may become accessible to travellers who would give much to study Islam at the source and fountain of its wonderful power.

THE BLOWER OF BUBBLES.

PART II.

IV.

I HAVE never known any one to change so little with the cycle of years as Basil Norman. When he came to Westminster, at the age of twelve, he had an easy nonchalance, a delightful insouciance, that never left him. He went from form to form, trod the stone-flagged passages as others did; but the youth of seventeen that left Westminster bore the same smiling, detached personality as when he entered. The atmosphere of tradition interested but did not drug him; the Elizabethan pancake impressed him less than did a contemporary Edwardian soap-bubble.

Conscientious form-masters recognised his extraordinary abilities, and gave him the benefit of well-worded and impressive homilies on achievement. Sometimes for effect they quoted Latin. Norman would counter with a 'Greek remark.' He never studied, but more than one scholar owed their success to the eleventh-hour coaching of Basil Norman. Learning, like everything else, came to him as a needle to a magnet.

With a curious air of detachment he watched the panorama of schoolboy life, noticing with a discerning eye the various strata upon which public-school morality is founded, assigning the relative importance of scholarship and cricket, and nodding knowingly as the process of standardisation brought similarity of speech, accent, thought, and vocabulary to all his fellows.

He was like a Puck who had never been really young, but who refused to become a day older.

For a few weeks he played cricket, but without reverence. During a match he kept up (*sotto voce*, of course) a running commentary of philosophy which, according to our ethics, was vulgar. I shudder to think what he would have done if Westminster had adopted baseball.

On one occasion the captain of the eleven took upon himself to point out to Basil Norman the error of his ways. The worthy demigod deplored Norman's habit of lying on the grass during practice and inventing couplets on the various members of the team. The captain also said that, providing he would take the game seriously, there was a future for him as a cricketer. Whereupon Norman, from his recumbent position, misquoted most of the 'To be, or not to be,' soliloquy, unblushingly attributing Hamlet's indecision towards living to his doubts of himself as a cricketer. When he finished he rose to his feet, and our comments were frozen at the sight of his face.

His cheeks had a ghastly pallor and his eyes were brilliant, but with a fixed, glaring intensity. And as we looked his expression changed—the colour returned with a glow of warmth to his skin, and his eyes were gray and humorous. Being boys, we forgot about it as quickly as it had happened.

The next Saturday we played Charterhouse, and though the score was heavily against us, Norman gave the finest exhibition of batting I have seen in public-school cricket, scoring a century and winning the match for us. He was frail but lithe, and with an air of aplomb batted the offerings of Charterhouse to all points of the compass. At the finish of the game we crowded around him, but he smiled a little wearily, and shook his head.

'I am finished with cricket,' he said.

Bewilderment, then anathema, broke like a thunder-shower upon the head of Basil Norman. We pleaded; we argued; we threatened; then we used language which possessed the merit of forcefulness and frankness. We called him a swine, a rotter, a skunk, and an absolute cad. Some one ventured the opinion that he was a perfect stink, and we all stood about him like the Klu Klux Klan trying a negro malefactor.

'Gentlemen,' he said—and there was a delightful touch of irony in the word—'you have come to bury, not to praise, me; yet, unlike Cæsar, I am not ambitious.'

'Swine!' said Smith tertius (or was it quartus?).

'In spite of the witty comment of me learned friend,' said Norman, after the manner of the leading counsel of the day, 'I have always held the opinion that life is a thing to be sipped, not drunk. I have played cricket—*veni, vidi*, I scored a century! I would not spoil me appetite, milords, by overgorging.'

'Your conduct,' said Grubbs, the captain, 'is rotten. It shows that you don't give a fig for the honour of the school. If you want to be a pig, you can wear the cap of one.' (We all knew what he meant, and admired him frightfully for his venture into the quagmire of metaphor.) 'We will send you to Coventry until you come to your senses.'

The culprit bowed airily.

'You will lose much more by my silence than I by yours,' he said—and it takes considerable courage to make such a statement to a tribunal of schoolboys.

If Norman suffered from our aloofness, he took it with the same nonchalance as he had taken our plaudits. Oddly enough, he had no intimate friends, and all of us, partly out of resentment against his pose of onlooker, and more from the love of torture which links the schoolboy to the savage, performed our duty of silent punishment with a zeal which deserved a better inspiration. We forgot how he had made friends with the misfits whose square personalities were being drawn through the round hole of public-school life. Little chaps he had taken in hand on arrival when they wanted to weep for loneliness turned from him as if he held contagion. All the sensitive, shrinking ones about whom he had thrown his cloak of vivacity, and who were now grown bold and self-reliant, let him pass from Little Dean's Yard to his house and through the ancient passages, a lonely debonair figure that always smiled. . . . And no one spoke to him. I, whom he had named 'The Pest,' thus turning my naturally perverse sulkiness into a subject of jest and good-humour, took a special delight in watching the man who had been sentenced by his peers to solitude in the midst of a crowd.

His peers? . . . Was it Smith tertius (or quartus) who used the word 'swine'?

Two weeks had passed, and we were to play Winchester a decisive match on our grounds, which, as land near the cathedral is rather difficult to obtain, are a little less than a mile from the school.

The stage was set. Youthful scholars of ten and twelve walked in their gowns, their brows knit with thought, their eyes blinking from overstudy. Little chaps struggled under the responsibility of silk toppers, and conversed solemnly on the deterioration of the tuck-shop; and the Olympian creature who was the head-boy of the school lounged outside the scoring-booth as if he were 'fed up' with nectar, and would like some brown October ale for a change—a pose much favoured by the best people in England. There was an excellent audience of the secondary sex, composed of proud mothers and apologetic sisters, whose presence was necessitating a sort of Jekyll and Hyde attitude on the part of their schoolboy relatives, who were endeavouring to be polite to their 'people' and at the same time give the impression to their *confrères* that the women were mere acquaintances — accidental dinner partners, as it were.

No schoolboy of twelve likes to admit to a mother.

Surrounding the field there is a high iron fence, through the railings of which, or on top, a motley collection of gamins cheer on their wealthier brethren of the silk hats. Naturally no notice is taken of these uninvited guests. It is quite all right for them to shout for Westminster if it gives them any pleasure, but what has a silk hat in common with a red kerchief and a slouch-cap?

On the day of the match they seemed in larger numbers than usual, and the top of the fence was covered with urchins, who retained their position of vantage as though the law of gravitation were no concern of theirs, keeping up a shrill chorus as Winchester went out for a moderate score.

With the odds all in our favour we went in to bat, Grubbs, the captain, and I leading off. The first ball was wide, but to feel the play of my muscles I took a perfunctory swing at it with my bat. The effect was extraordinary. . . . The crowd of Cockney youngsters raised a volume of sound as if my bat had been a baton and they a chorus.

'Gow it, Pest!' 'That's the style, Gloomy!' 'Troy t' other hend, Bluntnose!' 'Gee, he's got odd socks on!' 'Nah then, Spiderlegs!' (The blunt nose and the legs I admit to, but the accusation of odd socks was pure malice.)

The next ball, with no twist at all, bowled me clean, and I walked off the field to the tune of high-pitched shrieks of delight, and with a face that flushed a dark red. My place was taken by Smith tertius (or quartus), whose appearance caused an even greater furore than mine.

''Ooray for Bones!' greeted the lanky youth as he emerged—''im as his the loife of the school!' (He was the most morose of boys.) ''I, Bones, 'oo did you crib from this time, eh?' (A subtle allusion to an ancient offence which had almost earned him expulsion.)

The first ball came for Smith with an inviting hop. He watched it—went to strike at it—changed his mind — reconsidered his decision, and swung at the air as the ball passed over the bails by an inch, a feat which seemed to gratify our enemies on the fence immensely.

'Nah then, Bones, none o' that there contortionising!' ''It the ball, Bones; don't kiss it!'

And he did—a miserable little pop into the air; the chap in the slips didn't have to move a foot to gather it in.

Mr Smith then added his proof that Shakespeare was right when he said in this world we have our exits and our entrances.

The next six batters went out for a score of eleven, bowled clean by the most intimate volume of abusive chaff ever endured by a cricket team. Skeletons were not only being taken from their closets, but paraded brazenly before the eyes of the world. The secret history of Westminster was screamed from the fence-tops.

It was after the loss of our eighth wicket that Grubbs and I, who had stolen round by the street, stalked and discovered their ringleader.

'That's him,' said the captain hoarsely—the situation was too tense to permit of the niceties of grammar. I followed the line of his accusing

finger—and gasped. There was no mistaking those gray twinkling eyes, although they were almost hidden behind a huge bandage, presumably for mumps. He was dressed in a rough coster suit, with a villainous cap on one side of his head and a bandit's red kerchief about his neck.

'It *is* him,' I said dramatically.

'I thought so,' said Grubbs, and cleared his throat. 'Norman,' he cried. 'Kid—Norman.'

The young rascal, who was sitting on top of a post, more like a Puck than ever, swivelled about and solemnly winked one eye. 'Do I understand that the ban of silence is lifted?' he said from behind the mumps bandage.

Grubbs considered, and then made a tactful and instantaneous decision. (Small wonder that a few years later he was entrusted with a war mission to Washington, of the utmost delicacy.)

'You 've had your revenge,' he said, 'and the joke is on us. Call your mob off, will you?'

'You 're quite sure you wouldn't like us to encourage the remainder for a change?'

'Quite sure.'

'So be it, my captain.'

He blew a whistle through his fingers, and in a moment the fence was denuded of mortals like a tree smitten by an autumn gale. The Blower of Bubbles removed his bandage, and presented a stocky youth with three shillings.

'Buy sweets for the crowd,' he said, 'and mind—play fair.'

'Right you har', guv'nor;' and the mob disappeared. And thus ended the riot of the slouch-cap against the silk hat. To-day, if you are passing the field during a match, you will see that the gamins are still there, but they shout only for Westminster.

We were just turning away, when Basil Norman laid his hand on Grubbs's forearm, as a girl might do, and his eyes had a wistful look.

'Before I change into more fitting garb,' he said airily, then paused. . . . My breathing seemed to stop at the sight—his face had gone suddenly white, and his eyes were glazed.

'Grubbs!' he cried, and his voice sounded hollow. 'Don't you understand? . . . Oh, *you damned fool*, can't you see it 's my heart?'

V.

After Westminster I went to Cambridge, and succeeded in cultivating the Oxford manner, by which all Cambridge men are known. When I emerged from there I offered myself to the highest bidder (a sudden bankruptcy of my father having made an occupation essential). A London newspaper was the fortunate winner in the mad race for my services, though it would have been difficult for it to lose, as there was but one entry.

I became a writer of power—not quite so much so as the gentleman to-day who wields his pen as he would a bludgeon, and succeeds in writing a powerful article each week; but still I was a writer of strength. I damned the present, doubted the future, and deplored the past. I became an honoured member of the group of London writers whose entire genius is exhausted in criticism. I secured a bowing acquaintance with Bernard Shaw, and always spoke of H. G. Wells as Mr Wells. It was obvious to me that to achieve literary success in England one must abuse England—but especially any one who tried to change her.

Some of my *confrères* sided with Bernard Shaw and attacked middle-class morality and patriotism. Mr Arnold Bennett had a certain following, though we agreed that his Five Towns stories were not really critical, but merely observant. We did not know at the time that he had it in him to write *The Pretty Lady*, which was to be neither. For myself, I was drawn towards Mr Wells, and hit at everything like a blindfolded pugilist.

We agreed with Granville Barker that Irving had reduced the value of Shakespeare by overstaging; and we endorsed the opinion of a dramatic critic, known to the public as 'Jingle,' who said that Shakespeare's lines were often worthy of an Oxford undergraduate.

For pastime we abused Lord Roberts as a monomaniac, and Winston Churchill as a kleptomaniac with a passion for stealing the thunder of others. We even argued that the Church had lost its grip, and wrote eloquently on the value of doubt. With admirable *esprit de corps* we refrained from attacking the public-school system, though we realised that one could always get a hearing by doing so.

And every year those schools were turning out their thousands and the universities their hundreds; every year our number was strengthened by well-routined brains that took to destructive criticism like a German to barbarity. Somebody was writing our puerile dramas; some one was turning out the trash which flooded our bookstalls; some brain was conceiving the tawdry stuff which was educating the millions in the cinemas. . . . But we thanked Heaven that we were not as other men. We were England's educated class. For the education of England fails to teach one that a country's art and literature are as vital to the nation as speech to the individual.

I took a flat in Sloane Square and read Russian novels. Whenever I discovered a new Russian author, I quoted him as if I had known him all my life; it used to pain me to find how unrecognised he was by my fellows. I attended the opera only on Russian nights, and I became a devotee of the Russian dancers. I used to quote Russian in my paper, and brought down the curse of a hundred type-setters upon my head.

I think every writer has his Russian period.

Once or twice I heard of Basil Norman, though our paths did not cross. Some one claimed that

Norman could have been a great violinist, if—— Another told me that *Punch* had published a delicate little sonnet of his that had the quality of tears about it. There was no question (he said), if—— An artist I met had painted one landscape that defied criticism—even ours—and I spoke of the exquisite colouring and detail of the foreground.

'I could not have done that,' he said, 'but for Basil Norman, who brooded over me like an inspiration. The work is mine, but the conception his. If'——

Yet the world did not know of his existence. He remained a detached personality, treading lightly where sorrow was, singing his song of the sunlight wherever ears had become dulled with discouragement. A fantastic, gentle, twinkling-eyed prince in a kingdom of butterflies and violets. Try as I would, I could not refrain from contrasting my life of literary vivisection with his primrose youth that seemed eternal, springing from a genuine joy in living, a youth that was as perfect as a melody of Chopin's.

'The happiest of Christmases, old Pest!'

The subject of my thoughts was standing before me, and the bells were clamouring exultantly on the frosty air.

I gripped his hand, and something in his eyes told me the truth. . . . He had come for me because I was lonely and needed him.

And the message of the bells took on a new meaning.

VI.

We walked into the brisk, vibrating sunshine of a glorious Christmas morning. He had taken my arm, and was chatting gaily on everything from 'cabbages to kings.' Sometimes his nostrils dilated, and he would look up as if he were actually drinking in the ozone of the air; and he seemed younger than ever, with a joyousness born of sheer intoxication with life. We walked for a mile, and all the time his mood was as happy and stimulating as the sunshine sparkling in the December air.

Turning down a street, we passed a church from which the worshippers were emerging, and a mother with two sons on the brink of manhood held our attention for a moment. The lads had a gentleness of feature, an unconscious grace that sometimes is the attribute of adolescence, and their mother walked between them, proudly—they were her masterpieces. For some time Norman chatted amiably, but I could see that a pensive shadow was steadily creeping over the brilliancy of his spirits.

'They tell me,' he said in subdued tones, breaking suddenly from the topic in hand, 'that both my parents hoped for a girl when I was born. And sometimes I have thought that there is a little of the feminine in my nature. I love the pretty things of life, and there are times when I have an unmistakable sense of intuition.'

I waited silently, but it was some moments before he resumed.

'Somewhere ahead,' he said dreamily, 'in months or years to come, I see a vision of a woman in black, coming from church alone, and her head is bowed with grief'—— He passed his hand over his brow with a weary, querulous movement, and shadows appeared beneath his eyes. 'Where—where are the two sons? Not dead?'

He smiled wistfully, and replaced his hand in my arm.

'The picture we saw just now,' he said, 'is my conception of England—the real England of noble mothers and noble sons. But something tells me that the woman in black is England too, mourning for her sons who will never—come back.'

With an effort he squared his shoulders and forced a laugh from his lips.

'Pest!' he cried, 'I should be burned as a witch. Heigho! it's a pretty go when one has to turn lugubrious on a Christmas morning. Cheer us up, Pest. Tell me about yourself—whom you are in love with, and your dreams for the days to come. Let's blow bubbles—shall we?—and see what fresh beauties we can find in this charming adventure called life!'

And I laughed with him, exchanging philosophies light as air; but the chimes that rang out all about us had still another meaning. There was a warning in the pealing discords that broke on the quiet air; there was a requiem in the notes that lingered like an echo, then murmured ominously to silence.

I shivered as though I had a chill, for something of Norman's spirit had seized me, and I felt that both the warning and the requiem were—for England.

(*Continued on page 231.*)

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XIII.—OUR DEAR OLD COMMANDANT.

IF we thought a lot of our school, and did our best to keep up its good name, this was due not to a swelling admiration of the military system, but mainly to a sense of patriotism; it was also a tribute of respect to our commandant. He was not a brilliant man, and in some things was an absolute fire-eater. However, his bark was worse than his bite, and he improved on acquaintance. The 'Old Man' was sincere. He was no sneak. There was nothing petty in

his decisions, and little things revealed a deep love of his 'boys' rather than a selfish love of his job. In his day he had been a gallant soldier and 'a bit of a lad.' As a man of the world, he understood human nature, and his one desire was to have a happy and successful unit.

He had a hard-working but not a brilliant staff. Brilliant men are scarce as instructors in cadet schools. The military system, even to-day, is not kind to brilliance. It is afraid of genius. Genius even in this war has too often been attacked and destroyed. On the other hand, it is just to note that the brilliant men who *survive* the ordeal of jealousy are all sent to the front, and are, therefore, beyond the reach of cadet schools. What a pity! For in these cadet schools men hunger for more light and congenial thought. Captain Cheerall, I may say, was the great exception. It is good to write such things. The War Office ought to know them. The reason it *doesn't know* is that those who are running these schools are afraid to be frank. Push-and-Go is not appreciated by certain soft-jobbers in the Home Commands. And they have a quiet but brutal way of dispensing with men who want to be 'American' and revolutionise our whole system of military education.

It is imagined by military mandarins that we cadets don't know and don't see anything. What a blunder! At our school, and at every other cadet school, you can find the cream of intellect studying for commissions. The nation is in arms. And many a lecturer ignores the fact that he is talking to men with the highest university degrees. These men in our school never declared they had nothing to learn. Indeed, they promptly realised their frightful deficiencies in military education. They hungered for learning. When they got a little, they wanted more, and a good lecturer always left the room to the accompaniment of resounding cheers. This attitude of cadets is in striking contrast with the attitude of those who regard them as 'a d—— lot of Tommies who want knocking about.' We never objected to being knocked about, even by the sergeant-major from the Guards. But what we did resent was the visit of silly old fools, who talked a lot of rot and gave us no intellectual food. We were not blind, and all of us had 'been out.' If we were deficient in higher strategy, we had a share of common-sense. Had a War Office inspector tumbled into our midst disguised as a cadet, he would have heard frank appreciation of all that was good, and a damning indictment of all that was bad. The greatest weakness of the military system is that it declines to be told, seldom asks for suggestions, and is up against an intellectual aristocracy. This fear of intellect has been our curse in this war. And only one statesman has fought for 'The New School.' That man is David Lloyd George.

For all that, we were not unhappy. When we ceased to analyse the appalling anomalies of the military system, we enjoyed ourselves. Army life does teach fellowship and breeds great friendships. Our hut was tenanted by a band of brothers. Our company commander was a 'sport,' and the C.O. had rid us of our platoon commander, who was a prize prig and an insufferable snob. We got a new platoon commander, Lieutenant Damall, who was an intellectual rebel, a first-class soldier, a fine lecturer, and a jolly good chap. The general routine of the school was stiff, yet bearable. But it would have been an absolute joy if more brains had been knocking around. However, the school's sheet-anchor, personality, father, friend, jailer, and general entertainer was our dear old commandant. He would come on parade and play h— with everybody; turn us upside-down; call us fat-heads and duffers; then wind up with, 'You know, boys, I curse you because I love you. And I *do* want to be proud of you. I want to see you all generals and V.C.'s. Buck up, for Heaven's sake, or, by Gad, I'll have you shot!' and off he would stump, pretending he was in a devil of a temper. In reality the Old Man was playing quite a clever game. He had that wonderful secret of knowing how to 'curse' a man, and yet make a man smile and do his best. He might not be brilliant—but he was wise. And he was jolly good fun. 'You know, gentlemen,' he said one day at a lecture, 'I was a bit of a lad when I was young. An awful blood! Wouldn't call a duke my cousin, and was measured for everything—even my ties. Of course, that was in the good old days when we had nothing but nigger wars, and we used to spend nearly all our time hunting foxes or struggling to get in at stage doors. I was jolly good at that.

'When I joined my battalion a colour-sergeant was told off to carry me about. This fellow had to think for me, even on parade. He was always at my elbow whispering the words of command —for which I can assure you I often thanked the Lord. For, to be perfectly frank with you, like many young officers, I was a bit of an ass. I achieved fame at a general's inspection by giving my company the command "Trail Arms!" instead of "Present!" for which I got six months' marked drill on the square. They gave me no leave; wouldn't even allow me to pop out and see my best girl (as I allow you to do); but from 9 A.M. till 4 P.M. an old sergeant gave me dyspepsia, colic, and lumbago by marching, counter-marching, and doubling on that terrible barrack-square. I wore out two pairs of boots, and was almost excommunicated by the garrison chaplain owing to the awful language which I used after those parades. It was a bitter lesson; but it did me good, although I didn't think so at the time. I am just afraid I was a saucy young devil.

'Of course, in those days a subaltern was

very small fry. He was merely a "fag" in the regimental system. It was very dangerous to think—it still is a bit dangerous to do so—and the great secret of success was to eliminate any trace of personality or originality. As a sarcastic old major remarked, all he demanded of a subaltern was to be strong in the back and soft in the head. In passing, I may say I was awfully popular with this old chap. Perhaps I was up to his marvellous standard. I led him to think so, for I readily found out that the line of least resistance was the one which assured a calm and charming life. You may think that a terrible revelation, but if you study the British Army in the 'seventies, you will see that it would have been disastrous for any man of mediocre talent to start thrusting out his hand for the field-marshal's baton.

'Company commanders in those days directed operations from the anterooms or their bedrooms, and we long-suffering, fat-headed subs. fetched and carried for them. They were the drones, and we were the working-bees. At least we thought we were, but what we actually did was this. We received our orders, then went to the company office and simply passed them on. The colour-sergeants were really the foremen of works. These old N.C.O.'s were marvellous men—men of great attainments, and men whose abilities were not rewarded as they are to-day. Under the old system the officer was a god, not to be defiled by mere toil or clear thinking. Our daily task commenced about 10 A.M., and finished about noon. When we had to work in the afternoon, we always talked about resigning our commissions. We had an extraordinary view that we were there to enjoy ourselves and look pretty, and it was most unfair to burden our brains with 5 + 5 = 10.

'I am telling you these things, not because I long for those old times again. When I see you boys doing so many interesting things to-day, I feel I must teach you to abhor shams, to face facts, and to tell the truth. In those days I couldn't see the hollowness and the rottenness of it all. I see it now, for I have no illusions. War is a brutal business. Facts predominate. If you have the moral courage to get up in front of your men and admit an error, and seek for light and co-operation, you will show evidence of greatness.

'We were very pretty in those days. I rejoiced in my figure, which, as with all fashionable officers, was kept in order by common or garden corsets. When we went out in review order we were a sight for the girls and—"the mob." The men were just as smart. Indeed, a battalion looked like a thousand dandies out of a cutter's window. I have an affection for that aspect of the past. It is no crime to be a well-dressed man. Even to-day it is most important that an officer should look the picture of a clean, alert, and well-groomed British gentleman. That is an aid to discipline. Every Tommy is an aristocrat. As one of my men once remarked, "I likes my orficer to look a ruddy toff." Of course, there was a great weakness in this system. It was overdone. We concentrated on brass bands, pipeclay, and eye-wash. The men were mere automatons; the discipline was harsh, in some cases brutal; while strategy and tactics were not worshipped as we worship them now. That was not our fault. It was due to the age. The German menace was not even dreamt of. We had only frontier skirmishes to deal with. And we all enlisted—for fun.

'As for training, it was not at all intelligent. We did field-days in full-dress uniforms, busbies, cross-belts, and all the glitter used on review parades. Even in India troops wore European clothing, and died by the hundred from heat apoplexy. The frontal attack was the summit of our knowledge, and "form square" for savage warfare our one great stunt. It looked pretty. And it was this damnable craving for prettiness which hindered the development of military training. Of course, I did not know that then. To me life was one huge jest. But I had a rude awakening.

'In a frontier skirmish, my regiment was attacking a difficult position held by some of the hill tribes. The C.O., who was a charming old gentleman, but no soldier, decided on the usual thing—a frontal attack. We went forward. Two companies were almost annihilated. The senior major, a fairly able man, who was leading the attack, decided it was suicide to go farther, and ordered the retirement. We went back. The colonel demanded an explanation. The major very respectfully pointed out the stupidity of the arrangement, and suggested a feint attack on the front, combined with an enveloping movement round both flanks.

'"Bosh!" replied the Old Man. He ordered us forward again. Another company was decimated, and fortunately the colonel was among the casualties. If he had lived he would have killed every man by his stupid tactics. The major then withdrew the battalion. That night he made arrangements for another attack at dawn. One hundred men were sent to make a feint at the front, and two hundred more were divided into two columns to attack the right and left flanks. The remainder were in reserve. At dawn we carried out his orders. Two hours afterwards we had captured the position, three hundred of the enemy, one gun, and lots of loot.

'*Our casualties in that attack were fifty-five.*

'*Our previous casualties were about three hundred and fifty.*

'This to me was a revelation of the use of brains, and an indication that brains can save human life. From that day, gentlemen, I honestly tried to be intelligent. But I had to go warily. I swotted up Napoleon and Frederick the Great—*in secret;* for it was considered bad form to be a student. Even then I did not

quite appreciate the terrible dangers of such false "form." However, I had the courage to chuck my fashionable regiment and become a soldier of fortune in the Indian and Egyptian armies. From those two great and immortal men, Kitchener and Roberts, I acquired any little knowledge I possess. Still, I am not a marvellous soldier—and know it. But one thing I have been taught, and that is—sincerity.

'When I make a blunder I have no hesitation in cutting my losses. Nor am I afraid of criticism or suggestion. You may find this lacking in certain spheres of military life. But do not despair. Do your duty! Be loyal! And attempt no far-reaching reforms unless you have the genius and the courage to carry them out. Otherwise you will only batter your head against a brick wall. Progress is with you, and you are all young. I wish I were sitting with you as a cadet, and not talking to you with the rank of a colonel. In this war my age seems a curse. Your field is wide and your opportunities are illimitable. To the keen soldier this *is* a day of glory!

'For all that, I do not say our system is perfect. And I am not going to insist that the best men are always pushed on. But I do believe the system is improving. And I can assure you that I am doing my best to smash false barriers. I am not popular with certain people for this. Popularity is nothing to me. I have boys of my own. While I think this is a good school, I quite realise it is not a perfect school. We have not cut the old shackles yet, but we are getting on. You are young and impatient. I know your dreams. I know your hopes. I know how you grouse, and I often hear some of you say, "Oh, here 's that frosted old dug-out again." But I am quite sure you don't mean anything—just as I am quite convinced you try your best.

'Frankly, gentlemen, you have much to be grateful for. You are getting in this school as much knowledge as the old army officer got in twenty years. It may not be issued in palatable or popular form. It may jar your temperament, but the "stuff" is there, if you care to pick it up. I cannot talk to you like Sir Oliver Lodge or fascinate you like Lord Rosebery. I am a plain soldier. My staff are plain soldiers, but they are hard workers. They are doing their best for you, and it is up to you to do your best for them. If I, your colonel, have the courage to come and tell you of my own deficiencies, surely you boys will have the pluck to do a little heart-searching. You must also study the Service as a whole, and not in parts. Believe me, the British Army is a proud and glorious institution. The traditions are high. Great men have come from our ranks. In this war our arms are belaurelled with chivalry. Ours is no mercenary host, no band of knaves or babe-assassins. We fight a good fight. While I am no great Christian, I do believe we are the new Crusaders. This is a Holy Crusade.

'To sum up my theme, let me say I have told you of the jolly but inefficient past simply to show the marvellous advance made in military education, how we have blundered through to a more sensible and useful system. If you feel there are imperfections to-day, you would have been shocked had you soldiered in the 'seventies. For all that, I do not want you to feel contented—not even with me. A healthy discontent is a sign of a progressive mind. Always look forward. Always endeavour to develop new ideas and produce fresh thoughts. But in doing so, try to incorporate the best from the past. Shatter stupid tradition, certainly; but remember this, gentlemen—if your fathers are old, they are also wise with experience. And never insult old age or scorn good counsel.

'Yours is a high calling. Yours is a noble cause. You are all my boys, and I want to be proud of you. When you go from here, I shall watch your careers. If you feel you have any respect for me and this school—imperfect as it is—then I ask you to honour the King, play the game, be good citizens and gallant British officers. That 's all.'

When the Old Man finished an extraordinary thing happened. Tosher, the Canadian, jumped up on the table and shouted, 'Three cheers for the good old colonel!' Our wild hurrahs almost burst the roof.

'Thank you, boys,' said the C.O. quietly, and hurried away. He was afraid of his emotions.

Oh, we did love our dear old commandant!

(*Continued on page 253.*)

'GOOD-NIGHT.'

THE shades of eve have closed around;
We 've said our last good-night;
But in my dreams, when slumber-bound,
Thou 'rt still my guiding light.

The smiles that deck thy winsome face
Are aye before mine e'en;
Throughout the land in endless space
No sweeter lass is seen.

Thy golden hair will captive hold
The sunshine's brightest beam;
Thine eyes forget-me-nots enfold
From near the mountain stream.

I hear thy voice, in accents kind,
Soft words of wisdom speak—
The outcome of a noble mind,
A spirit pure and meek.

The air that oft I've heard thee sing,
Borne on the summer wind,
Till death within my heart shall ring,
And still an echo find.

Good-night, my own, my dearest love;
May angels guard thy sleep,
And from the cloudless skies above
Their watch around thee keep!

HELEN WILKIE.

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THE PAGEANT OF A PRIVATE ON GUARD.

By C. A. MALCOLM, M.A.

THIS is one of those quiet, cloistered, 'cushy' guards, where 'visiting rounds' are scarce and duties almost *nil*. In fact, I am on guard outside an ancient palace, wherein dwelt kings and queens and royal princes of many centuries, and where much of the tragic history of our land had its origin. No need to reveal its name; every true Scot must know it, and every English and Irish soldier who has done duty here will remember the place, if by no other token than that of the perennially fresh, neatly cut 'NELLIE' on one of the stone slabs of the principal door.

In the lonely vigils of our solitary guard how we have vainly speculated upon the unknown personality and the worldly fortunes of the bearer of this name, so long immortalised in enduring stone! Was she kind and beautiful? Haughty, capricious, and a flirt? Was 'Nellie' of the country or of the town? Did she marry her soldier-boy, whose dreams of love found this single expression, never to be effaced until the fabric itself, with the memorials of all those once-potent, illustrious personages that adorn the interior, be blotted out and destroyed?

'Nellie' must be very, very aged, if still alive, for the oldest soldier I know, himself a grandfather, made acquaintance with this name on stone when a mere boy.

When did 'Nellie' live? Why do I seek to solve her lover's riddle after so many thousands of soldiers have been content to accept her at her name value, while doing guard duty?

I break off my reveries. I repeat to myself the Orders: 'To see that no damage is done, no windows are broken; to ring the alarm-bell should sign of fire appear; and to march from tower to tower in a smart and soldierly manner.' . . . .

What is the use of marching in a smart and soldierly manner at an hour past midnight when ladies are not here to admire or 'Brass Hats' to criticise? Besides, it has been a day of toil, and the guardroom coffee was particularly good, the biscuits and cheese delicious. . . . It is refreshing—no, soothing, rather—to lean against one's sentry-box on such a night, and feel at peace with the world. Every one else, everything, seems hushed in sleep, . . . '*and leaves the world to darkness and to me.*' . . . Hark! What was that? . . . A railway-engine steam-whistle! Some train speeding towards London, doubtless. What a hideous anachronism for all those old fellows and *grandes dames* whose portraits line so long a hall inside! They knew nothing of such mechanical contrivances. Horses—black, bay, piebald, or white—were at their service; coaches, with four or eight gallant steeds, and dainty sedan-chairs sufficed their needs.

What would old Achaius—he who is reputed to have been the first King of Scots to make an alliance with the French—say if he could step out of his Dutch artist's frame and discuss the present state of the times? Let him rest, the old eighth-century monarch. Nobody seems at all interested in him. . . . He is not half so fascinating as that elusive lady, 'Nellie.' . . . Could it be that she lived away back in some remote century—with Queen Mary, perhaps? What a time! . . . *Hst!* . . . What noise is that? The massive, iron-barred, oak door actually opens on rusty, creaking hinges. . . . Do I dream? There, framed in the gap between door and wall, peers the fairest, kindest, pleasantest face I have ever beheld. It is the sort of face a cheerful poet would conjure up. . . . '*Bon soir, monsieur le soldat.*' . . . And the laughing blue eyes and dimpled round cheeks shyly draw nearer. . . . What a musical voice she has! What a trim form!

'It makes cold weather, is it not? . . . And you out there! . . . You have cold, m'sieu. . . . No?'

The tones of that voice—how sweet and soft and velvety! What a splendid opportunity for displaying my excellent qualities as chevalier, esquire of dames! But the truth is, I am slow or stupid before two bright eyes. . . . I am mesmerised then, I think—else why did I not give the compliments to the kind visitor? Such a visit was indeed an angel's visit.

At last I found expression in blundering fashion. 'Who—where—how—where did you come from, pray?' At the back of my head I felt that this might be 'Nellie.'

'*Tiens!*' exclaimed the lady. 'Are you at this lodgment so long time as not to know that I am one of the daughters of the house of the Queen Marie? . . . No? . . . *Mais oui!*'

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I felt it was due to me, as a soldier of the *Garde Écossaise* (how ever did I get there?), to prove to my superior that I was not altogether a dolt. 'Pardon, ma'mselle, since my *retour* from France I am a bit at sea about things, and my French is rather rusty, I fear.'

It was a great effort, and the lady bore it well, though her brow puckered somewhat. 'Rusty? . . . Rusty? . . . *Qu'est-ce que c'est que ça?* Ah yes! I see!'

'Now, ma'mselle, don't think me such a dullard. I can sing a catch pretty well, as my friends in our platoon can testify.' I was amazed at my lack of modesty. 'Listen, *s'il vous plaît;*' and there and then I trolled out the '*Marseillaise*,' which a real old 'Frenchy' had taught me long ago down Tournai way.

'What a droll *chanson, certainement!*' exclaimed my audience when I had done wiping the sweat from my brow and neck. 'It is of the newest, m'sieu? I have not heard it before!'

'What!' I ejaculated, aghast; 'do you mean to tell me you don't know your own country's national anthem, written and composed by Rouget de Lisle, and sung by thousands of French volunteers of Marseilles as they marched on their way to Paris in 1792? The most famous battle-song, the'——

'Oh! I say!' broke in the French girl. 'Come, come; you are dreaming. . . . Oh dear, dear! 1792! *Hé! hé! hé!*' and off she went into peals of rippling laughter—from which it appeared all my eloquence had been in vain. 'M'sieu, did you say 1792? *Ma foi!* and this is the year 1565! . . . *C'est très drôle votre métier. Allons, m'sieu;*' and the little lady became serious. 'It is not *gentil* of me to talk thus to you. I demand ten thousand times pardon for my laughter. But I do not marvel that you dream out here these cold nights, and everything so *morne*, so *triste*.' . . . .

I did not hear her out; my mind was again travelling. . . . 'I say, ma'mselle, you don't happen to be Nellie—Ma'mselle Nellie—by any chance?' Whereupon the little lady made the queerest grimace I ever saw, bunching her lips into a nice round strawberry or cherry, and turning her eyes into bright globes, at the same time raising her shoulders ever so slowly. Wrong again, it seemed. Nevertheless I *would* have her Nellie.

'And you are one of Queen Mary's household?' I asked. 'How fortunate that I should meet you! . . . I always did want to meet you, you know. . . . What about poor young Darnley and old Rizzio? They died terrible deaths, did they not?'

'What is it you ask now, *monsieur le soldat?*' and the fair, round face and eyes were clearly troubled. 'M'sieu, you had better go to the house, hang up your *équipement*, and go to bed. You are not well; you dream; your spirit is *dérangé*. As to the prince, he reposes himself at Cragmilly; and the gross signor is within. *Chut!* Don't you hear his profound voice? How it fills all the place? Listen!'

And then, my attention having been drawn to it, I did hear the noise of some one singing lustily in deep, bass tones.

'*M'sieu, cachez-moi*—quick, quick!' And before I grasped the lady's meaning she had slipped behind my sentry-box, the while a broad-shouldered, thick-set man, with the strongest, swarthiest, ugliest countenance I ever clapped eyes on, went swinging past, the brim of his black-velvet bonnet over his eyes, a sword clattering on the stones behind him. . . . In my amazement I completely forgot to challenge the stranger ere he disappeared in the courtyard of the palace.

'*Tiens!* What a fright I received!' whispered the French girl, tiptoeing from her hiding-place. 'That is one bold, bad man, is he not? *Très, très féroce!*'

'I do seem to know the face,' I replied. 'But where or how I met the gentleman before, I don't recollect.'

'Really! . . . It is Monsieur Botvil, . . . *très fort, mais pas beau.* Ugh! . . . He is bad—wicked! But you have hunger, *monsieur la sentinelle.* Permit me to go bring you something to eat.' And with that she glided off like a moonbeam.

Ah! wasn't I in luck extraordinary? What a nice, dear girl, to be sure! I waited on in patience, but my friend did not reappear; nor did that much-looked-for little supper. Instead, from the opposite direction there clattered in a great crowd of gaunt horsemen with pikes and firelocks, and with curious helmets on their heads. In they thronged, dismounting in the great quadrangle, and out again, talking among themselves of Cromwell, Lambert, Monk, and the great progress they were making.

I stood absolutely dazed. None seemed to notice me (for which I was thankful). It was all so puzzling. These were the Ironsides, then, and I had lived to see them! How strange! I must try to see the great Protector himself. . . . But no more came. . . . Dull times again. . . . No; here was another crowd—a cheering, tumultuous crowd. Nearer and nearer it approached, and now I could discern many of its members.

What a shouting! What a skirling of bagpipes! Scores of tartan-kilted pipers, and above and behind them on his charger sat a tall, fair, young man in blue-velvet cap, with white cockade, and scarlet breeches. I never saw so many well-dressed ladies as I saw that day in that crowd. And they all kept looking at the man on the horse, remarking on his nice straight nose and noble aspect, others of them calling out, 'Welcome, Royal Charlie!' 'Bonnie Prince Charlie!'

'Oh, that's the Pretender!' said I to myself. 'He's not one of us. Never mind; I'll pay him my compliments.' "*Shun!*" I ordered me. 'Present—arms!' But not a soul seemed to be aware of my presence. Then I glanced with a professional eye on his followers—Highlanders, every one, it seemed; and, believe me, a more unsatisfactory regiment I never looked upon. What a poor show, I thought, they make compared with the white-gaitered, red-coated infantry of the line, these bare-kneed and bare-legged, ragged-looking fellows, armed with all manner of swords and cutlasses, knives and shields!

A dour-looking man beside me, who evidently read my thoughts, gruffly addressed me with: 'Ye ken naethin' aboot it. Thae fellaws 'll knock the guts clean oot o' yer pig-tail, pipe-clay gentry.'

In spite of the unmitigated rudeness of the boor, I was forced to admit to myself that they would be rough customers to tackle at close quarters.

Well, I was a Hanoverian sworn, and had had no dealings with rebels; yet deep in my heart I had always cherished an attachment for the exiled princes of the long line of Stewart. All the romance was—or seemed—there. The most beautiful ladies of Scotland, they said, were all for Prince Charles. . . . Was 'Nellie' too a Jacobite? . . . Surely. . . . Yes, I would declare my secret sentiments. And I burst forth into a new song done by one Adam Skirving, that was extremely popular in certain quarters. I had just got as far as 'Hey, Johnnie Cope, are ye wauking yet?' when a bomb burst on my ear.

'Here! . . . What's this? . . . You're asleep—and on sentry! Do you hear?'

I did. It was actually myself sound asleep, and collared by 'visiting rounds' at 2 A.M., of all hours!

'Pardon, sir; not asleep, sir, but taken kind of bad, sir.' And I repeated Orders like a model soldier. I was excused. . . . You see, I was a *very* old soldier. . . . But what about 'Nellie'?

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XVI.

'FROM a wine-cart driver,' continued Keene-Leslie, 'I learned that I was near the town of Eboli. The car was now an incubus. Its presence would make the very stones prate of my whereabouts, so I decided to lose it. I turned off the main road, and left the Fiat at the side of a little-used track in a big wood some miles out of the town. Then, still keeping off the main road, I "hoofed it" to Eboli. There I bought a hat and a cheap overcoat, and into the town I sauntered, but with my eyes open, you bet, for the villa gentry. My dodge was to double back to Naples by train at once, but I found that there was no train that night. There was nothing for it but to "lie low," so I went to the Albergo del Vozzo, and stayed the night. Nothing happened; and next morning I boarded the train, and was in Naples in a couple of hours.

'You had not arrived, so I had a talk with the Chief of Police. He was much interested in my yarn, for the villa had been more or less under observation; if the inmates were not "wanted," they were at least suspected of being part of a clever international gang of rogues. He was puzzled about their selecting Ubriano as a base, until I gave him an outline of the story of the paper in Hugh Forbes's possession. I was anxious to gain further tidings, and the Chief set things going promptly. When I went back to see him, he had news for me. The occupants of the villa had evidently taken alarm at my presence in Italy. It looks as though Benedetto had come across my name in his precious career, for the house was empty! It was probable, the Chief told me, that they would make for England. He promised to keep a watch on the Messageries and other lines, and advised me on no account to join you; so I rigged myself out as the elderly nonentity you saw, and travelled home by a later train than yours. Just as well that I disguised myself, for, when we were nearing Folkestone, I'm hanged if Wakeford didn't make his appearance on deck! He was at the same game as myself; he had discarded his dark-pointed beard and was clean-shaven. He scarcely moved from the seat he had chosen, and I'll swear that his attitude was more of the hunted than of the hunter. I am dead-certain that he never suspected that the footling spectacled old nondescript was the man who had bolted with his motor-car, and whom he had tried to plug with a revolver. I determined to keep an eye on him, and to phone to London from Folkestone, as it was possible that Scotland Yard might identify him; but at Folkestone he disappeared. I had gone below for a minute, and never saw him again. He probably had slipped out from the crowd to avoid the boat-train. At all events, he wasn't in it when it started, and he didn't leave it at Charing Cross. . . . So here I am! And now let me have your "hair-breadth 'scape," for I have a telegram from my chief, and must tear off to meet him at once.'

I ran through my adventure in the train with the country priest, and we agreed that there could be little doubt that he and the big 'butler' were one and the same man.

'Look out for the next move from the gang,

Neil. Let me know, of course, and, with a bit o' luck, we 'll beat them again,' were Tony's parting words.

Off he went. I got the night train for the North, and next morning I breakfasted in the peace of my rooms in Auld Reekie.

Among my letters at Jura Street was one from my uncle telling me that the copy of the paper coincided exactly in shape and size with the faded document at The Bield. It was clear that the two had been twin documents; that the one at The Bield had become illegible through damp and age, while my uncle Hugh's copy had stood the test of time. Moreover, in the paper in the colonel's possession, the only two recognisable words, '*Exultabunt Domino*,' were in precisely the same place at the foot as in the copy I had sent him, and even the little Roman cross preceding them was there. There had been no developments at The Bield, and no signs of any prowler, although my uncle and Angus had watched carefully. The tone of the letter was that of a man in good spirits, and the writing was in his usual clear, firm hand.

Dr Hall also had written. His note told me that he had informed the police about the old Italian with the melodeon. A man somewhat answering the description had been found in Morayshire, but it appeared that he was a well-known itinerant—a bit of a 'character'—and he was able to prove that he had not been out of Morayshire for six weeks. The colonel was well, and the doctor hoped that there would be no more developments in the affair, as avoidance of excitement was most desirable for him.

Two facts stood out clearly in the queer business. We were in possession of one part of a mysterious document which was being hunted by men who had money, brains, and diabolical resources to help them. The other part, which I had seen in the bogus cigarette on the night of the fog, had fallen (Heaven knows at what cost to others!) into these men's hands. Unless an extraordinary stroke of fortune fell to us, the next move in the game was bound to come from the gang; but I wasted no time pondering the affair, for my own situation gave me more than enough to think about.

A March of foul weather wore on until a few days before the rising of the Court for the Spring Vacation. Not that the rising of His Majesty's Judges (as I reflected ruefully) affected me in the least, except that it would be an escape from the attentions of my clerk, a persistently hopeful creature, who daily during Session approached me, his optimistic eye charged with the cheerful expectancy that a brief had come in on the previous evening. I almost envied the briefless one—his name is now a beloved one in letters—whose clerk left him so severely alone that his lineaments faded from his master's memory. Never a guinea's worth of work came my way. The thought shadowed me. It grudged me sleep, waited at table, strode beside me, up the Mound and down again, took my arm in the Parliament House, stuck to me like a poisonous physical presence, and familiarity with it never bred contempt.

I think I have mentioned that I had written a little for the newspapers and an occasional magazine article. It had only been a little. A conspiracy of heartless editors refused to have more. It is an ill business trying to turn an honest shilling with Black Care at one's elbow, but as best I could I had 'buckled to' an article for consideration by a weekly newspaper. The rate of pay compared unfavourably with a healthy navvy's, but it was better than nothing, and the writing gave me something to think about. Its title, of all things, was, 'The Enervating Effect of Wealth,' and it professed to deal with the dangers of Philistinism and divorce from ideals in the nation and the individual. I wrote it, tongue in cheek, and I read it over with a peevish contempt for myself. I had almost made up my mind to save my self-respect by tearing the depressing thing to pieces, when the diminutive 'slavey' heralded the entrance to my room of Mr Archibald Jardine, one of my colleagues of the Junior Bar. I was glad to see him, for I was in the blackest of humours with myself, and Jardine was an old friend and a good fellow. He was the laziest man in the Parliament House, except one of the judges; but he was a sound lawyer, and his alertness, his clear-headedness, and his personal charm had served him well. He was gathering a good practice, as he put it, 'in spite of himself.'

'How goes it, Tatcho?' I greeted him. (He was nearly as bald as a coot; hence the sobriquet.)

'Fair to showery. Are you busy?'

I was able to reassure him on this point, and he settled himself in an arm-chair with his pipe.

'What 's that thing?' he asked, pointing to the MS. 'I couldn't help seeing it. If the rest of it is as piffling as the title, it must be pretty awful. What is it, anyhow?'

I explained.

'It seems an extremely moderate form of amusement.'

'Indeed it is.'

'Didn't know you were an author!'

'Neither I am. I'm a helot, a hack, a plagiarist, a whited sepulchre!'

'So? That 's a fairly progressive indictment. Do you like doing it?'

'No.'

'Why do it?'

I told him that my object was to improve my handwriting.

He smoked in meditative silence for a little. 'I came to consult you, Neil, about the Spring Vacation. Have you any plans?'

'I am unable to decide,' I replied. 'Torn as I am between the competing fascinations of my private golf-course, my forty-horse-power Rolls-Royce, and my two-thousand-ton steam-yacht'——

'Just so,' he cut in. 'Dammitman, none of your moss-grown jests weighs less than a ton. Don't give me any more of them. I'm in a hurry. Tell me, I pray you, where are you going in the Vacation?'

'I don't know.'

'All is well! You are the very man I want. To business! I have taken my old stretch of the Deveron. You remember?'

'Rather!' The man does not deserve to live who could forget that lovable corner and its green garden by the bridge on Deveron-side. 'What are you getting at?'

'The river won't see me this spring, Neil, and I want you to take my place. The fishing is divine. The air is champagne. You will go?'

'It's good of you, Tatcho! I am tempted, but it's out of the question just now. At any other time I should be delighted, but'—— I shook my head.

'Why?'

'*Res angusta!*'

'It isn't a question of affording it, man. You and your friends can have the run of the lodge for a month. I hate the thought of the fishing being wasted.'

What he meant was that he loved to see his friends enjoying themselves. True, he was a rich man; but your rich man is not invariably a thoughtful one. I hesitated for a moment. Faint, far off, sounded the music of a salmon-reel. Ah! Did the maiden of the 'Lorelei' ever sing a sweeter lure? With a sigh I wrenched myself from the spell, for I knew that, even with the utmost care, my resources would be down to about a five-pound note by the end of the Vacation. I kept that sombre fact to myself, but the dream of the Deveron vanished.

'No, my friend. Lord knows I'm sorry, but it can't be done.'

'I am disappointed. Look here, Neil,' said the good Tatcho, fixing me with a gimlet eye; 'is there any relationship between your refusal and your writing'—he nodded towards the offending manuscript—'that sort of tosh?'

'Yes. They are both by Stone-Broke out of Little Flutter. Now you know. Get thee behind me, Tatcho! Why can't you whip the beloved stream yourself?'

'I am going to work.'

'I beg your pardon?'

'You heard me well enough. I—am—going—to—work.'

'Wait a moment. The notion of *your* working in Vacation takes some time to trickle in.'

'Why shouldn't I?'

'Why not, indeed? Absence of occupation is not rest; a mind quite vacant'——

'Is a mind quite blest!' he interrupted. 'But mine won't be blest in the coming Vacation, for I hate work. My job ought to have been pulling blooms off century plants! However, if I do as little as I can during the Session, why the devil shouldn't I work as much as I like in Vacation?'

'Again, why not? But what sort of work?'

'My trade. Smith-Drummond is my senior in a thundering big case, one of the regrettably rare, almost extinct specimens of the go-ahead-spare-no-expense-every-iron-in-the-fire type. The papers make a bundle three feet high already. Both sides are "out for blood." It may come off sooner than we expect, and as Smith-Drummond is up to his neck in other work, the idea of the solicitors is that in Vacation I'm to go to London, where the headquarters of the clients and their English lawyers are, and straighten out a lot of the preliminaries.'

He was in the middle of unloading on me a lot of technical details, when he pulled up suddenly and gave the arm of his chair a lusty slap.

'By Jove! Neil! Will you come to London with me and give me a hand? Technically, of course, you won't be in the case, but I have my work cut out for me, and you'll save me no end of worry.'

'"Devil" for you?'

'Devil, clerk, secretary, label yourself what you jolly well like. Think it over. It will be spadework, but I am not asking you to sweat for nothing. You'll be worth your modest pay, and I can employ whom I dam'-well choose as my private secretary. We'll be three weeks at the grindstone in London, and with little time for the village festivals; but you'll be at your job, and doing yourself a good turn as well as me. My papers get into a hopeless muddle. Just now my room is knee-deep in misplaced documents. You can help to keep things right for me in this business, for I'm an unmethodical blighter. I have a genuine gift for putting things in their proper places and forgetting where they are. I believe I could lose a big drum in a telephone-cabinet! But I must go now. I'll give you a couple of days to think it over.'

A couple of days! Ten seconds of time sufficed for my decision.

'Thank you, Jardine. It's awfully decent of you,' I said. 'I'm your man.'

'Not yet, but you will be for eight hours a day in London on and after the 1st of April next.'

We shook hands on it.

'I sha'n't forget your'——

'Oh, that's all right,' he choked me off hurriedly. 'It's an ordinary affair of business.

I'll send you some of the papers to-morrow morning. So long!'

He took his departure, leaving me with a lighter heart than I had known for months.

The precious thesis on the canker of wealth caught my eye. I jammed it triumphantly into the heart of the fire.

The beginning of April saw me back in London.

(*Continued on page 245.*)

'YELLOW JACK.'

By JOHN D. LECKIE.

'YELLOW JACK' is not a personality, but a power. 'Jack' is the sailors' name for a flag (as in 'Union-Jack'), and the flag hoisted by ships when in quarantine or to show that they have infectious disease on board is termed, from its colour, 'Yellow Jack.' Hence the sobriquet 'Yellow Jack,' sometimes applied to yellow-fever.

Although yellow-fever is still a dreaded disease, medical science has done much to mitigate its ravages; in fact, the progress made in this direction during the last quarter of a century is marvellous. Readers of *Tom Cringle's Log* may remember that the author, Michael Scott, refers to Jamaica as the 'land of fun and fever.' The latter part of the designation no longer applies, though it was true about a century ago, during the time of Scott's residence in the island. The ravages of the disease at that time in the West Indies were appalling, and they have left their mark in the world's history; it is to them that the negro republic of Hayti owes its origin. It may seem strange that a handful of untrained negroes should have successfully defied the armies of the great Napoleon; but they would have been powerless without the aid of 'Yellow Jack,' who proved a most effective ally. In 1802 an army of fifty-eight thousand five hundred and forty-five soldiers was sent from France to Hayti to quell the insurrection. Within four months fifty thousand two hundred and seventy were dead of yellow-fever. When, finally, the expedition returned, only three hundred men survived; disease had accounted for the rest. In fact, in proportion to the number of men involved, the Haytian campaign was more disastrous than that of Moscow. In the latter case it was the cold that killed Napoleon's soldiers; in Hayti it was the heat, or, rather, its indirect effects.

Thus 'Yellow Jack' helped to found the Haytian republic. But destiny had a wider scope. Napoleon's army of fifty-eight thousand men was by far the largest that had ever been sent to the West Indies, and, if successful, would probably have been employed in an attempt to subjugate the neighbouring British islands. The West Indies at that time were the richest and most prosperous of the British colonies. Foiled by destiny, Napoleon was constrained in the following year (1803) to sell to the United States the Louisiana territory—not the present State of Louisiana, but a vast region comprising about one-third of the area of the great republic. There is little doubt that the Haytian failure induced him to take this step, which had such a far-reaching effect on the world's history.

About twenty-five years ago I was living in Rio de Janeiro, at a time when that city was a hotbed of yellow-fever. Deaths from the disease were so frequent and sudden that one felt like being in a battle, seeing men drop on all sides, and knowing that one's own turn might arrive at any moment. I remember the case of a friend, a fine young fellow, who succumbed to the disease on Christmas Day. But the sanitary condition of Rio has improved wonderfully during the last quarter of a century, so that it is now affirmed that the local death-rate will compare favourably with that of most large cities in the world. This marvellous change has been produced by a better knowledge of the causes of yellow-fever, and consequently the adoption of improved preventive and curative methods. It was discovered that one of the principal agents in the dissemination of the disease is the mosquito, which acts as a carrier of the germs from an infected to a healthy person.

A vigorous campaign against the mosquito was initiated. The insect lays its eggs in standing water, in which it passes the first (or larval) stage of its existence. Now, the mosquito larva requires air, and consequently free access to the surface of the water. A small quantity of oil poured on standing water forms a film, which cuts off the larva from its air-supply, and so suffocates it, at the same time preventing other mosquitoes from laying eggs in the water. A systematic house-to-house inspection was undertaken. Cisterns were protected by fine wire screens as well as by a layer of oil. The sewers were thoroughly fumigated, dead mosquitoes being taken out, it was said, by the bucketful. It may seem strange that the mosquitoes should frequent the sewers. But the insect, for its health and comfort, requires heat, moisture, darkness, and a calm atmosphere; all these requisites are found in a sewer. Being mainly nocturnal in their habits, mosquitoes lurk and sleep in the daytime in some secluded nook, whence they emerge at dusk in swarms. The result of such a campaign as this in Rio and other fever-haunted cities was that yellow-fever at once diminished or even disappeared.

Yellow-fever has left its mark not only in history, as already shown, but even in the configuration and the commerce of our planet. Had it not been for the discovery of effectual means of combating it, the construction of the Panamá Canal would have been impossible. In his attempt to pierce the Isthmus of Panamá, De Lesseps was balked not so much by engineering as by sanitary difficulties. The white officials sent out from France died almost as rapidly as in the Haytian expedition eighty years before. Then the Americans took the matter in hand. During their occupation of Cuba in 1898–1902 they had proved the efficacy of sanitary methods in abolishing yellow-fever. The city of Havana, formerly a focus of the disease, was so cleansed by American methods that the pestilence almost entirely disappeared. Perhaps it was mainly a knowledge of this fact that induced the United States Government in 1903 to conclude a treaty with the republic of Panamá for the reconstruction of the canal. The result is well known. Thanks to up-to-date sanitary methods, yellow-fever and malaria were banished, and the work was successfully carried out. So great were the ravages of these diseases on former occasions that it is said that every sleeper laid on the short railway across the isthmus (built in 1850–1855) cost the life of a man.

So little was known, even a few years ago, of the methods by which yellow-fever is propagated that the writer remembers reading of the case of a hospital which was actually a breeding-ground for the pestilence. In order to prevent the access of ants, so troublesome in tropical climates, the legs of the bedsteads were placed in tins of water, which thus became ideal places for breeding mosquitoes, and consequently for disseminating yellow-fever and malaria.

THE BLOWER OF BUBBLES.

PART III.

VII.

AT the head of a stairway which one reached by going through a tobacconist's, Herr Klotz greeted us with guttural cordiality. We asked after his wife, and were told that she was a little better, though very weak, and had insisted upon seeing her guests before they left, if they would be so kind as to visit the sickroom.

On the contents of an enormous hamper sent from 'Arcadia' (and, I am certain, paid for by Norman) the German and the two of us lunched with all the bonhomie of Bohemians. Basil Norman was in the best of spirits, so much so, in fact, that Klotz was constantly overcome with laughter, and on three occasions was forced to rush away to acquaint his wife 'mit der amuzing veet of zee altogedderillustrious Herr Norman.'

By no means least in importance, Klotz's little son of about four years of age sat in a high chair and chuckled knowingly whenever he deemed the humour had reached a necessary climax. Though he was not unlike his father in the shape of his head, his chin did not recede, and one could only assume the mother had supplied the qualities lacking in the father. Never for a moment did the child lose interest in the proceedings; he followed throughout the facial expression and the play of conversation of his elders. His face interested me so intensely that I found myself glancing at him whenever his interest in the others gave me a chance; there was so much of promise and heredity about him.

'And what,' I said, during a momentary lull in the merriment, 'is Master Siegfried to become?' We had learned his name a moment before.

'Siegfried,' said his father, 'tell zee gentlemens vot you to be already intend.'

The little chap smiled, but without self-consciousness. 'A conducthtor,' he lisped, 'like Herr Nikith.'

Klotz crossed his hands upon his ample waistcoat and beamed paternally.

'Your baton bring,' he said, 'und der score *Tristan*.'

With profuse apologies for this display of juvenile precocity, the violinist hurried after the boy, and re-entered a moment later with his violin and a music-stand, which he proceeded to set up.

Siegfried followed close on his heels with the full orchestral score of the last act of *Tristan and Isolde*, which almost obscured him from sight. Placing it on the stand, he retired in a dignified manner; and Herr Klotz, taking a chair, seated himself at the left of the stand, and proceeded to tune his fiddle to pitch, varying the proceedings with imitations of French-horns, vagrant clarionets, and irresponsible trombones in the melange of discord which always precedes the entrance of the conductor. Norman, who had been enjoying the scene to the full, suddenly rose to his feet.

'Herr Klotz,' he said sternly, 'I protest.'

The tuning ceased, and the violinist looked anxiously at his guest. 'You do not like dis, zumtimes?' he faltered.

'I object,' cried Basil, 'to being left out.—Herr Siegfried!' He raised his voice. 'Herr Siegfried!'

The little chap walked solemnly in, a baton in his hand. 'Yeth?' he said.

'*Mein Herr*, my friend and myself desire to join your orchestra.'

The youthful conductor considered, ruminatingly. 'You blay goot?' he said.

'Wonderfully. I was comb-and-tissue-paper-player in the Cascade Steam Laundry Orchestra, and my friend'——

'He ith goot alzo?'

'Pest, speak for yourself.'

I shrugged my shoulders. 'Far be it from me to brag,' I said, rather lamely, 'but I was first violinist to His Majesty the King of Diddledoodledums.'

'Ah yes,' cried Norman; 'and you were dismissed because of your unfortunate habit of playing an octave flat.' He leaned over and put his lips to Siegfried's ear. 'Let him play the drums,' he said in a stage-whisper.

Amidst roars of delight from the older Klotz, the youngster left the room, and returned in a minute's time, carrying an immense tin dish-pan and a broken broom-handle, which musical impedimenta he entrusted to my tender mercies, and then sedately stalked from the scene once more. With mixed emotions I carried my pan and stick over to the extreme right, and placed a chair beneath the spot where the stage-box would be, calmly surveying the assumed audience with that look of waggish melancholy one associates with gentlemen of the drums. Norman, whom Klotz had armed with the combined ingredients of his instrument, placed a chair half-way between the conductor's stand and myself, and together we joined Herr Klotz in a two-minutes' orgy of discordant preparation. With a desire to increase the variety of my percussion effects, I conscripted an extra chair into service, placed it back towards me, and prepared to use my cane as an auxiliary drumstick.

By common consent we achieved a moment's unanimity of silence, which was seized by Herr Siegfried as the auspicious moment for his entrance. Without the least loss of dignity he clambered on to his chair, as we applauded, perfunctorily, by hammering our alleged music-stands with non-existent bows; and, turning to the audience, he bowed with the restraint of genius—a feat of condescension which appeared to delight the throng hugely, for he was constrained to turn about and acknowledge their plaudits a second time before they would allow him to proceed.

As drummer I assumed an air of morose boredom.

The noise of the audience having subsided, the conductor opened his score and nodded to his *Concertmeister*, Herr Klotz, who carefully found the required place in the orchestration.

'Blay der "Liebestod" music,' said he in his most professional manner to us. We nodded knowingly, and found the required part in the last act of our scores, after turning over a vast number of visionary pages.

'Do we begin at the beginning?' asked Norman.

'Yes,' I answered, 'and leave off at the end.' After which sally I laughed immoderately, and began to understand the instinct which causes a humorist to enjoy his own wit more than any other's.

A rap on the stand brought my mirth to a close. Both arms were extended in the air—a last look at both sides of the orchestra (there must have been a hundred of us)—the left hand slowly poised to indicate 'piano'—the right hand gently raised—and then the strings were brought into action. I had intended, as another excellent jest, to give a tremendous crash on the pan at the start, so as to bring down the leader's wrath, but something in the little chap's attitude stopped me. This was not play to him—it was real; and, to my amazement, it seemed no less vivid to my fellow-burlesquers. Herr Klotz was playing the chromatic development of the opening as if it had been Covent Garden and the real Nikisch conducting. The Blower of Bubbles was giving one more proof of his amazing versatility. In some manner he was imitating a cello, and he *knew* the music. Where he had learned it one could only conjecture—but when did he learn anything?

Silently I watched the serio-comic development. The boy was conducting remarkably, with unerring artistry, sustaining the exact Wagnerian *tempi*, and, with little exaggeration, indicating the crescendo and diminuendo which colours all the great master's composition. How much of it he knew or whether he was following his father's violin I could not make out, but his earnestness fascinated me; and suddenly his eyes turned towards mine. I gripped the broom-handle—but no, it was merely a warning that my time was imminent. I think my breath came short as I waited. Then his eyes sought mine once more, and inclining towards me, his baton called for the drums. It was *I* he was conducting, and no one else! And I vibrated the broom-handle against the dish-pan, only to stop instantaneously as his baton moved to subtler instruments. He never failed to warn me with that preliminary glance, and when the magic wand followed I gave him all I had. The little beggar was a hypnotist.

Towards the climax I could have sworn the whole orchestra was there. Klotz was playing superbly, and Norman was roaming from one instrument to the other with a remarkable combination of accuracy and imitative versatility. As for me, I supplied dynamic effects that would have satisfied even the great Beethoven, who once asked for guns.

Then it was over.

Herr Siegfried bowed twice to the audience, indicated his entire orchestra with an all-

embracing wave of the baton, and ended by solemnly shaking hands with his father, who stood up to accept the honour. After that, with a self-conscious wriggle, he became the boy once more, and removed his spell from us. With roars of delight we gathered about him, making a circle by joining hands, and dancing extempore, we sang a chorus consisting of constant repetitions of 'Hilee-hilo! Hilee-hilo!' That may not be the correct spelling, but then we were singing, not writing it—which is one advantage music has over literature.

Before we went, Herr Klotz took us into the room where his wife lay ill, and by her eyes—for she was too weak to speak—she thanked us for our part in making the day a festival one for their lonely little household. With an instinctive gentleness that a woman might have shown, Norman spoke of the things she wanted to hear about: how her husband had been missed at the restaurant, of the desire of every one to make a little present to them, of the great future that lay before their son, and of the genius of Herr Klotz that would some day be recognised. With the cheeriest of good-byes, he lightly touched her shoulder with his hand and said he knew she would soon be well again.

He lied. In half of what he said he lied. He was blowing bubbles that the woman stricken with fever might see in them some little compensation for her life of drudgery.

With the guttural good wishes of Herr Klotz still in our ears (we had pledged eternal friendship in three foaming mugs of beer), we sought the street, to find that dusk was settling over the city. For some moments neither spoke, but feeling that perhaps I had descended too abruptly from my pedestal, I cleared my throat and ventured on a remark.

'A decent fellow,' I said patronisingly, and felt my dignity reasserting itself; but Norman failed to hear me. He was lost in some memory. Now that I look back, I wonder was it the picture of the sick woman he saw or his vision of the mother with her two sons; or, with his gift of intuition, could he see, less than a year ahead, Klotz, in a German soldier's uniform, marching through Belgium with an army of lust and rapine, gorged like gluttonous, venomous beasts?

I wonder.

VIII.

It was from an aunt of mine that I first heard of Norman's attachment to Lilias Oxley.

Whenever I received a letter from my relative, I had first to realise that its mission was to educate, not to entertain. She was a woman of strong ideas, and, as my mother died very early in my life, she seldom lost an opportunity of impressing a moral—like the Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*. In her correspondence, and to a large extent in her conversation, my aunt was given to dashes, underlines, and exclamation-marks. It is perhaps unnecessary to state that she was a single woman.

I received the letter two months after Christmas; it was dated from the Beacon at Hindhead.

'My dear Nephew,—You will find mentholated crystals — carried in a small bottle — a splendid preventive against the present epidemic of cold in the head! Sniff a little every night before going to bed.

'When are you going to marry? For goodness' sake, marry a *dark* girl when you do. Our family is growing positively colourless!

'Your friend, Mr Norman, is visiting the Oxleys down here. It seems young Oxley is trying to write a play with some ideas in it, and Norman thinks he can help him! Who in the world wants to see a play with *their* ideas! It's a pity you couldn't teach him to do something useful—Norman, I mean.—Young Oxley is going into the Church! Why doesn't he go to Canada! I mean *Norman*.

'Do you remember little Lilias Oxley? She had pneumonia last year, though I *warned* her mother about flannel soaked in goose-oil and turpentine! She always looked like a hothouse flower, and now she is simply *frail*. Of course, she's pretty and has eyes that always make fools of the men—not that *that* signifies! Everybody says she's artistic, but all I ever hear her play is by some newfangled foreigner named De Bussy, and it's all discord! She's only nineteen and looks sixteen.

'Of course, young Norman comes along, and instead of picking out some healthy *buxom* girl, he falls in love with this bit of tinsel china! It's criminal, and should not be *allowed*. What kind of children will they have, if any! He calls her his *Beatrice*—Heaven knows why.

'They are together *constantly*. I would write to the *Times* about it if I thought that Lord Northfellow would publish it. We should have a Minister of *Eugenics!* Surely Winston Churchill would be better employed at that than trying to build up a huge navy we'll never need! By the way, I see he's taken to writing *novels* now!

'Do talk to young Norman! Tell him your uncle is doing very well with pigs in Canada; and why not induce your friend to go *there*, and get some *common-sense*, because every Canadian I meet has a head on his shoulders? It must be the climate!

'I am going to stay here for a month, and then visit my cousin in Scotland. She has six children. Whatever induced her to marry a minister? He has no money and no *prospects*, except more children, I suppose!

'Does that Mulvaney woman see that your room is kept aired? When you write you should have the window open and a cap on your head.

'I hope you will never write books! It is quite a *distinction* nowadays not to.

Where did you go for Christmas?—Your loving aunt, HANNAH.

Feby. 8/1914.

The only way I can account for my aunt's love of exclamation-marks was her delight at seeing a sentence round to a good finish. I have known authors to be so overcome with the dramatic significance of their work that they put them in as a sort of public recognition thereof.

En passant. . . . I wonder why my aunt never wrote a serial story for one of the London dailies.

IX.

WAR.

Our world of artificiality lay like a cracked egg-shell. As drowning men, we clutched at everything that seemed stable . . . to find nothing that was not made of perishable stuff. Our pens that had criticised so long mocked us as we gazed at the pages which seemed to reject our thoughts before we gave them life. A few of us turned into special war writers and comforted the nation with statistics. We showed that Germany was beaten—it was a mathematical truth that could be proved. While we demonstrated our immense superiority to the enemy in figures, a little British Army was fighting against odds of six to one.

And the Fates stood by with poised shears, ready to cut the thread of Britain's destiny.

It is not pleasant to recall the arraignment of the year 1914. The Boer War had shown our weakness to every nation but ourselves; our educated men had graduated into the world using their abilities as obstructionists. We had discouraged everything that had the very odour of progress.

Yet—we muddled through. Men still use that word as if it were something creditable instead of hideous. We won, because, behind the Britain that muddled and obstructed, there was the Britain of noble mothers and noble sons.

And into the first winter our orgy of statistics went on, like an endless Babylonian feast . . . while the British fleet, that we should never need, strained and plunged in the icy gales of the North Sea, grimly, silently, saving the world for Civilisation.

Great days. Fateful days. Terrible days.

One Friday night early in December I received a note from Norman, asking me to meet him for dinner at 'Arcadia.' I had not seen him for six months, but his debonair charm was as potent as ever, and we chatted of the past like friends who had not met for years. As if by mutual consent, we avoided the present until I noticed that the orchestra was different.

'Where is Klotz?' I asked suddenly.

'Gone.'

'Where?'

'To the war. He was a German reservist, and got away.'

'And his wife?'

'She is confined to her bed all the time, but fortunately there is an excellent woman looking after her and young Siegfried. By the way, what a conductor he 'll make some day!'

By the subterfuge I knew who was paying for the woman, though his income was always slender. Stimulated by a British-born orchestra that played with a respectability beyond question, we pursued bubbles of conversation for half-an-hour, saying many clever things and arriving at no conclusions; but both of us knew that, behind the badinage, there was the consciousness of war gripping our brains like a fever.

'What do you think,' I said at last, 'of the question of enlisting?' It would have been a mockery to deny the fever any longer.

'Why should I enlist?' His smile was so disarming that I regretted my move at once.

'Don't misunderstand me,' I said hastily. 'You are not needed, and you never will be. Besides'—— My voice trailed off into the insincere platitudes that always come to the lips when conscience is to be drugged.

He lit a cigarette. 'Pest,' he said, 'most men are participants in life; a few, like myself, are onlookers. It was my choice when I was a mere youngster—wisely or not, I do not know—but the pose has become reality now. I am a jester at the court of the world, a wordy fellow with a touch of melancholy in his humour, watching and commenting on the real things of life. Before there was a war I blew bubbles, and now I am fit for nothing else. Have a cigarette?'

'Thanks.'

He passed his hand across his brow with the same weariness I had noticed before.

'To gaze on life,' he went on after a pause, 'and not to live it, spares one many sorrows. Even love, which comes to most men as an overwhelming passion, stole into my life like a perfume of Cashmere. When I was twelve years of age and living on the south coast, I used to pass a little dream-girl of seven years or so. The purity of her face, the haunting sweetness of her eyes, stayed with me like a melody a mother sings to her child. Then she was ill, and for three weeks I never saw her. Finally she came one day in a chair, and her beauty was the most exquisite thing I had ever seen. It made me think that the God who gave us this beautiful world sometimes cherishes a soul as sweet as hers and keeps it in a body that is frail, so that through life He can watch it like a flower, tenderly, lovingly; . . . and when He wants it back again He has but to whisper, and, like a violet bending to a summer breeze, it hears and obeys. . . . I have sometimes thought that even tears shed for such a one have in them the quality of dew, and serve to keep the memory green and pleasant.

'The next day I brought her a rose. Though we had never spoken, she took it, and then gave me her face to kiss. . . . I lost my mother

when I was very young, but this dream-girl's kiss supplied that inspiration for the ideal that a child takes from its mother. I could not have been impure after that—I could not have been unkind. The next day she was gone, and I never saw her again until I went to Surrey to visit young Oxley. She was his sister.'

'And you found?'

'That the dream-child had become a woman—the charm of Spring had softened to the witchery of Summer.'

He shrugged his shoulders and relit his cigarette, which had gone out.

'That, my dear Pest, is how love came to me.'

I frowned in an endeavour to pierce his apparently superficial dismissal of the subject.

'Don't you intend to marry her?' I said.

'Marry her?' He laughed, but there was little mirth in the sound. 'Does a jester marry?' His eyes hardened, and there was a new ring to his voice. 'Who am I to take a wife? A *poseur*, a *flâneur* in a world of men. I stand discredited beside the poorest workman whose toil brings in a pittance for his wife and kiddies. England is calling for men—for men, I say.' He brought his fist with a crash on the table. 'What can I offer her—my parlour accomplishments? My minstrel's mummery that shudders at the sight of a sword? Can I blow bubbles in a world where hearts are breaking?'

There were tears in his voice, but his eyes were flashing furiously.

'Hexcuse me.' A man had stepped up to us, wearing the armlet of a recruit. His face was oddly familiar, but I could not recall it until a light was switched on just behind him, and I recognised the pumpkin-faced man of Christmas Eve.

'I just thought as 'ow I'd like for to tell you as I've been took for the Army O.K.'

We shook his hand and wished him the best of luck.

'Funny thing, sir, as 'ow the 'ole blooming time I was planning to sign hup I was a-thinkin' of you and that there fiddle. "You wouldn't like to meet 'im," I kind o' sez to myself, "and you not in the harmy, you wouldn't," I sez.'

'Instead of which,' smiled Norman, all trace of his intensity gone, 'I am the one who is the slacker.'

'But didn't I see you in the line the day we was going for to join hup?'

Norman laughed. 'I was probably a hundred miles away,' he said. 'Pest, have I a double?'

The recruit scratched his head. 'I could 'a sworn hit was you,' he said, and launched into a graphic description of drill and the absurdities thereof, a recital which appeared to have no prospect of an ending until we were interrupted by the restaurant proprietor, who took Norman to one side for a consultation concerning the medieval cook.

I felt a hand on my arm, and turned to see our friend of the pumpkin face making secret and terrifying signs for me to lend him my ear.

'E's a-'iding something,' he whispered hoarsely. 'I ain't been a chandlery merchant hall my life, wot does most o' 'is business hon tick, without hit learning me to remember faces. Hit *were* 'im. 'E was turned down for a bad 'eart!'

Whereupon he made a semi-mystic sign with his thumb and forefinger to indicate that the whole affair was a secret between gentlemen.

That night, in bed, the sensitive, delicate features of Basil Norman remained in my memory. I had surprised his secret which he would admit to no one; not to the girl he loved; not to himself. It was the same spirit that had made him defy the whole of Westminster. We had called him Puck and the Blower of Bubbles, and he himself had said he was lighter than air. . . . But Basil Norman's life had been one endless battle with an indomitable soul that refused to yield to the body.

I did not sleep well that night.

(*Continued on page 249.*)

CONCRETE.

By THOMAS POTTER, Author of *Concrete, its Uses in Building.*

CONCRETE has of late attracted a great deal of interest by reason of its use by the Germans for 'pill-boxes' as a means of defence, its adoption for the building of ships, its merits as a protective material for floors and roofs during air-raids, and the prospect of its utilisation on a large scale after the war for the erection of workmen's dwellings, &c.

Although employed to a greater extent than formerly, concrete is, however, still almost unknown in many parts, except by name, and its use and application are imperfectly understood. In the United States the Government Board of Agriculture, in conjunction with the universities, issues at frequent intervals publications dealing with concrete, which are obtainable post free on application, and the universities appoint lecturers and specialists to instruct builders and others how to make use of it. Nothing of this kind has been attempted as yet in this country.

Concrete consists of any hard substance of an imperishable nature and suitable size, mixed with water and with cementitious materials having a strong affinity therewith, and cast or deposited in moulds or frames of a temporary character. Concrete is supposed by many to be a new invention, owing to its disuse in this country for many centuries; but Professor Middleton says it can be

traced back to 500 B.C. Remains of it have been found in Egypt; and American engineers are of opinion that the huge top stones of the Pyramids could not have been lifted to so great a height by any mechanical means known at the time, and are of the nature of concrete, formed in a similar way to present practice. If this be true, the Egyptians must have possessed a knowledge of some powerful cementitious material, and of mechanical appliances to reduce hard granite chips to minute portions—a task impossible to perform by hand.

Concrete appears to have been used in many European countries from time immemorial. Alberti, an Italian architect, writing in 1485, says: 'I have observed that in other places the ancients, who were wonderfully expert in making great works, followed different methods in filling up their foundations. In the sepulchre of St Antonio they filled them up with little pieces of very hard stone, each not bigger than a handful, over which they perfectly drowned the mortar. I have known other instances where the ancients have much the same sort of foundations, and structures too, of coarse gravel and common stones, which they have picked by chance and which lasted many ages.' The great dome of the Pantheon, built by Agrippa in 27 B.C., one hundred and forty feet in diameter, with an opening in the centre thirty-six feet in diameter, is mainly concrete. Palladio, a noted architect, writing in 1570, says: 'In ancient times coffer-work was made by taking boards laid edgewise according to the thickness of the walls, filling the space between them with cement and all sorts of small stones mingled together, and continued after this manner from course to course.'

This is practically the system adopted in modern times. The Romans introduced the use of concrete into this country, as is still in evidence in many places—the walls that surround York, for instance. The Normans followed suit, as may be seen in the walls of Old Sarum, Corfe Castle, the keep of Rochester Castle, and many others. They used it, too, for other purposes besides the making of walls; the remains of the stairs at Rochester and Colchester Castles show the marks of the boards upon which the concrete was deposited.

Concrete appears to have been used in this country almost entirely for buildings of a defensive character, and when these became unnecessary its disuse was the result. Eventually it was entirely abandoned until less than a century ago; and even then, and for a long time after, it was only employed for massive engineering works, such as sea-walls, dock-walls, and harbour-works. An architect, writing in the *Builder* in 1848, says he had used concrete for foundations of buildings in London, but was unable to do so in the provinces, as he could find no one who knew anything concerning it. The ancient practice of using concrete for walls, as described by Palladio, by depositing it between boards set on edge to form a trough, was never universal. Walls were sometimes faced with a veneer of stone or brick on each side, and built up a small portion at a time, the space between being filled with rough, coarse stone débris, thrown in dry and consolidated by pouring over it slaked lime of the consistency of cream. This was a usual custom in this country when walls were of a substantial thickness, until the invention of Portland cement. It took many years for Portland cement to become general as a cementitious material for concrete purposes; but when it did, it was found that, for numerous reasons, it was better to mix the aggregate and the matrix in a dry state, then adding water to make the mixture of a suitable consistency, and depositing it where required. The earlier method was a happy-go-lucky process. In many cases the filling-in or core was unshapable and of a rubbishy description; when the walls of Westminster Abbey were cut into on several occasions for some special purpose, the core was found to be of a very indifferent character. The reports of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings state that it is frequently found, when the walls of ancient buildings are dealt with, that the core is of no value as a support to the roof, and that the facings having to support the entire weight is the cause of many failures. Owing to the difficulties of dealing with concrete from an architectural point of view, buildings of an important and pretentious character are often treated at the present time in a somewhat similar manner; that is, the walls exposed to view are faced with wrought-stone, and the opposite or inner sides with temporary boards on edge, and concrete is poured in between the two. Where the appearance of walls is of no great importance, they are formed either by pouring concrete between temporary boards fixed on each side to form a trough, or by casting it in wood or metal moulds to form solid or hollow blocks, or thin slabs which are built up on each side with a space between to ensure dryness, whichever method is considered most suitable. Hydraulic lime (lime which sets hard as well in water as in air—if not better—and is not influenced by climatic changes) was almost the only cementitious material used in ancient times, so far as we know. Hydraulic limestone is found in abundance in most lands, the best in this country being the blue lias, which is the strongest and most suitable material for concrete purposes, Portland cement excepted.

General Pasley made a series of experiments with limes and cements at Chatham about a century ago, but in his book describing them he makes no mention of the keep of Rochester Castle, one of the best-preserved specimens of Norman lime concrete, situated about a mile from where his experiments were being made. Inventions and discoveries appear to take place

in cycles, and are overlooked, abandoned, or forgotten, to be reinvented or rediscovered at long intervals. General Pasley, who was an expert in limes and cements, writing in 1847, says: 'Concrete is a recent improvement first adopted by Sir Robert Smirke in the foundations of the penitentiary at Millbank, where the soil, chiefly of peat moss, was soft to a great extent. The origin of its use arose in this way. In excavating for one of the piers of Waterloo Bridge the workmen had a great deal of difficulty owing to the very compact state of the gravel forming the bed of the river, which everywhere else had been found perfectly loose. The effect had been produced by the accidental sinking of a bargeload of lime over the spot some time before, which had cemented the gravel into a solid mass resembling the calcareous conglomerates of nature which are formed by a similar process. Mr Rennie, the engineer, having told the circumstance to Sir Robert Smirke, the latter availed himself of the hint, and used concrete in all his foundations, none of which has ever been known to fail.'

It was a long time before Portland cement took the place of lime as a cementitious material for concrete, but it is now nearly the only one used for the purpose, except occasionally in the case of foundations. Its manufacture has been much improved within the last thirty years. Previous thereto it was often of an unreliable character, but at the present time it is usually sold to what is known as the British standard specification, which is guaranteed by all manufacturers of repute. This consists of a specification defining what the constituents should be, their proportions, the degree of fineness of the finished article and its tensile strength, &c., and was drawn up by the Royal Institute of British Architects. The materials required for its manufacture are to be found in almost every country, and as a result there are manufactories in most parts of the world. The first one in France was erected in 1846; in Germany, 1855. It was first imported into the United States in 1865, and the first manufactory was erected there in 1875. At the present time more cement is made in America than in any other country, and it is employed there for a greater number of purposes than anywhere else. As the durability and other essential properties of concrete depend largely on the cement, it is self-evident that, no matter what its purpose may be, the cement should be of the best quality only, and its use disallowed if otherwise. It is impracticable to test the character of cement except by experts equipped with machines made for the purpose. In such tests a considerable interval of time is necessary to ensure a correct result, and this is not always available; but if guaranteed to be according to the British standard specification, the quality of cement may be relied on. Except for foundations, concrete did not come into general use in this country for years after General Pasley wrote of the Waterloo Bridge incident; but M. Coignet constructed a number of buildings in Paris in 1858–59, one sixty feet in height, the walls, the floors, and the roofs being entirely of lime concrete, called by him *béton aggloméré*. It was not, however, until 1865 that concrete was employed in this country for walls of buildings, and occasionally for other purposes. There was an antipathy towards it, engendered by numerous accidents arising from carelessness and want of experience. This was the case mostly in the Metropolis and its suburbs, but in country districts it was used to a certain extent for cottages and unpretentious buildings of a moderate height.

In the London area Thames gravel or ballast, as it is called, was invariably used as the aggregate, as it was readily procurable at a moderate cost; and it is still in general use. The London County Council rules compel aggregates to be either Thames ballast, pit-gravel, if free from clay, certain kinds of quarry stone-chippings, or other materials equally hard and suitable, but disallow coal residues, such as coke-breeze, boiler-ashes and clinker, and slag, by reason of their containing a certain amount of sulphur. Coke-breeze was debarred in addition on account of its inflammatory character, and because it was supposed to be incapable, owing to its softish nature, of sustaining a compressive stress or heavy load. The Fire Prevention Committee constructed trial floors made respectively of coke-breeze, Thames ballast, slag, burnt clay, and broken bricks; a fire was kept under and over each for three hours until nineteen hundred degrees Fahrenheit was reached, and water was played on continuously from hose-pipes. The result was that the coke-breeze floor remained uninjured and proved the best, while the Thames ballast floor failed, and was the worst. Mr Kirkaldy, a material-testing expert, made certain experiments for one of the Metropolitan boards, and found that whereas stock brickwork with blue lias lime mortar crushed with eleven hundred pounds per superficial inch, coke-breeze concrete required two thousand and thirty-seven pounds. These results are against all preconceived notions, and go to prove that theoretical deductions with regard to concrete should be tested by actual practice.

In nearly every part of the country there are materials to be found—often at a nominal cost—suitable for concrete for building the thousands of cottages which the new housing schemes contemplate. These would reduce the ordinary cost and provide healthful and durable homes, superior in many ways to those built of brick and stone, and capable of being constructed by discharged and demobilised soldiers. The writer speaks from experience, having lived in concrete houses for many years.

THE LAST TRAIL.

PART II.

VIII.

THE polecat crept on to the water-trough, sniffed where the rat had been, making sure that it was really a rat and not a gnome, in spite of its strange colour, and—the lowest bar of the gate clicked.

The polecat did not spin about, top-fashion, as the lesser beast had done, perhaps because he was so long. He darted his head round, and looked over the dark-brown curve of his own arched back. One foot he had in the air at the moment; it remained there. Except for that one screw of the head, he had not moved so much as a hair. And he found himself looking at—the cream rat. At least, if it was not he, it equally was not any rat of a legitimate colour, and, if dilapidations count for anything, it was the very same rat.

Now, a human being would have shown surprise. This citizen of the wild showed nothing behind his dark, sharp, brindled, weasely countenance. God knows what he thought.

But the rat was looking at him, had seen that twisted head on the long neck. There was a pretty purply light in the eyes of the polecat, that had gleamed as he turned. The eyes of the rat shone steadily, like tiny white-hot coals. In three seconds and five hops the rat was gone.

And the polecat took no notice—apparently. He drank a moment, and continued to decipher that trail. It took him all his time. It took him, too, once round that yard and into a hay-bin. Here its maker had slain a mouse. It led him, through a little hole in a door, officially intended for the use of cats only, into a great, black, echoing void, that was the barn. The barn had been full of corn; but, all having been sold and carted away two days before, it was now empty—of corn; not of other things.

A very young rat, a legitimately coloured brown one this time, lay on its back on the floor, barely cold, its hand-like forepaws tightly clenched. Something, possibly another rat, made scraping noises high aloft, as one who climbs, under stress of a great fear, laboriously to the roof. The roof, it seemed, had many tenants, mostly awake. And as the polecat cautiously followed the trail, circling the place, he came upon, first, a dead wood-mouse; second, a nearly dead sparrow; thirdly, fur, fur of a—he looked up, and beheld it glaring down at him, eyes, eyes only, floating in space—the eyes of a cat.

'Gr-r-r-r-r-rr! Phtt! Hurr-r-r?' said the cat.

The polecat said nothing. Like most of the fighting breeds, he was rather a silent person. He encircled the post that ran up to the cat's perch three times, as the owner of the trail had done; and as the trail led away, showing that the cat had been deemed too strongly entrenched, he agreed, and followed it.

It took him down a hole of awful twistfulness in the floor, and here he met, face to face, a stoat coming in. The stoat was a kind of cousin of his, but that made no difference. (It rarely does.)

The stoat grinned a horrible grin, as if knowing what had to happen. Indeed, there was no room for anything else. Then they fought. It was a nasty, wicked little scrimmage while it lasted. Each flew at the other's throat. The scientific rapier-thrust behind the base of the skull, which both used for dealing with their prey, was no good here. Do rival fishermen slay each other with hooks?

One might have expected the stoat to go down almost instantly under the direct frontal attack of the polecat, seeing that he was only about half the size of his opponent, but in a nimble tribe the polecat is one of the least nimble, and the stoat one of the most. The result was that the polecat's jaws closed upon a stoat that wasn't there, so to speak, and the stoat's little sharp canines upon a polecat that was. Being a polecat—and one of the weasel tribe—he took the stabs of fire that proved the fact in grim silence.

As a rule it was the stoat's custom to hang like a spanner to anything upon which he got a hold, but not this time. He just bit, and was out of reach before the polecat got in a counter-stroke. He did it again and again. You could not have followed his movements; they were snake-quick. You could not even have told what he was at—all bristled out to twice his size, and swearing in the intervals—but the polecat could feel what he was at. And both animals—well, smelt to blazes, to put it bluntly; which was a tribal trick of theirs.

Next instant the stoat had twisted upon himself, and was running for his life, the polecat hard on his heels. He shot out of the barn, and across the rick-yard into the hedge, where he went down, like a sounding porpoise, into a rat's hole not large enough to admit the polecat. And the polecat, after sniffing, turned away to go back to his previous trail, and—was just in time to catch a glimpse of a creamish body and a long whippy tail vanishing round a corner of the big straw rick. I think it gave him food for reflection, for he slipped to that corner to investigate, and, as he did so, the death-scream of the stoat, muffled and choked, came to his ears from the interior of the hole. They had got him down there, then, cornered and mobbed him, the ruffianly old buck-rats of the

place; and there must have been many, for they would never have dared to tackle the plucky little fighter else.

IX.

Again the polecat paused to reflect. There seemed to be a devil of a lot of scaly-tailed vermin hereabouts, and they were wondrous bold, too. It almost appeared as if his quick animal instinct had warned him of something sinister about the place, for he stared sharply round, and for a moment seemed half-inclined to retreat. The lure of love, however, was too strong for him, and he took the trail again, which this time led him into the cow-sheds, where a great red bull, anchored and lashed like a big ship, made the noises of several grampuses, and lunged at him ponderously, as he passed down the line of mangers.

He turned to show his teeth to the giant—which was like his cheek—and stayed to stare amazed, for, looking ghostly and uncanny in the very last of a pale, washed-out rift of moonlight, a creamy-coloured rat was sitting upon the cross-beam that supported the cows' chains and yokes. It ran along and up into the vaulted darkness of the roof-arch, after about ten seconds; but the polecat felt that that was only because he had seen it, and that, as a matter of fact, it had been watching him all the time. He did not say anything, of course—polecats seldom do; but as he moved on, I fancy he was thinking just about as hard as a beast like that can think.

Out of the cow-sheds and into the pig-sties the trail ran, and there the polecat stopped dead. There were noises in the darkness, besides the grunting and snoring of pigs—noises of grim and bitter conflict. As the polecat drew forward, step by cautious step, they grew worse; but, for the life of him, he could not tell where on earth they came from. Weird forms, heard for the most part rather than properly seen, some dark, some ghostly-white, flitted from his path as he stole on, or stared at him, with eyes like gimlet-holes of light, from beams, from holes, and unseen fastnesses. They were the forms of rats—all the rats of the threshed corn-ricks and the barns, gathered there because starving; and, I give you my word, there is absolutely no knowing what starving rats will do—everything bad for certain. These rats, however, were not fighting.

The polecat was puzzled. The horrible sounds of a close-fought, bitter fight continued; and the still more horrible, ceaseless gathering of rats, in every spot where he was not, continued too. Once a rat blundered past him in the dark, badly mauled, and he smelt the blood, and he slew. The rat squealed as his fangs closed behind its neck, and when he looked up, he found himself surrounded everywhere by a ring of cruel, sharp, gleaming eyes in pairs; but when he rushed at them they vanished, only to come back when he stopped. And all the time the noise of that furious fight never ceased; and all the time, coming in from outside, he could hear the pealing of distant church bells. Man, it seemed, was happy that night—which was a good deal more than he was. This business puzzled him, and the unknown is always distasteful to a wild beast, if not terrifying.

In a remote corner he found another rat mobbed by its fellows, but taking no notice of them, and crooning to itself in pain. Its brotherly comrades melted before the polecat, as he came rippling up, but the stricken one could not face him, because its head would not lift. The thing's neck was broken. Again he slew swiftly, and, as with the last, as swiftly hid the carcass away; but as he left it he heard those eyes, the living rats, to wit, rush in upon it with a ghastly pattering, like droves of hyænas. They were most undoubtedly starving, and, by the same token, still more undoubtedly very dangerous. He would have given a night's hunting to be safely out of the place, but he could not find the trail of his beloved. It stopped at the foot of a huge, old-fashioned meal-bin, a very giant of meal-bins, and beyond that, though he had cast forwards and backwards and in every direction, no sniffing of his could carry it. Surely the rats could not have eaten the whole animal up? Banish the thought! She would have put up a fight of fights, for one thing; and something, surely, if only fur, would have been left, for another. And still the noise of terrible combat, somewhere unseen, never ceased.

X.

It seems never to have occurred to him, up to that point, to look up. This appears to be a weakness that afflicts mammals, rarely to look up; a strange fact, too, seeing that, for many of them at any rate, their chief terror comes from above. It was the frantic scratching of claws, as if something was vainly trying to balance itself somewhere overhead, that finally forced him to lift his head, and—a rat fell on top of him from over the side of the meal-bin. It was quite white, that rat, or, rather, creamy, except where it was red. It was already more than half-dead, bitten through the neck with two clean fang-holes, and he had no difficulty in slaying it. 'But why did he slay?' you ask. Why, indeed? Because he was a polecat, I suppose, which is as good an answer as any other. Why do some men arm themselves and slay? For sport? Not always. And Nature had armed the polecat, and he slew—occasionally, but not often, I dare to think, for sport.

Scarcely was that rat out of action when a second incontinently tumbled upon him from above, and was despatched with clean precision and practised promptitude. Not that it would have mattered, for that rat had already two holes through its neck. This grisly work,

however, as it were, warmed the polecat up. It set his excitement alight, his blood-lust aflame, and when a polecat—when any weasel, in fact—begins to get excited, to 'see red,' things of a most hectic nature are bound to happen. They forget themselves at such times, but everything within reach gets no chance of forgetting *them*.

The polecat doubled his long body, on sturdy miniature bear-like legs, into a loop. He sprang. He missed, and fell sprawling. He aimed. He sprang again, and his head and forepaws appeared over the top of the side of the meal-bin. For a moment he swung there, scraping. Then he climbed up and balanced, all four feet touching. And he looked down.

His eyes, those fierce red orbs, saw a sight, a most amazing sight, down there, on and over and among and in the meal of the meal-bin. It crawled, that meal. It was alive, horribly animate, with things — meal-coloured, meal-smothered things—which explained the mystery of the cream and biscuit coloured rats; and they reared, and they fought, and they rolled, and they burrowed, and they sprang at, and ran round, and fell back from, and, in about one case in twenty, got up over, the side; and they gibbered with hate and fear; and they squealed with loathing and pain; and they screamed in rage and death. And not all those things, though all were of the same mealy colour, were rats either. One was not a rat. It looked like a ferret, a big one, parti-coloured; meal-coloured where it wasn't dark-brown black, and dark-brown black where it wasn't — crimson. And it was fighting for its life, that thing, having got into, but finding no chance to climb out of, that death-trap. So were the rats, having got into, and, in the majority of cases, not being able to get out of, that place. But even if the polecat had had his eyes shut, he would have known the name of that other beast. Anybody who had not a cold—and it would have had to be a mighty bad one—would have known the name of that beast too. You could smell its name. It was written, almost I had said in blue, on the very air, for only a polecat could stink like that, and—on purpose. It was indeed the undoubted and exclusive smell—in that land—of *Mustela putorius*, the polecat. But in one point our polecat was ahead of us; his nose told him that he could add the words 'feminine gender' to that description, and the knowledge acted upon him like the touch of a magic hand.

With a single flying leap he arrived at the bottom of that great, big bin, unannounced and grim, and as he landed he set in to slay. Even among the choking, clinging, clogging meal, he slew and fought, and fought and slew, terribly, ghastlily, appallingly, for he was temporarily as mad as any berserk, and blind to the world; for his trailing of a night, his quest of a year and a half, had come to an end at last.

For a bit, however, it looked, to the dull human eye at any rate, as if the end was like to be of the wrong kind, and of too sweeping a nature; for that great, big bin was literally alive with rats: starving rats, desperate rats, cornered rats, old rogue rats, big father rats, cannibal rats, gaunt mother rats, young 'k-nut' rats, lean 'flapper' rats, crippled rats, one or two hobbledehoy rats, and, yea verily, one blind rat—almost all anxious to get out; nearly all failing in the leap; and very much all desperate beyond the last shred of fear.

As for the female polecat, she appeared not to be able to get out either—at least, not with all those rats there; she must continuously face and fight them; they would have torn her to pieces else, and she knew it. But she did not know it when she went in there to kill them.

Even as it was, there seemed to have been little enough sanity—and no pity—inside that great meal-bin, which was a pitfall to boot—a fact, by the way, which the farmer well knew. But directly the male polecat broke his neutrality, the whole thing went clean crazy in one whirling, boiling, tumbling, revolving, whitish cloud. A few rats managed to get out over the side, wounded, fewer dying, and fewest of all whole. Some fell where they dropped; some crawled away, to be eaten by their kind; some rushed off in the darkness. But by far the greater number failed to make that leap good, in the reeking dark, and died in the choking meal-fog like—well, like rats, and that is darned hard, too.

In the end, as a storm dies, that fiendish combat died down in the bin there, and only silence, and the horrible crooning, mumbling noise of a rat, hard bitten and beset, in a far corner, broke the fat, full, complacent grunting of the pigs. At last even that ceased, and the pigs became as silent as they ever would be, but no polecats appeared. No polecats ever appeared. The farmer found them next morning, surrounded by dead rats, lying one across the other—*dead*. Some of the rats that had faced them that night had already tasted poison, and that was enough.

But verily, 'Cruel is Fate, who makes, who mars, who—ends.'

And that is why there are no polecats in that county now, and why, too, there might have been.

THE END.

IF LILAC ALWAYS LASTED.

If lilac always lasted,
If roses ever bloomed,
If hopes were never blasted,
And lives were never doomed—

Ah! then this brief existence
Would constitute our all,
And from no heavenly distance
Eternal Spring would call.

PAULINE W. ROOSE.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE FOUR DAYS' BATTLE OF 1666.

By H. W. HOUSEHOLD, M.A.

I.

'JUNE 2. Up, and to the office, where certain news is brought us, of a letter come to the King this morning from the Duke of Albemarle, dated yesterday at eleven o'clock, as they were sailing to the Gunfleete, that they were in sight of the Dutch fleet, and were fitting themselves to fight them; so that they are ere this certainly engaged: besides several do averr they heard the guns yesterday in the afternoon.'

So wrote Mr Samuel Pepys in his famous Diary on that June day, between the Great Plague and the Fire. It was the second of the four days of the great battle in 1666. Samuel Pepys was an official high up in the Navy Office, and when in the previous year there was loud complaining that the fleet had been sent to sea short of food and stores, he was made 'Surveyor-General of the Victualling business,' and at once set busily about his work. It was no light task, as he knew very well; for, as he said, 'Englishmen, and more especially Seamen, love their bellies above everything else, and therefore it must always be remembered, in the management of the victualling of the navy, that, to make any abatement from them in the quantity or agreeableness of the victuals, is to discourage and provoke them in the tenderest point, and will sooner render them disgusted with the King's service than any one other hardship that can be put upon them.' 'Englishmen, and more especially Seamen,' perhaps have not changed very greatly since Mr Pepys wrote two hundred and fifty years ago. He knew what he had to do, and he did it well; and during the greater part of the campaign of 1666 there were few complaints.

On June 2 Pepys hurried away from his office to the river to see about sending off to the fleet a couple of yachts with a body of soldiers on board. Coming on shore again at Greenwich, he went into the park, 'and there we could hear the guns from the fleet most plainly. We walked to the water-side, and there seeing the King and Duke [James, Duke of York, the future James II.] come down in their barge to Greenwich-house, I to them, and did give them an account what I was doing. They went up to the park to hear the guns of the fleet go off. All our hopes now are that Prince Rupert with his fleet is coming back, and will be with the fleet this even: a message being sent to him for that purpose on Wednesday last.'

The great fleet of eighty ships had been put under the joint-command of Prince Rupert and George Monk, Duke of Albemarle—that Monk who had brought Charles II. back to his throne in 1660. The two had joined it in the Downs earlier in the week, but a rumour came that the French had put to sea and were sailing up the Channel to join the Dutch; and Rupert was at once sent off with twenty ships to hold them back, and cover Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. It was a dangerous move to divide the fleet, and it caused the loss of the battle, but at the moment the Dutch, who were commanded by De Ruyter, were believed to be in harbour. Directly it was discovered that they were at sea, messages were sent off to fetch Rupert back, but for three desperate days Monk with sixty ships had to face the Dutch with ninety.

II.

The English fleet was off the North Foreland, making for Harwich, on the morning of June 1, when 'about 7 aclocke our scouts gave ye signall, wch was leting ye top gallan sails fly, and fireing 2 or 3 guns to let us know they discovered the enemies' fleet to the leeward.' The Dutch had come out with an east wind behind them, but early in the morning it had changed, and it was now blowing hard from the south-west. To avoid being driven to the northward, they had anchored, and were now lying midway between Dunkirk and the Downs, when the English cruisers sighted them. Word was quickly brought back to the Duke that he had the main Dutch fleet before him, and that it greatly outnumbered his own. A council of war was called on board the flag-ship. The Duke himself was for attacking at once. He cared no more for the difference in numbers than did Blake when, off the Thames, he faced Van Tromp's ninety ships with only forty-two. Monk, like Blake, was a soldier, and perhaps he did not fully measure all the difficulties that lay before him. Some of the sailor admirals at the council of war understood the risk of fighting under the conditions of that day well enough, but 'they durst not oppose it . . . for fear of being called cowards, though it was wholly against their judgment to fight.' Not only would

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they have to fight ninety ships with sixty, but their poor sixty would be unable to use their heaviest guns. They would be to windward of the enemy, and, as the wind was strong, they would heel over so much when it came abeam that the lower tier of ports would have to be kept closed, lest the sea should break in; while the Dutchmen's ports, as their ships heeled over, would be high out of the water on the side engaged, and every gun would be in action. True, the Dutch were caught at anchor and at a disadvantage. With the wind so high and the sea rising, they had expected the Duke to anchor also, and he was upon them so quickly that they had no time to get their anchors up, and had to cut their cables. Their centre and rear were some distance to leeward of their van, and could not get up at once against the wind to help it. So at the van the Duke dashed in the old headlong English way, seizing an opportunity that Nelson was to seize, and use to such effect, long afterwards at the Battle of the Nile. But though the attack was headlong, the English line, even in that day, was so well kept that their enemies marvelled at the sight. On board one of the Dutch ships, serving as a volunteer, was a young French nobleman, who wrote an account afterwards of what he saw and did in the great fight. 'Nothing,' he said, 'equals the beautiful order of the English at sea. Never was a line drawn straighter than that formed by their ships; thus they bring all their fire to bear upon those who draw near them. . . . They fight like a line of cavalry which is handled according to rule, and applies itself solely to force back those who oppose; whereas the Dutch advance like cavalry whose squadrons leave their ranks and come separately to the charge.'

But the English were to have no success this day. Though the Dutch van had been cut off, the English ships, as the sailors had foreseen, were unable to use their lower-deck guns on the side next the enemy. Meanwhile the Dutch centre and rear were coming up; and when, after three hours of heavy fighting, the Duke found himself close to the French coast by Dunkirk, and had to go about, he ran straight into them. His position then became as bad as it could be. He was doubled on, as the French were doubled on by Nelson at the Nile, and was hammered at from both sides. Some of his ships were cut off, two flag-ships among them, the *Swiftsure*, flying the flag of Vice-Admiral Sir William Berkeley, and the *Henry*, with Rear-Admiral Sir John Harman on board. Both fought gloriously. 'Highly to be admired,' wrote a contemporary, 'was the resolution of Vice-Admiral Berkeley, who, though cut off from the line, surrounded by enemies, great numbers of his men killed, his ship disabled and boarded on all sides, yet continued fighting almost alone, killed several with his own hand, and would accept no quarter; till at length, being shot in the throat with a musket-ball, he retired into the captain's cabin, where he was found dead, extended at his full length upon a table, and almost covered with his own blood.' His body was taken to Holland by the Dutch, 'and there,' wrote Mr Pepys, 'he lies dead in a sugar-chest, for everybody to see, with his flag standing up by him.'*

Sir John Harman was more fortunate. After a desperate fight, he saved his ship. 'Being in a short time completely disabled, one of the enemy's fire-ships grappled him on the starboard quarter; he was, however, freed by the almost incredible exertions of his lieutenant, who, having in the midst of the flames loosed the grappling-irons, swung back on board his own ship unhurt. The Dutch, bent on the destruction of this unfortunate ship, sent a second, which grappled her on the larboard side, and with greater success than the former; for the sails instantly taking fire, the crew were so terrified that nearly fifty of them jumped overboard. The admiral, Sir John Harman, seeing this confusion, ran with his sword drawn among those who remained, and threatened with instant death the first man who should attempt to quit the ship, or should not exert himself to quench the flames. The crew then returned to their duty and got the fire under; but the rigging being a good deal burned, one of the top-sail yards fell and broke Sir John's leg. In the midst of this accumulated distress, a third fire-ship prepared to grapple him, but was sunk by the guns before she could effect her purpose. The Dutch vice-admiral, Evertzen, now bore down to him and offered quarter; but Sir John replied, "No, no, it is not come to that yet," and giving him a broadside, killed the Dutch commander; after which, the other enemies sheered off.' 'The undaunted Bravery of that English Rear-Admiral cannot but be Admired,' wrote the Dutch admirals in their report to their Government.

On June 11, when he was home in London, Sir John Harman was visited by Mr Pepys, who wrote in his Diary: 'I with my Lady Pen and her daughter to see Harman; whom we find lame in bed. His bones of his ancle are broke, but he hopes to do well soon; and a fine person by his discourse he seems to be; and he did plainly tell me that at the Council of War before the fight, it was against his reason to begin the fight then, and the reasons of most sober men there, the wind being such, and we to windward, that they could not use their lower tier of guns.'

III.

The battle that day lasted till nearly ten o'clock at night, by which time, after eleven hours of fighting, the two fleets had drawn apart. A hard night's work followed, repairing masts and rigging, fitting new sails, and stopping shot-holes. For the damage was not all on the

* Such was the London rumour. It was quite untrue, for the Dutch treated the body of the dead admiral with the greatest respect.

English side. The Dutch losses were heavy also. Vice-Admiral Evertsen and several captains had fallen. Three ships had been sunk; others had been dismasted; and Tromp, the son of Blake's old enemy, who had commanded the van, had been obliged to leave his crippled flag-ship.

Next morning the English found themselves with forty-four ships to the Dutch eighty, and there was still no news of Prince Rupert. The Dutch at first were to windward, but by better seamanship the English regained that favourite position, which gave them the choice of the time and manner of the attack. When the fight reopened the Dutch were in some disorder. To make matters worse, their van, which had been the rear on the previous day, showed cowardice, and ran to leeward. De Ruyter with the centre had to follow to keep touch, and Tromp with the rear was left alone again. He was surrounded, and the odds were heavily against him, but he was as brave as Berkeley and Harman, and he kept up the fight with all his usual gallantry, until 'a most horrid noise of both great guns and muskets' told his danger to De Ruyter, who succeeded in bringing back the truant van with his own ships to relieve his friends. Meanwhile Tromp had fared badly. A vice-admiral had been killed; two ships had been sunk and three crippled; and Tromp, who had been in the thickest of the fight, had been obliged once more to shift his flag.

The Dutch thought that Albemarle might have routed them, for they were in great disorder, 'all the ships huddled together,' wrote De Ruyter, 'like a flock of sheep, so packed that the English might have surrounded all of them with their forty ships.' But the Duke did not do it. 'Methinks,' said a Dutch captain, 'he committed then a strange fault.' Not so strange, probably, as it seemed. Damaged masts and spars have been answerable for many similar 'faults.' It was, no doubt, impossible for Albemarle to manœuvre his ships. However that may be, the Dutch succeeded in re-forming their line, and, after another partial engagement, the English fleet retreated in good order, with those that had been most damaged in the van; and 'sixteen of the greatest ships to be a bulwark of the rest and bring up the rear in a breast, and so he shoved on the other in a line before him.' The Dutch pursuit was not pressed. Their line was straggling, and with the wind falling to a calm at nightfall the fight died away.

IV.

About noon of the next day, which was Whit Sunday, the wind had gone east, and the Duke, after burning three of his crippled ships, continued his slow retreat towards the mouth of the Thames. Two or three hours later, to the relief of everybody, Rupert and his twenty ships appeared in the distance, and 'wee then steered towards the Prince comforting ourselves with ye thoughts of renewing the fight by returning on ye enemy.' But they had some bad moments to pass through before they reached him. Six ships actually struck upon a well-known shoal, and one, the *Royal Prince*, the finest ship in all the fleet, could not be got off again. There was no Harman on board, and when the Dutch surrounded her, she surrendered without a struggle. The Dutch tried to tow her off, but failing in that, they burnt her where she lay. The vexation and the shame of her loss were soon forgotten in the general rejoicing at the junction with Prince Rupert. Confidence returned; it was resolved to attack again on the morrow, and preparations began at once. But let us leave the fleet, while the battle is beginning on the Monday morning, to visit Mr Pepys in London and learn what news he has.

'To White Hall, where, when we come, we find the Duke [of York] at St James's. . . . So walking through the Park we saw hundreds of people listening . . . to hear the guns. . . . After waiting upon the Duke . . . I home; where no sooner come, but news is brought me of a couple of men come to speak with me from the fleet; so I down, and who should it be but Mr Daniel, all muffled up, and his face as black as the chimney, and covered with dirt, pitch, and tar, and powder, and muffled with dirty clouts, and his right eye stopped with okum. He is come last night at five o'clock from the fleet, with a comrade of his that hath endangered another eye. They were set on shore at Harwich this morning, at two o'clock . . . with about twenty more wounded men from the *Royal Charles*. They being able to ride, took post about three this morning, and were here between eleven and twelve. I went presently into the coach with them, and carried them to Somerset-House-stairs, and there took water (all the world gazing upon us, and concluding it to be news from the fleet, and everybody's face appeared expecting of news) to the Privy-stairs, and left them at Mr Coventry's lodgings . . .; and so I into the Park to the King, and told him my Lord Generall [Albemarle] was well last night at five o'clock, and the Prince come with his fleet and joyned with his about seven. The King was mightily pleased with this news, and so took me by the hand and talked a little of it, I giving him the best account I could; and then he bid me to fetch the two seamen to him, he walking into the house. So I went and fetched the seamen into the Vane Room to him and there he heard the whole account.

'How we found the Dutch fleet at anchor on Friday half seas over between Dunkirke and Ostend, and made them let slip their anchors. They about ninety, and we less than sixty. We fought them, and put them to the run, till they met with about sixteen sail of fresh ships, and so bore up again. The fight continued till night, and then again the next morning from

five till seven at night. And so, too, yesterday morning they began again, and continued till about four o'clock, they chasing us for the most part of Saturday, and yesterday we flying from them. The Duke himself . . . by and by spied the Prince's fleet coming, upon which De Ruyter called a little council (being in chase at this time of us) and thereupon their fleet divided into two squadrons; forty in one, and about thirty in the other; . . . the bigger to follow the Duke, the less to meet the Prince. But the Prince come up with the Generall's fleet, and the Dutch come together again and bore towards their own coast, and we with them; and now what the consequence of this day will be, we know not. The Duke was forced to come to anchor on Friday, having lost his sails and rigging. No particular person spoken of to be hurt but Sir W. Clerke, who hath lost his leg, and bore it bravely. The Duke himself had a little hurt in his thigh, but signified little. The King did pull out of his pocket about twenty pieces in gold, and did give it Daniel for himself and his companion; and so parted, mightily pleased with the account he did give him of the fight, and the success it ended with, of the Prince's coming, though it seems the Duke did give way again and again. The King did give order for care to be had of Mr Daniel and his companion; and so we parted from him, and then met the Duke of York, and gave him the same account: and so broke up, and I left them going to the Surgeon's.'

V.

While Mr Daniel and his battered friend were telling their story to the king, the fleets were once more fiercely engaged. At daybreak the Dutch had been almost out of sight, but by eight o'clock the English, 'in very good order,' had come up with them. The good order, however, was soon lost. The Dutch succeeded in pushing between broken fragments of the fleet; and all was confusion. A ruinous defeat seemed certain, but first wind and then fog came to the help of the Duke. The Dutch 'bore away to leeward, and, glad to part soe, we stood over for the English shoar.' Or, as the Dutch saw it, 'God, after he had so gloriously favoured the Arms of the Victours, was not pleased that they (the English) should be utterly defeated by the Destruction of their whole Navy, which appeared as unavoidable: For the shattered Remainder of them miraculously escaped by the Favour of a thick Fog.'

No news of the fourth day's fighting reached London till June 6, and at first all seemed to have gone well. 'Sir Philip Frowde,' writes Pepys, 'did meet the Duke with an express . . . being the narration of Captain Hayward of the *Dunkirke*, who gives a very serious account, how upon Monday the two fleets fought all day till seven at night, and then the whole fleet of Dutch did betake themselves to a very plain flight, and never looked back again. That Sir Christopher Mings is wounded in the leg; that the Generall is well. That it is conceived reasonably, that of all the Dutch fleet, which, with what recruits they had, come to one hundred sail, there is not above fifty got home; and of them few if any of their flags. And that little Captain Bell, in one of the fire-ships, did at the end of the day fire a ship of 70 guns. We were so overtaken with this good news, that the Duke ran with it to the King, who was gone to chapel, and there all the Court was in a hubbub, being rejoiced over head and ears in this good news. Away go I by coach to the New Exchange, and there did spread this good news a little, though I find it had broke out before. And so home to our own church, it being the common Fast-day, and it was just before sermon; but, Lord! how all the people in the church stared upon me to see me whisper to Sir John Minnes and my Lady Pen. Anon I saw people stirring and whispering below, and by and by comes up the sexton from my Lady Ford to tell me the news (which I had brought) being now sent into the church by Sir W. Batten in writing, and passed from pew to pew. . . . Idled away the whole night till twelve at night at the bonfire in the streets. Some . . . did give me two or three vollies of their musquets, I giving them a crown to drink; and so home. Mightily pleased with this happy day's news, and the more because confirmed by Sir Daniel Harvey, who was in the whole fight with the Generall, and tells me that there appear but thirty-six in all of the Dutch fleet left at the end of the voyage when they run home. The joy of the City was this night exceeding great.'

But the joy was not to last for long, for the news that had come, like so many rumours in wartime, was wholly false. Spirits fell and faces changed next morning when there came to hand 'the contrary news, which,' says Mr Pepys, 'astonishes me: that is to say, that we are beaten, lost many ships and good commanders; have not taken one ship of the enemy's; and so can only report ourselves a victory; nor is it certain that we were left masters of the field. But, above all, that the *Prince* run on shore upon the Galloper, and there stuck; was endeavoured to be fetched off by the Dutch, but could not; and so they burned her. . . . This news do much trouble me, and the thoughts of the ill consequences of it, and the pride and presumption that brought us to it. At noon to the 'Change, and there find the discourse of the town, and their countenances much changed.'

VI.

There were no great newspapers at that day to attack the Government and turn out Ministers; but discontent was general. That sixty ships had fought with ninety was reason enough for the defeat, but people were not satisfied with

that, and, in the usual English way, began to make wild charges of mismanagement. 'Sir G. Carteret,' says Pepys, 'tells me, as I hear from everyone else, that the management in the late fight was bad from top to bottom. That several said that this would not have been if my Lord Sandwich had had the ordering of it. . . . There is nothing but discontent among the officers; and all the old experienced men are slighted.' The Duke, of course, would not have it so. He 'is as high almost as ever,' sneers Mr Pepys, 'and pleased himself to think that he hath given the Dutch their bellies full, without sense of what he hath lost us; and talks how he knows now the way to beat them.' And indeed perhaps he did, for he beat them soundly enough some six weeks later. He also knew that the defeat was by no means the disaster that it was thought to be when the tale of the losses first arrived. The Dutch had suffered too, and their victory did them little good. 'They had lost seven or eight ships, many more utterly shattered; some 2000 men killed and wounded; and three flag officers killed, including Evertsen, one of their finest leaders. And that in spite of the fact that for most of the fight they had had the advantage in numbers of nearly two to one. Naturally, the English losses were heavier. Berkeley and Myngs killed, Ayscue a captive in Holland; 12 Commanders killed; eight ships lost to the Dutch; . . . at least 12 ships sunk or burnt, including the *Royal Prince;* and perhaps 5000 casualties and 3000 prisoners.'

A few days later Rear-Admiral Sir Christopher Myngs was buried, and Pepys attended his funeral. The story which he tells may well close the account of the great battle.

'Invited to Sir Christopher Mings's funeral, but find them gone to church. However, I into the church . . . and there heard the service, and staid till they buried him and then out. And there met with Sir W. Coventry . . . and went with him into his coach, and being in it with him there happened this extraordinary case,—one of the most romantique that ever I heard of in my life, and could not have believed, but that I did see it; which was this:—About a dozen able, lusty, proper men come to the coach-side with tears in their eyes, and one of them that spoke for the rest begun and said to Sir W. Coventry, "We are here a dozen of us, that have long known and loved and served our dead commander, Sir Christopher Mings, and have now done the last office of laying him in the ground. We would be glad we had any other to offer after him, and in revenge of him. All we have is our lives; if you will please to get His Royal Highness to give us a fire-ship among us all, here are a dozen of us, out of all which choose you one to be commander, and the rest of us, whoever he is, will serve him; and, if possible, do that which shall show our memory of our dead commander, and our revenge." Sir W. Coventry was herewith much moved, (as well as I, who could hardly abstain from weeping,) and took their names and so parted; telling me that he would move his Royal Highness as in a thing very extraordinary. The truth is, Sir Christopher Mings was a very stout man, and a man of great parts, and most excellent tongue among ordinary men: and as Sir W. Coventry says, could have been the most useful man at such a pinch of time as this. He was come to great renowne here at home, and more abroad in the West Indys. He had brought his family into a way of being great; but dying at this time, his memory and name (his father being always and at this day a shoemaker, and his mother a hoy-man's daughter; of which he used frequently to boast) will be quite forgot in a few months as if he had never been, nor any of his name be the better by it; he having not had time to will any estate, but is dead poor rather than rich. So we left the church and crowd.'

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONTRAST, some one has said, is the magnifying-glass of the senses.

My three weeks in London were as an oasis in an uncharted waste. The Jura Street days of enforced idleness or hateful hack-writing were succeeded by the blessed tonic of congenial work, the anodyne of routine by full and keen hours. Fresh environment, fresh acquaintances, fresh sights and sounds animated and braced me. I worked with gusto, slept soundly, and woke refreshed, the hum of the early traffic in the April sunshine cheering me like a song. Keene-Leslie was busy, and sometimes out of town, but Jardine and I often dined together. The days slipped past too quickly.

April proved kind. The air was crisp and exhilarating, and if occasional wilful bursts of rain thwarted the sunshine, they did ample penance by freshening the streets and stirring the sap of the young greenery in the parks, where the crocuses held up their pretty heads to welcome the spring. Bits of gay colour were invading the streets, and all Londoners who could find the time were out-of-doors. After my day's work, by way of exercise and recreation, I often filled in a couple of hours before dinner wandering about in the great fascinating hive. Sometimes Jardine or Tony accompanied me, but as often as not I was alone, free to go my own way, to stroll or hurry as I felt inclined,

to dine where I liked and in any clothes I chose.

On the 23rd Jardine and I finished our work. He went North for a week's fishing, and as I was booked next day to run down to the Sussex coast with Keene-Leslie, I postponed my return to Edinburgh. In the evening I cleared up a few 'loose ends' of my job, and about six o'clock started out from my rooms in a quiet street near the Museum, on one of my aimless saunters. I made my way leisurely through Oxford Street into Hyde Park, and after idling there for an hour, came up Rotten Row. A few drops of rain made me quicken my pace. I had thought of dining at a good restaurant, but in Piccadilly I suddenly discovered that I had left my sovereign-purse in my rooms, and a search in my pockets showed that my resources amounted to one florin and two coppers. However, I was not cast down. There are very many places in London where a man with no rooted objection to an unaristocratic neighbourhood and close quarters at table can get a decent dinner with two shillings or less, and still have a tip for the waiter and a bus fare left.

Soho-ward I steered. In Shaftesbury Avenue the rain, which up till then had been inconsiderable, began to pour steadily down out of a sky of unredeemed and dismal slate. London was promised a wet night. I strode briskly on, and soon had an embarrassing choice of cheap and exotic restaurants. At the little, red-painted, muslin-curtained 'Au Bienvenu' in Greek Street I could have specialised, among other delicacies, in '*Tripes à la mode de Caen*' or 'Snails in green butter,' but neither these gastronomical adventures nor the grievous aroma of sauerkraut farther along the street held an allure for me. I struck into Frith Street, and halted at the Restaurant de Bon Goût. Its exterior belied its name. The window was austerely draped in dingy-white curtains, with a few india-rubber plants and a couple of music-hall bills thrown in; but the *carte du jour* announced (in phonetic spelling) that a *dîner de cérémonie* was provided within for the sum of one shilling. This was the place for my money, I thought. Curiously enough, I have the menu of my repast on that eventful night, and it lies before me as I write: '*Soups, 1 viande au choix, 2 légumes, dessert, café*,' with the attractive addendum, '*pain à discrétion*.' Bread *ad lib.*! Does the language hold a more heartening slogan for hungry, hard-up men? If the proprietor received small profits, no wonder he had a steady turnover! I passed the house not long since, and noted, with mingled feelings, that although it had been rechristened, its orthographic tradition survived in an assurance to the world which ran: 'Ivery atention to patrons.' The statement tallied with my experience—for I certainly received all the attention I wanted, and considerably more.

On the threshold I hesitated for a moment, but the rain was now coming down in rods which jumped a couple of inches up from the pavement and sent runnels tinkling down the street drains. Little recking the events which hung upon my haphazard choice of a cheap dinner, I entered. The dining-room was narrow and low-ceilinged, but well lit and scrupulously clean. The little tables were spread with snowy cloths, and if the cutlery and the glass were cheap, the cooking was first-rate. At one end was a 'snack' buffet where a stout daughter of Israel, with an air of aggressive chastity, presided over weird-looking drinks and dishes. These I resisted, and having secured a table to myself and instructed a moist and septic waiter to bring me the renowned shilling dinner, I took a look at my fellow-diners. They were not an interesting lot—half-a-dozen city clerks; three long-haired super-specimens of the musico-artistic breed, drinking vermuth at one of the tables; a whispering pair of lovers *tête-à-tête*, the girl's face very pretty in the pink glow of the shaded lamp; solitary diners absorbing the evening papers along with their meal; a couple of theatrical damsels in much-beflowered hats; and a lot of nondescripts, most of whom were obviously foreigners.

I had just attacked the inevitable *petite marmite*, when three men came in. I threw them a casual glance, and probably would have taken no further notice of them had not the resonant 'Good-evening' of one of them to the little proprietor struck full on my ear. The deep voice seemed strangely familiar. The three were making their way up the room in single file; all I could see was the back view of the man in the rear, a heavy, broad-shouldered figure in a loose blue-serge suit. Having reached the farthest corner of the room, they sat down at a table, the heavy man at the top, facing me, with his companions on either side of him. One of these was a lanky, evil-looking young fellow with a pinchbeck Mephistophelean face, the other a heavily jowled ox of a man. Both were dark, Southern types. I had just registered a mental verdict that their room was preferable to their company, when suddenly I became aware that the big man was staring hard at me. I caught his eye, when he instantly withdrew it and began to talk to one of his companions; but in that swift moment I recognised him, and I knew that he recognised me. The last time I had seen him was in the Naples train, apparently wrapped in innocent slumber, with a breviary on his knee. For he was no other than the simple country priest with a discriminating taste in cigars! He had discarded his dark-rimmed spectacles, but he could not so easily dispense with his long, humorous mouth, his little black eyes, or the rich contrebasse quality of his voice. My pulses quickened, but I wanted a minute or two to think out the

situation. Feigning absolute unconsciousness of his neighbourhood, I went on with my dinner.

I am not a good actor, and did not trust myself to look his way lest he might read recognition in my face; but, luckily, there was a mirror on the wall on my left, and in it I contrived to snatch a wary glance or two at the three men. Once the bland old rascal bent forward and said something to his companions. The three heads were close together for a minute or two. Very probably the conversation concerned myself, for the two younger men did not look in my direction until afterwards, when I saw them take a stealthy survey of me in turn. Evidently my man intended to play the same game as I did. He did not look at me again, but chattered and laughed with his *confrères*, to all appearance oblivious of my presence. This went on until I was half-way through my dinner, when he rose and came along between the rows of tables towards the entrance. To lose sight of him was the last thing I had any notion of. Now or never! Up I rose from my table and faced him in the middle of the room. He halted and looked at me, mild surprise in his eye.

'I have been looking for you,' I began.

'For me?'

His little, puzzled, interrogative bow was a bit of excellent acting, but his next movement clinched my suspicions. He put his hands up to the lapels of his coat, and instantly I recalled the hairy paws of the knave in the Naples train!

'For *me*?' he repeated. 'I have not the pleasure of remembering your face,' he said coolly, in excellent English and with his voice perfectly under control. But I recognised that voice at once.

'Perhaps I may jog your memory,' I rejoined. 'We met in the train at Naples, and you left without giving me an opportunity of saying good-bye. You kindly presented me with a cigar, and I have since been most anxious to meet you.'

He shook his head. The note of regret in his voice was admirable. 'My *dear* sir! You are in error, I assure you! I have not been out of England for years. A case of mistaken identity! But it is of no consequence. These things will happen. Sometimes they are a little awkward. Pray think no more of it.'

His face was a study of solicitude lest I might feel any embarrassment, and I confess that his *sang-froid* shook me for a moment. My first impulse had been to close with the oily scoundrel and send for the police, but by this time his two companions had come closer. I did not like their looks. A moment or two passed, with nothing said on either side, my companion of some weeks ago standing in front of me with an air of mild boredom. His two satellites edged a foot nearer. Swiftly I made up my mind to 'ride cunning.' A fracas would have been useless, and in all probability there were more of the gang near.

'I believe that I have made a mistake. I am truly sorry,' I said, with all the grace I could muster.

He bowed, with 'I quite understand,' and for a moment I thought I caught the ghost of a smile on the long, thin-lipped mouth as he turned back to the table, followed by his two friends. But I made no sign, and took my seat again, outwardly, I hoped, unruffled, but fairly tingling with excitement.

Between pretending to read a newspaper and dawdling over my dinner, I contrived to spin out a quarter of an hour, in which I got a good look at the trio. Beyond doubt, the last time I had seen the man facing me was on the Continental train when he was disguised as an elderly and spectacled priest. I was itching to lay him by the heels; but there were obvious difficulties in the way. I had no evidence to back up the charge of theft of my belongings, and the restaurant was clearly one of the man's haunts. The little proprietor hovered round his table, and the waiter was at his beck and call, a smiling embodiment of attention. It was plain that the rascal was a habitué of the place, and, for all I knew, a good many of the swarthy diners might have been his friends or his accomplices. I felt sure that he thought he had bluffed me into believing that I had made a mistake in accosting him, and I was wondering what his next move would be, when another man came in. He was a clean-shaven, tall man in evening-clothes of faultless taste and cut—his lithe figure and patrician looks in striking contrast to the burly rascal and his vulgarian comrades. The handsome new-comer made his way towards the table at the end of the room, where the three had again seated themselves. The waiter had just brought them drinks. They were for the moment engrossed, but at a word from my Naples friend, on the approach of the new-comer, they rose with a marked air of deference. There was, indeed, more than deference (in the sense of acknowledgment of a social superior), there was the suggestion of discipline, in their attitude. The new-comer shook hands with the older man, and with a careless nod motioned the other two to sit down. Presently he and the big man went to the fireplace, where they engaged in animated talk. I would have given a good deal to hear it, but they were too far from me.

Although I kept my eyes glued to my newspaper, I was conscious of being watched. There are few more unpleasant sensations, and a minute or two of it proved enough for me. Having laid down the paper, I leaned back in my chair with all the nonchalance I could muster, and a swift glance at the mirror showed me the new-comer half-turned in my direction, his heavily lidded dark eyes lighting on me for a moment. Two or three minutes afterwards he

rose and sauntered past my table to the office window, where he engaged in conversation for a little while with the proprietor. Then he came back, and gave me a glance in passing. It was perfectly well-mannered — the ordinary casual, politely indifferent glance, with nothing marked in it, which one gets and gives every day; but I thought that his eye rested on me for just a second too long, that he was interested, and had deliberately passed my table to get a good look at me.

On his rejoining the others, I lit a cigarette and pretended to bury myself in the newspaper. A party of diners seated themselves at an intervening table, which prevented my seeing beyond it without craning my neck and thereby attracting attention. . Five irksome minutes passed, and then the four came down the passage between the tables. None of them looked in my direction except my Naples friend, who gave me a polite inclination of his head and a glance of his little black eyes as if to say, 'Sorry! Surely you see now that you must have made a mistake.' To his little bow I returned what I imagined was a disarming smile.

The four men went to the cloakroom near the entrance, put on their overcoats, and went out through the swing-door. In a trice I paid my bill, and at the door I nearly ran into the little, smirking proprietor. 'Who are the gentlemen who have just left?' I asked him. He was desolated to be obliged to inform me that he did not know the names of these patrons. They sometimes came here, he thought; but, as he explained, with apologetic upturned palms, there were so many people came to the 'Bon Goût.' I thought that he was a liar, and felt inclined to tell him so, but I had no time to waste. Ten seconds more and I was outside.

(*Continued on page 261.*)

NATURE AND ART.

WHEN the equestrian statue of Charles I., which, after an adventurous career during the Commonwealth, was finally erected at Charing Cross, was lately being sandbagged to protect it from air-bombs, one newspaper objected to this proceeding on the ground that the statue, as a work of art, was not worth the cost. The reason given for this opinion sounds plausible. How, asked the writer, can the statue be a good work of art when the horse's eyes are placed on the front and not on the sides of its head? This reason, as has been said, sounds plausible; but really it is absurd. There are plenty of other equestrian statues in London where the horses have their eyes 'just where their eyes should be,' and yet these horses do not look like living horses, but rather like horses' hides stuffed with hay—a whole skinful. Eyes right or eyes wrong, King Charles's horse alone looks 'just what a horse should be.'

What the sculptor who made the statue set himself to do was to produce a work which, when looked at on its pedestal, would appear a vigorous representation of a living man on a living horse. Effect is what all great artists, whether sculptors, painters, or poets, seek. If they can secure that while adhering to facts, well and good; if they cannot, so much the worse for the facts. Thus the greatest equestrian statue in the world is by universal consent that of Colleoni, placed before the Scuola di San Marco in Venice, and during the war transported to Rome for safety against air-bombs. Every one who has seen that resplendent effigy has been amazed by its animation and naturalness; yet few have ever noticed that the horse is walking as nothing but a circus horse ever walked—and it may be doubted whether the most accomplished circus horse could walk thus with an armoured warrior on its back—by advancing its two offside legs at the same time. That equestrian statue's only rival is the one of Gattamelata at Padua; and, strange to say, the horse there is walking in the same impossible way.

As to painting, take the greatest of English landscape painters, Turner; when he wished to make an effective picture of the last voyage of the 'Fighting Téméraire,' he did not hesitate to make the sun set in the east. Most people who look at the picture do not know, probably, that it is the east in which the sun is setting; but the judicious who do know do not care. Shakespeare, again, when he found it necessary for the plot of his play to create a seaport in Bohemia, promptly created one. And Milton, when he wished to produce a tremendous effect, disregarded the very nature of things. Who does not remember such lines as:

A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace, flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe;

and:

And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide?

It is true, 'piddling' Bentley in his edition of *Paradise Lost* objected to 'darkness visible' and 'in the lowest deep a lower deep' on the paltry ground that they were contradictions in terms; but the reader who is alive to the magic of words recognises these as figures of speech which could be conjured up only by the wand of an enchanter.

Byron's 'Prisoner of Chillon' is a fine example of a poet's disregard for facts when they stand in the way of effects. He introduced that poem to

the public by calmly stating that he knew nothing about its hero, Bonivard. If he had known that François de Bonivard of Geneva was a gentleman who had no brothers, whose notions on private morality were constantly getting him into trouble with the public authorities, and whose quarrel with the Duke of Savoy had nothing to do with liberty of conscience, but much to do with the perverted fruits of ecclesiastical property, does any one imagine that that would have prevented Byron from writing the poem? He wanted to write a poem in denunciation of tyranny and in praise of freedom; he saw in the Castle of Chillon a picturesque setting, and in the long imprisonment of Bonivard a theme full of possibilities for such a work; and so he bothered his head not a bit about the facts of Bonivard's life, but proceeded to write. At Ouchy he and Shelley, who had been cruising together round the Lake of Geneva, were held up for two days by bad weather; and during those two days there at the inn, now called the Hôtel d'Angleterre, he wrote the verses which in the result have blotted the real Bonivard out of history and consecrated Chillon for ever to the memory of a Bonivard who never existed.

THE BLOWER OF BUBBLES.

PART IV.

X.

I DID not meet Basil Norman for nearly four years. I joined the Artists' Rifles early in 1915, fought for eleven months, and was given a commission. After a short time in England I went out in all the glory of a Sam Browne and one star, but in a few months I was wounded in the chest, which earned me Blighty and a surfeit of Aunt Hannah, who still contended that had we only concentrated on an *army* instead of a *navy*——

As I write, it all seems a blurred memory of colourless monotony, mud, fatigue, death, and grim humour. In January 1918, after a term of duty as musketry instructor, I returned to France, and fought through the horrible spring battles until, with cruel coincidence, I was wounded in the same place again, and once more came to England with a bullet in my chest—a bullet they dared not extract. In September I was discharged.

One morning in November I sat by the fire in my den at Sloane Square. I had resumed the tenancy of the rooms, and Mrs Mulvaney looked upon me as being even less mature than before, warning me about goloshes when it was wet, and umbrellas when it wasn't, but appeared likely to be.

How long I sat there I do not know, but memory began to weave its spell, driving my surroundings into a dim obscurity and bringing back incidents of the past with vivid clarity. I gripped my head with both hands, and, for the hundredth time, sought the truth that lay buried in the holocaust of the nations. . . . My wound hurt again, and a dizziness crept over me like a fog that rises from the sea and enshrouds the land.

Futile. . . . Futile. . . .

Had some one spoken? The words sounded distinctly. . . . I could have sworn I heard them.

Was the whole war a dream, or was it real? Once more I was in Sloane Square; there was my desk with its litter of papers, my pipe-rack, my books. . . . Had I ever left them? Could it be true that I had led men against machine-gun fire—and that I had killed? Were those boys who died beside me, smiling like children in their sleep, really dead? Was it all some hideous fantasy of an unhealthy brain—a gigantic charade invented by the greatest buffoon of all time?

Futile. . . . Futile. . . . Futile.

I cursed, and pressed my brow with my hands. It was a fight for sanity, as so many men have fought in the solitude of their rooms since the hell of Flanders.

Like a panorama the events of the war crossed my mind, and yet those that stood out most clearly were the unimportant things that came as mere incidents during the unfolding of the world's destiny. The senior chaplain's dog, which was shot by an A.P.M. and mourned by a whole division . . . the new arrival who thought he was a special charge of the Lord's, and who persisted in looking over the top during the day—we buried him next morning . . . the night that the female impersonator from a divisional concert-party lured the colonel into amorous confession . . . the little chap who got no mail at Christmas, and said he hadn't received a letter for two years . . . one after the other these human trivialities coursed through my brain, forcing the vaster issues aside.

From no apparent cause, the strain of reminiscence turned toward Basil Norman. I had seen him somewhere, but whether in London or in the country my poor tired brain seemed unable to determine. And then, with no regard for relevancy, I was with my battalion once more, marching with the Australians to hold a strategical point that one of our brigades had saved from the disaster of March. Who was it said that the Australians lacked discipline? Look at them grinning like youngsters at a game, with the odds against any coming out alive! Discipline? Hell!

We rested at a cross-roads and smoked;

one of our Tommies was singing the refrain of a song that urged the country to call up all his relations, even his father and his mother, but for Gawd's sake not to take him. The sublime incongruity of it was so thoroughly British that we laughed and called for a repetition. A few minutes later the Australians passed us, going forward, and there was a reckless air of bravado about them that boded ill for the Hun.

We waited an hour, two hours—perhaps more.

By Jove! Coming around the bend in the road was the brigade that had held the line. Good work, you chaps! Well done! Bravo! That's it, you fellows; give them a cheer! Beneath the mud and the dust and the beards, they were livid with fatigue; the skin beneath their eyes had dropped, and their jaws hung impotently, like those of idiots. There wasn't a sound from their ranks as, too weary to lift them, they dragged their feet through the dust of the road. They had held their position for fifty-six hours, attacked incessantly from three sides by overwhelming numbers. Damned good, you fellows; damned good!

Still buffeted by imagination, my memory of the scene seemed to fade; yet one impression lingered that was both vivid and blurred. It was when that brigade, or what was left of it, had almost passed, and we were tightening up the straps of our kits, that I caught a glimpse of his face, or that of a man who could have passed as his twin. The soldier beside him was limping painfully and leaning on him heavily in an endeavour to keep up, and beneath the grimy pallor of that face I could see the old wistful, whimsical smile. . . . I tried to cry out, but something stuck in my throat, and next moment we were falling in.

It was Basil Norman, and the lame soldier beside him was the man with a face like a pumpkin. Either that or my brain had become the plaything of fancy.

Again my memory became a blank, and for a few minutes everything seemed obscured. Some one was shouting! It was taken up by another, then by many—the whole air was filled with noise. . . . I heard a woman's voice. Good God! Had the Germans broken through? . . . '*Steady, men—get your aim first.*' . . . The shouting grew in intensity, and I pressed my brow with my hands until the marks stood out like wounds. With a cry as of an animal in pain, I rose to my feet and shook the shadows from my eyes. There was my room—the smouldering fire—my chair . . . but the shouting—it was louder than before.

Feeling my reason tottering, I crossed to the window and threw it open. People were running, and crying some word as they ran; one woman wept openly, and no one heeded her; a taxi passed, crowded to the roof with hatless, gesticulating enthusiasts. Was the whole world mad? From every direction came the noise of deep-throated shouting, swelling into a vast *Te Deum* of sound. A soldier with one foot leaned against a lamp-post and rested his muscles from their labour with the crutches.

'Hello!' I cried. The khaki seemed to restore my grip on things. 'I say—hello!'

He turned round and hobbled over to my window. 'Wot 's the trouble?' he said.

'This shouting,' I cried; 'these people running like rabbits. What does it all mean?'

'Wot! don't you know?' He smacked his lips in appreciation of the surprise he had in store for me. 'Why, Fritz 'as took the count, 'e 'as.'

'Then'—— Confound it! what made my lips quiver so? 'Then—it 's peace? . . . You mean . . . it 's peace?'

He nodded half-a-dozen times. 'The war,' he said, feeling the importance of his declaration, 'is napoo. Kaiser Bill 'as 'opped the twig, and the hold firm of 'im and Gott is for sale, with the goodwill thrown in, I *don't* think.'

I leaned out of the window, and we grasped hands.

Futile. . . . Futile. . . . Futile.

No—by Heaven, no! Not while we remember our dead; not while the spirit of comradeship still lives in the breasts of those who went out there; never, if the Britain of the future is worthy of her knights of the greatest crusade of all, and of the mothers who gave that which had sprung from their very heart-beats.

'*Out of sorrow have the worlds been built, and at the birth of a child or a star there is pain.*'

Half-mad with joy, I rushed into the street and urged my hospitality on the mutilated soldier, who came into my den and took a seat by the fire, while I fetched a decanter and cigars that we might make the occasion a jovial one. As I came into the room I noticed that he was examining me curiously.

'Hexcuse me,' he said, 'but if I may make so bold—wasn't you 'is pal?'

'Good heavens!' I cried, a light bursting upon me. 'You 're the man with the face like a—like a'—— I suppose I blushed.

'Don't 'esitate,' he grinned. 'Many a time over there 'e told me you called me "Pumpkin-Face," and, beggin' your pardon, sir, I likes it a sight better than "Pest."'

'Then—it was Norman I saw in March?'

'Ay.' He sipped his glass meditatively. ''E lied about 'is 'eart, and was took O.K. late in 'fifteen. 'E was a ranker like the rest of us, but 'e was a proper gentleman, 'e was—that is, not just like we hunderstands the word in Hengland, but a *real* gentleman. 'E never preached and 'e never whined, but them two heyes just kept twinklin', and whenever hany of us was a bit windy, 'e 'd sort of buck us hup by that there smile 'e 'ad. I ain't much on langwidge, not 'avin' no eddication to speak

of, or I'd hexplain better; but when little Sawyers got 'is from a sniper, and 'e knew 'is ticket was punched for to go West, the sergeant says, "Fetch the padre," but Sawyers 'e says, "No, it's Bubbles I want." . . . I ain't much on religion neither, and I've done a 'eap o' filthy swearin', which I guess is all down agin me in the book; but wherever Bubbles is goin' is good enough for me, whether it's brimstin and blazes or hangels playin' 'arps.'

'Tell me'—I dreaded the answer to the question—'where is he now?'

''E's took a cottage hover in the Hisle o' Wight,' he said, clearing his throat and speaking slowly, 'and 'e's married to the sweetest creetur I ever sees houtside a book. Blime! after I gets hout o' 'ospital, me not 'avin' any hold woman of my own, 'e finds me hout and sends a letter sayin' to go there for my convalessings, which likewise I did. That's 'is haddress on the top of that there letter.'

I took the paper from his hand, but kept my eyes on his face; he was keeping something from me. 'Tell me the truth about him,' I said, and waited.

He shifted uneasily in his chair. ''E got a blighty near 'is 'eart,' he said, making a supreme effort, 'and 'e'll never get hup from 'is chair no more.'

XI.

The packet for the Isle of Wight threaded its way through the traffic of incoming vessels, and ran by a cruiser that had just come from the bloodless Trafalgar of German shame, where the second navy of the world surrendered without a fight.

A man next to me grunted. 'It's all right for us to crow,' he said; 'but Germany was beaten, and she did the right thing.'

I looked at him—he was quite sincere. His hair was unduly long, and he carried a manuscript case—probably one of the statistical writers still going strong.

'In your wildest flights of imagination,' I said, 'even if the combined fleets of the world were against him, could you picture Beatty leading the British Navy out to surrender?'

'Supposing he were ordered?'

As if in answer to his question, our course took us by the hull of the *Victory*, straining at her moorings in the November wind.

'In that case,' I said, 'Beatty would have had two blind eyes.'

Which was the sum total of our conversation until we landed at Ryde, when our paths diverged, never, I hope, to meet again. Probably, over the week-end, he was polishing up some powerful articles on the absurdity of Reconstruction.

By the time the train had reached the little station of St Louis, just beyond Ventnor, the wind had blown away any clouds, and the sun was shining radiantly. As I emerged from my carriage I felt a throb of exhilaration shoot through my veins, but depart as quickly as it had come, when I realised how near was the tragedy I had soon to witness. I heard my name spoken, and, turning, saw a ruddy-faced, storm-blown fellow of fifty odd years, whose whole bearing smacked of nor'-westers and mizzen-tops. When I admitted to my name, he seized my bag without a word, and started down the road with the swaying motion peculiar to mariners.

We had hardly gone any distance, when he stopped at a gate, which proved to be the back entrance to a garden, and following him through it, I was led along a path which was strewn with leaves in all the wealth of autumnal colouring, while through the trees there was the deep blue of the sea, flecked with crests of foam. We had gone about fifty yards when we came upon a cottage, in front of which, on a promontory, was a neatly trimmed lawn, guarded by six trees that stood like sentinels. The lower branches had been cut to give a better view, and their appearance lent a quaintly tropical look to the place, as if they were palms. In front of the house, fields sloped gradually to the edge of the cliff, which overlooked the sea beneath.

'My dear old Pest!'

Against the background of the trees I had failed to notice him sitting in an invalid's chair. In three strides I was by his side, his hands in mine . . . but no words came to my faltering lips. For a moment the gray of his eyes softened to a look of understanding; then the old smile, just as charming as ever, irradiated his face.

'This is an event,' he said, 'to be entered in the log.—Sindbad!'

The ex-seaman who had acted as my guide pulled at his forelock.

'Ay, ay, cap'n!'

'Take this gentleman's things to the guest-room upstairs.'

'The cabin to starboard? Werry good, cap'n.'

Heavens! such a voice! There were fog, gale, piracy, rum, and combat in it.

'Sindbad,' said Norman, in answer to my look, 'is one of my indiscretions—like "Arcadia." He turned up here one day with such a tale of the sea as would have shamed Robert Louis Stevenson at his best. So far as I can discover, he has been in every naval fight since Aboukir Bay. He's a bit hazy on the Jutland scrap, but hints darkly at the possibility of an invasion by Spain. He is convinced that the Armada is only hiding and waiting its time.'

In spite of myself, I laughed.

'As he refused to go, I decided to employ him as a man-of-all-work, and, as he appeared to have forgotten his own name, I gave him that of "Sindbad," which pleased him as much as me. As a result of my engaging him, the lawn you stand on is the quarter-deck, which he never fails to salute. As nearly as I can discover, we are sailing a perpetual voyage—you see by this view that the illusion is possible—and we're

living in the imminent danger and hope of an attack by the Spanish. By the way, old man, would you rather go upstairs and clean up? Are you cold sitting there? Sometimes, being so comfortable myself, I forget all about my guests.'

I protested, sincerely, that I was quite contented where I was.

'Good!' he smiled. 'Now, tell me all about London. . . . I see you were hit twice. From more than a dozen sources I've heard how splendid you were in France.'

His voice was so bright, with its old, happy mannerism of rapidity of words, with the occasional slurring rallentando, and his gaiety so infectious, that, under his influence, I felt the clouds about my brain lifting—not only those caused by grief for his helpless condition, but those born of my own black moods which drove sleep from my eyes for nights at a time. I had come determined to be cheerful and to bring encouragement to the invalid, but already I was drinking in the elixir of his spirit and feeling my arteries throb with a kind of ecstasy.

His charm was more potent than before.

For a few minutes we chatted about France and the old Westminster boys who had won renown. We talked of many things, and laughed to find that we were still boys.

'By the way,' he said, during a momentary lull in the stream of reminiscence, 'I must apologise for my wife. She is doing some necessary shopping in Ventnor, but will be back by the next train.'

'I heard you were married,' I said, but got no further. Delicacy forbade my asking him how his dream of love had become a reality. He must have read the question in my eyes, however, for he offered me his cigarettes, which, with him, was always a prelude to a change in the tone of conversation.

'I did not write to her after I went to France,' he said quietly, 'because . . . well, I've spoken to you before of my sense of intuition—and I knew that mine would be a heavy price to pay. It was not fair to fasten her with a life none too robust at its best, because of a love-fantasy between two children. When I was hit, and they broke the news to me that—that this was to be my luck, the one thing that comforted me was the thought that she was free and would not have to share my captivity. By-the-by, Pest, isn't the sea fascinating? It is never the same for two days together.'

He was still a Puck, lightening his moods whenever they threatened to hurt the listener with their intensity.

'Pest,' he said, after a pause, 'she came to me. . . . When everything was dark, and I was groping blindly for some hand that would start me just a—a little on my path, she came—out of the mists. I urged her to leave me. I argued that she was not fair—and for answer she kissed me. . . . Pest, it was a moment of such exquisite happiness, a happiness so poignant, that I wish I could have died then. I was never so fit for heaven.'

The figure of Sindbad appeared from the house, tugged at its forelock, and disappeared into the garden to trim some shrubs.

'How did you happen to come here?' I asked.

'I had always looked on the Island,' he said, smiling, 'as the only spot in England where a twentieth-century Robinson Crusoe could find a sanctuary from the world, and, by the courtesy of the gentleman who owned the place, I was able to purchase it at a ridiculously low price. As a matter of fact, he was offered twice the amount quoted to me, but refused because I was a disabled Tommy. We came here strangers, but really the kindness of every one is so great that the ordeal is turning into a privilege. You have no idea, Pest, how extraordinarily sympathetic and courteous these people are.'

'I suppose, though,' I said softly, 'that it is rather—lonely.'

'Lonely?' he laughed. 'Bless your heart, old boy! talk about a French savant and his *salon*—this place is a positive Mecca for all the distinguished pilgrims on the island. For instance, there is the editor of the *Tribune*—a man who thinks editorially and talks colossally. He claims that any one who has read Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, and Carlyle's *French Revolution* is educated. He never reads anything else, but keeps on reading these three in an endless cycle. We have perfectly stupendous arguments that never get anywhere, but utterly exhaust both of us. Then there's the station-master. How many passengers boarded the train here when you were coming off?'

'Four, I think.'

'Ah yes; this is Saturday—a busy day. Some trains we don't get any, and others just one or two; but in anticipation of a rush at some future date, he's inventing a scheme of getting tickets out of a drawer, stamped and all complete, by merely pressing a button. I tell you it's going to revolutionise the booking systems of the world—we've been working on it for weeks, but so far all we've got is the button. The plans are prodigious, though. And the Tommies! Gor blime, Pest! there's a convalescent home just down the road, and it's a queer day that at least two of the beggars don't come up for a "jaw" about old times. You talk about your officers' messes and brass hats; why, it's real life in the ranks. I tell you, Pest, I would rather be the man that coined the word "Cheerio" than the greatest general the world has seen.'

A merchant-ship, still wearing its strange motley of camouflage, sailed past only a couple of miles from shore.

'Look!' whispered Norman, and pointed down the garden.

Sindbad was crouched behind some bushes, surveying the vessel through a dilapidated telescope. After a careful scrutiny, he resumed his labours, shaking his head and muttering darkly to himself.

Norman chuckled hilariously. 'He's on the look-out for Spaniards,' he said.

'What a villainous telescope!'

'Isn't it? He always has it by him, though. I'll swear you can't see half-a-mile with the blessed thing.'

A huge black hound appeared from the direction of the conservatory, and, after the canine manner, expressed his wriggliest delight at the sight of Norman, ending by sitting solemnly beside the chair and laying one paw on the invalid's knee.

'Good-afternoon, Mr Jones,' said Norman.

The dog thumped the ground four times with his tail, and emitted a yawn like the sound of a train emerging from a tunnel.

'Mr Jones,' said I, 'changes from cordiality to ennui with rather startling rapidity.'

The hound acknowledged his name by a solitary thump, and then groaned with the air of a Stiggins contemplating the wickedness of a Weller.

'What breed is he?' I asked.

'Dog—just dog. He is, if I may say so, the battle-ground of his ancestors. Every breed but that of bull can be traced in him, and each has its moment of ascendancy. Mr Jones possesses a most remarkable hereditary system.'

The subject of our conversation became suddenly tense. A bird had hopped on to the quarter-deck, and was pecking at the ground in a manner that would infuriate any self-respecting dog.

Gathering up his loins, Mr Jones stalked the intruder to within four yards, and then fell in a heap on the spot—where the bird had been. After surveying the landscape with a puzzled air, as if to indicate to us that foul work was afloat, he walked to the end of the lawn and gazed thoughtfully at the sea. Having thoroughly demonstrated his indifference as to whether he ever caught a bird or not, he yawned terrifically, and left the scene for the comfort of the kitchen.

(*Continued on page 264.*)

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XIV.—NOT UNDERSTOOD.

DO not believe that we of the New Army are bloodthirsty Bernhardis, always talking about offensives and what not. Not a bit of it! Ninety-nine per cent. of us loathe the whole business, and seventy-five per cent. are opponents of militarism. Indeed, I think we may rightly be described as an army of pacifists enlisted in defence of our beliefs. No decent-minded Briton desires to compete with the brutal philosophy of the Hun. The man who says he likes war is either a liar or a Shylock in the supply department. The best way to end war is for the German nation to reduce the German General Staff to the ranks, and let them suffer such a bombardment as we gave the German Tommies prior to the battle of the Somme.

Shell-fire kills militarism.

The great New Army is a successful army, because it has a cause. Its *moral* is largely based on our love of freedom, truth, ease, and peace at our own fireside. We are a peace-loving people. A navy we have always regarded as an expensive business, the army as a luxury, war as a d—— nuisance and a most uncomfortable affair. War interferes with our commerce, our studies, our games, and our pleasures. War kills and mangles men who have been made in the image of God. It wrecks nations, countries, and homes; brings into millions of lives suffering, poverty, anger, despair, madness, and soul-racking sorrow. It is the most foul, ghastly, ungodly thing that man ever created.

War is hell—a suffering hell, a grisly hell.

Every man in the New Army thinks that. And it is most important you should realise our point of view; otherwise you will be unable to understand our psychology, and the reason for our carrying on. Of course, you may never have heard that side before. You are not to blame. Newspaper correspondents at the Front send home the most awful 'tripe' about us. They actually dare to say we 'like it.' When we read such things we laugh. Perhaps the poor devils are not entirely at fault. Some bright gent, who is director-general of *moral*, may consider it necessary that they should produce this piffle. But such a view is rather an insult to our education. We can penetrate official camouflage, sometimes enjoy it, but all the same this sort of stuff is not good for the army or the nation. It breeds illusions. Illusions of this order eventually become a danger to the State. Much better to speak the truth! To show war in all its vile nakedness, show it in operation—with blood, bayonets, and a brutal barrage blowing horses and men to bits, and motor-cars sky-high. Britishers can face this, for we are a race of stoics. But what Britishers cannot understand is that extraordinary diplomacy which says we must camouflage heavy casualties, hide disasters, whitewash blunders, and instil in the minds of a shivering British public that the Front is really 'not so bad as they say.' The Front is a vile and a hellish place.

But it was the Germans who made it so.

That is the whole alphabet of our cause. We are in this military business because we hate it. The position is such that if we refuse to fight, our lives, our homes, our businesses, our mothers, wives, and sweethearts, will be a the mercy of that awful devil who says he is the chosen of God—the Kaiser. We must fight, or fizzle out. Snowden, Ramsay Macdonald, and men of that kind are foolish and dangerous counsellors. Their methods, if successful, would mean that Pacifism—the true Pacifism—is dead for ever, and we should be compelled to deify the sword and applaud the philosophy which condones rape, murder, burglary, and all the vile dogmas of Berlin.

And yet our instructors never took up that line.

(*Continued on page 271.*)

AN AWKWARD PREDICAMENT.

By S. W. King.

I.

'OH Lord! it's too jolly hot for anything!' The remark came from Second Lieutenant Antony Seaforth, who was orderly-officer for the day.

He made it aloud, though, save for himself, the 'mess' was empty. Orderly-officers, you must know, are lonely folk at the best of times. Nobody talks to them. Everybody pities them. For the time being they are outcasts, asking nothing at the hands of their luckier brethren, and getting what they ask. Consequently an orderly 'dog' is sometimes driven to utter his thoughts out aloud, if only to make sure he has not lost the power of speech. Hence the remark with which this story opens.

Nevertheless, Tony Seaforth was not unhappy. Far from it. He was reclining on an easy-chair, with his coat off and a 'bull's-eye' in his mouth. A large glass, half-full of beer, stood on a table within easy reach of his right hand; and in his left hand he held a novel by George A. Birmingham, entitled *Spanish Gold*.

Further, he was not likely to be disturbed, as almost the whole battalion had gone on a route-march, and would not be back till lunch-time. The small hand of the clock in the mess pointed to eleven; the big hand was at twelve.

So that, all things considered, our hero had very little to grumble about except the weather, which, by the way, was almost as hot as he said it was. Still, against that one small discomfort he could set his beer, his shirt-sleeves, a comfortable chair, and an amusing story.

Soon he grew drowsy, put his novel down on the table, finished his beer, and closed his eyes. In fact, he fell asleep.

Now, to go to sleep in the mess is, as everybody knows, *the* unforgivable sin. It is worse, for example, than spitting on the floor. Tony Seaforth knew that well. But he also knew, or thought he knew, that there was no likelihood of his crime ever being discovered. In this, however, he was wrong, as my story will show.

His gentle slumber was rudely disturbed by the sound of a voice. Here let me explain that our mess consists of one long room divided into two parts by curtains slung on a steel bar. Our hero was in the part known as the anteroom. The voice that roused him came from the messroom proper, which lay to the other side of the curtains.

In a moment Tony was on his feet; in another he had crawled—with the bag of 'bull's-eyes'—under a small sofa which stood beside his easy-chair. He had recognised the voice. It was the general's. Now, Tony did not like the general.

I decline to describe the feelings uppermost in the young man's breast as he lay on his back under the sofa. I could describe them; but I won't. Any soldier who has been in the firing-line knows exactly what they were—just as anybody who has ever been a second lieutenant can tell you why Tony did not like the general.

Presently the curtains parted, and the general strode into the room, followed by a lady. From his lowly position Tony could just see a pair of top-boots and a portion of a skirt. He wondered who the general's companion could be. But he was not left long in doubt.

'Hubert,' said the lady, walking over to the easy-chair and picking something out of it, 'can you tell me what this coat is doing here?'

At the first sound of that voice Tony started violently. I do not blame him in the least. You would start violently if your aunt, who lived three hundred miles away, suddenly appeared in your mess without any warning. Particularly if she called your general 'Hubert.' And that, as you know, is what Tony's aunt Mary did.

The general replied he had no idea what the coat was doing there, and then softly invited Aunt Mary to sit down on the sofa.

Now, Aunt Mary was thirty-five, extremely good-looking, and a widow. So that, when the general came and sat down beside her, right over Tony's head, that youth, instead of being terrified at the close proximity of a certain pair of top-boots, smiled a cruel smile and set himself deliberately to listen.

II.

'Tell me, Mary,' began the general in low tones, 'what lucky chance brought you down here? Do you realise that this is the first time I have seen you for sixteen years?'

Mary blushed. Tony asked me afterwards how did I know she blushed. I pointed out coldly that whether she blushed or not was no concern of his, as he was not writing the story.

Mary blushed. 'Oh,' she said carelessly, 'I got an invitation from a friend to come and stay with her. So I came. I purposely did not tell my nephew of my visit, as I wished to give him a surprise.'

The general raised his eyebrows inquiringly. 'Your nephew?' he said.

'Yes. Don't you know that my nephew, Antony Seaforth, is in the Bumffshires?'

Tony grinned. 'I rather think he does know, thank you, aunt,' he said under his breath.

'Antony Seaforth!' exclaimed the general. 'I did not understand he was your nephew. Yes,' he continued, 'I know the lad. Rather a scapegrace, isn't he?'

The scapegrace ground his teeth, and waited anxiously for his aunt's reply.

'Oh no, Hubert!' it came protestingly. 'I don't think so at all. Tony is a nice lad. I am really very fond of him.'

'That's one in the neck for you, you old bully,' chuckled the 'nice lad' silently.

'Well, well, Mary, I have no doubt you are right,' said the general impatiently. 'We won't discuss the boy any further. I want to talk about old times,' he added, a new note in his voice.

'Oh, please, Hubert, not that! Anything but that!' came Aunt Mary's voice imploringly. 'I don't like even to think of old times.'

'But I do,' said the general in what seemed to Tony a bullying tone. 'One day,' he continued, 'sixteen years ago, you told me you loved me. Then why did you marry Captain Carruthers? Did you like him better?'

'No, Hubert.'

Tony could only just hear the low response.

'Then why did you marry him?'

'Oh, Hubert, I was only a girl of nineteen, and a very foolish one. I allowed myself to be carried away by Jack's pleading. He seemed to me so strong and masterful, and you'—the sweet voice trembled—'you were always so quiet and gentle.'

The eavesdropper started. 'Good Lord!' he said to himself; 'fancy calling that loud-voiced, overbearing tyrant "quiet and gentle"!'

'Is that the only reason why you would not marry me?' asked the general quietly. 'You don't care to answer,' he continued gently, as his companion remained silent. 'Then may I tell you why you would not marry me?'

'No, no, please, Hubert, no!' was the anguished reply. 'Oh, if you ever loved me, please don't say any more!'

'I have loved you for sixteen years. I love you now. That is why I feel I must speak.'

There was a ring of manly sincerity in the general's voice which Tony rather liked. But what amazed him was its wonderful gentleness.

'You married Captain Carruthers,' the general went on slowly, 'because you thought I was a coward.'

Tony imagined he heard a stifled sob.

'Do not think,' the gentle voice continued, 'I ever blamed you for the thought. You were very young—only a child—and you worshipped bravery. You heard Carruthers match his horse against mine over a two-mile course. He asked if he might make your hand the stakes. You looked at me, hesitated, and then agreed.'

He paused for a moment. Tony was so intensely interested that he had quite forgotten he was under the sofa.

'As long as I live,' the general went on, 'I shall not forget the look you gave me when I declined the match. Carruthers, you will remember, laughed at me, taunted me, even accused me of being afraid. But I would not ride.'

He hesitated and looked at his companion. 'I think, dear, that is all,' he added. 'Forty-eight hours afterwards you were his wife.'

Aunt Mary said nothing. She was crying softly. Tony, listening to her, found he could no longer suck his 'bull's-eye' with comfort because of a queer lump which had suddenly risen in his throat.

He was now really sorry for both the general and his aunt Mary, and he disliked intensely having to play the part of eavesdropper any longer. He was about to leave his hiding-place and face the consequences, when the general's voice speaking again stopped him.

'Ah, my dear, my dear,' it came—and Tony noticed how strangely husky the voice was—'my life without you has been a lonely one. I have often thought since that I made a mistake in not accepting Carruthers's challenge. But at the time I felt I could not do it. The idea of riding a race with you as the stakes was utterly abhorrent to me. I just wanted you to come to me of your own free-will—or not at all. Do you understand, Mary dear?' He looked wistfully at the bowed head.

Mary suddenly stopped crying and looked up. 'Understand?' she said quietly. 'Yes, Hubert, I understand. I understand that one day sixteen years ago I threw away a noble man's love. I understand that on that same day I allowed myself to listen to a suggestion which a true woman would have scorned, and to agree to it. I understand that I married a man I did not love, and sent the man I loved away without even a word of explanation. But,' she added in the same quiet tones, 'I have suffered for it.'

There was a long silence. Tony was quite relieved when the general broke it.

'I am getting an old man now, Mary,' he began sadly. 'I am fifty-one. You are only thirty-five—sixteen years younger. Sixteen years is a long stretch, dear,' he continued; 'but if you would care to come to me, then'—he hesitated—'why, then,' he added simply, 'I shall thank God every day of my life for His great goodness to

me. Will you marry me, Mary?' he asked suddenly, longingly. 'I want you so badly.'

Mary blushed a lovely red. She hesitated.

'She's surely not going to refuse him,' said Tony to himself in real alarm. 'If she does,' he added decisively, 'I have done with her.'

Then Mary spoke. 'Do you really want me, Hubert?' she asked wonderingly.

'Silly fool,' breathed the anxious Tony; 'didn't he tell you he does?'

'I never wanted anything so much in my life,' said the general decidedly, as he moved nearer to her.

'Then, of course, dear, I'll marry you. I love you,' she added simply.

To a certain pair of ears which were anxiously awaiting it, there came the unmistakable sound of a kiss. Their owner breathed a sigh of relief. 'At any rate, they're all right,' he said to himself. 'Now, thank goodness, I expect they'll soon go,' he added contentedly.

III.

Tony's assumption was quite correct. The idea underlying the assumption was all wrong. As a matter of fact they did go soon; but—well, finish reading the story, and you will see.

'Don't you think, Hubert,' came in Aunt Mary's voice a few minutes later, 'we might have another window open? It's so very hot in here.'

'That's a good notion of yours, Mary,' said the general joyfully, as he hastened to put it into action.

Tony mentally reflected that any notion, so long as it happened to be Mary's, would naturally be good to the general. For his own part, he also admitted the notion was a good one, though for vastly different reasons. He was nearly suffocated. Besides, it was twenty minutes to one by his wrist-watch, and lunch was at one o'clock. That was to say, he told himself, that in twenty minutes, or possibly less, the route-march would be over, and the room in which he was now a prisoner would be chock-a-block with all sorts and degrees of hungry men waiting impatiently for the gong to sound. 'And if you're not out of here before the C.O. gets back,' he said, addressing himself sternly, 'then, Antony Seaforth, you will most certainly be court-martialled.'

Having duly opened the window, the general returned to Aunt Mary, a broad smile of pleasure on his face.

He was about to resume his seat beside her, when his left foot suddenly, and of its own accord, shot from under him, and he came down on the sofa in great haste and with considerable force.

Underneath, the sofa was in bad repair. Tony ought to know, and he says it was one vast hole. Accordingly, when attacked so violently by the general, the outraged piece of furniture at once avenged itself by indignantly raining dust and horse-hair straight down on Tony's face. The dust got into his nose and eyes; little bits of horse-hair made their way between his lips or nestled confidingly in his ears; and, to complete his troubles, the 'bull's-eye' he was sucking, endeavouring to slip unnoticed down his throat, in its hurry chose the wrong passage, and got stuck.

Caught in 'the fell clutch of circumstance,' poor Tony coughed and sneezed at one and the same time.

The cough at once cleared his throat of the 'bull's-eye.' But it also alarmed Aunt Mary, who bounded from the sofa. 'Good gracious, Hubert!' she exclaimed in trepidation; 'whatever is that queer noise?'

The general had risen from his seat almost simultaneously with Aunt Mary. He was no longer the lover, but the cool and level-headed man of action. Also, he had an 'idea,' and that 'idea' was closely connected with the coat which Aunt Mary, on her entrance, had picked up out of Tony's easy-chair. 'Don't be alarmed, Mary,' he said confidently, as he seized her umbrella by the handle. 'We'll soon see what the noise is.'

Then, stooping down, he viciously thrust the point of the umbrella underneath the sofa. It came in contact with something soft and yielding; whereupon the general smiled. To make sure there could be no mistake, he again and again repeated the jabbing process, each time with a similar result. Then, either satisfied or because he had no breath left, he stopped and withdrew the umbrella. 'You may come out now,' he said.

One side of his body aching with pain, the wretched Tony crawled abjectly out, and slowly rose to his feet.

Now, the rest of what happened during the interview which followed between Tony on the one side, and the general and his aunt on the other, and the things that his aunt said, and the things the general did not say, and the money which Tony received both from the one and from the other of them, are they not written in the Book of the Mind of Tony?

And Second Lieutenant Antony Seaforth slept without a care that night, and the next day a new orderly-officer reigned in his stead.

A FOREST THOUGHT.

In the green woods I lie at ease to-day,
A pigmy here where giant oak and beech
In lordly silence commune each with each,
While feathered fronds of bracken lightly sway.
The wide, embracing boughs hold Time in thrall;
Their benediction fain would compass Fate.
Yet they for some grand consummation wait,
Some voice to answer life's insistent call.

So gropes the soul through shadowed circumstance,
Upreaching towards the Light: calm, unafraid.
The great trees' lower branches are in shade;
But see, above, how bright the sun-rays glance—
How vast the arch of heaven limitless,
Where the immortal Presence broods to bless!

CONSTANCE FARMAR.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

WHO are the Bolsheviks, and what do they desire? There is perhaps not a question of the day of more importance to the life of the world and to each of us than this of the existence, the aims, the methods, and the prospects of these Bolsheviks of Russia who, from the small beginning of a revolution against the revolution in their own country, are spreading their evil influence in all places. Here in the British Isles, in France, in Spain and Portugal, the agents of Bolshevism have been found at work, and making no great failure of their efforts. They have appeared in the United States, and the discovery has shocked the Americans. Agents of the Bolsheviks are everywhere in South America. Find an island with a small population almost isolated from the rest of the world, and there somewhere, disguised as a simple islander, perhaps, will be a Bolshevik, seeking his opportunity to distil his poison in the minds of those about him, stirring them to revolt against the world as they find it. Now, is not this ubiquity, this universality, of the new movement an amazing thing? It is so remarkable that, in no manner of impiety, it has been said that this is the most spreading social movement in the world since the advent of Christianity. In such a comparison, startling at the first thought, there is, of course, no reference to the ethical merits of these movements; only to their wide extension and their grip of peoples. They are very different things. It has been remarked of Christianity that it was a story that transformed the world, a beautiful story that for all time will exercise an influence upon the minds of men. But when Christianity began, the world was but slightly equipped in what we may call conveniences and communications, and it was long before that story spread and became the universal force we know. Bolshevism is produced at a time when those enjoying a vast abundance of conveniences and communications seem suddenly, through science, to have made a grab at the inner and more precious secrets of nature, and to have snatched before their maturity some that were being prepared for future ages. People murmur that such rashness and foolish, greedy impatience must surely be accounted for. Consider that the real practical application of electricity—as in the electric light, the telephone, and things like that which seem so indispensable now—has come within the lifetime of many of us. Go back forty or fifty years and see how amazingly elementary the system of life, as then conducted, appears to us now. If you examine broadly the extent of invention and discovery, and their adaptation to the methods of life since then, especially in the last ten years, you will perceive that in this period humanity has been involved in a veritable fury of what it calls progress, directed chiefly to manufacture, movement, and destruction, culminating in a gorgeous and extremely vulgar exhibition of them all in a four years' war. The developments of science, discovery, and invention accruing from this new curiosity have exceeded all by which they were preceded. Through thousands and thousands of generations mankind has been struggling in some vague, blind way, impelled by forces beyond itself, for advancement in pursuance of that tremendous scheme of the Creator which we cannot grasp. It seems man must have stood almost actionless for ages, since his means of transport and communication remained so simple. Anyhow, we have the fact that in these matters and others of science—electricity and the like—we have made more advance in fifty years than was made by our predecessors in a hundred thousand. Of course, one may be told that during all that period of slow progress the foundations of intelligence, society, commerce, and everything else were being laid, and that when they were ready the great push in science was made; but such an argument does not satisfy. Such points as these are directly associated, as we shall see, with first considerations and inquiries upon Bolsheviks.

* * *

It seems an incredible thing that Bolshevism, even upon an assumption that there may be some good in it, should so rapidly gain a footing nearly all over the world. In a couple of years it has done far more than the great religious movements could accomplish in centuries. Still more incomprehensible is it that its prospects as a dominating world-force should need to be seriously considered; that the Great Powers in all their military might, after scorning the

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Bolsheviks and waiting for their self-extermination, should consent to invite them to a conversation upon an island in the Sea of Marmora; that one German industrial magnate, Hugo Stinnes, looking into that difficult future which faces his country now, should say with truth, 'If Bolshevism extends, it will mean the ruin of the whole world;' or that another, Rathenau, director of a great electrical concern, should murmur, 'The danger comes from the North; it is Bolshevism. It is impossible to settle any question—Poland, the Czechs, or the Balkans—without taking into consideration this formidable situation. The Entente believe they can stop Bolshevism by Poland and a weakened Germany. It is a dangerous illusion. The active solidarity of all nations against the common peril can alone save the world.' There is nobody—in Britain any more than elsewhere—to deny the power and the truth of this suggestion. And this is the state of a movement that people in general had never heard of only two years ago, threatening now to overturn the human order, smash the social structure as it is known, and start life afresh. It is remarkable. However much we disbelieve in this movement, regard it as a canker and a pestilence, it seems somehow that there must be a great force behind it, even beyond that of the men who are leading it and using it. But perhaps it should not be surprising. If in fifty years, or even twenty, we could do more in revolutionising systems of life than in hundreds of thousands before, why should not movements like this also spread much faster than the movements of old, communications of every description having been much advanced? We have become accustomed to speed; whatever is done in the future must be done quickly. Then these are clearly the days of violent transformations. That which marks a direct and absolute change from the old order seems to begin with a good recommendation. Four years of destruction, four years of the ruthless employment for evil purposes of all those great secrets taken from Nature, four years of the dethronement of kings and overturning of constitutions, have given peoples a taste for strong things in the way of changes; the milk-and-water of parish council bills will no longer suit them. Faster movement is wanted. On the other hand, the world has clearly lived too hastily in recent years. Its morals, its ethics, its conceptions and practices have not by any means kept pace with its discoveries. It has been grabbing at the future, and by luck and ingenuity has somehow become possessed of means and instruments from the secret store which it is not old enough to handle, is not fit to own, any more than an infant is qualified to play with a loaded gun. Despite the seeming atavism of late, the spirit of the human race must be progressing, or else the whole scheme of nature is a mere negation—which would be absurd—and in time, perhaps another half million years ahead, the thoughts, feelings, desires, conceptions of people will be such that they would no more think of using their latest scientific discoveries (immeasurably more advanced than ours—think of the new world that radium is opening!) for their mutual destruction than we now, so much inferior mentally and spiritually, would think of dining upon each other in the manner of common cannibals. Now, if those future folk have any record of us and our war they may consider us as people who discovered too much, more than was good for us, and, losing our heads completely, misapplied it. They will not be able to understand by any other explanation than that of our having been in a delirium how we could behave in this manner and with so little reason.

* * *

Bolshevism, as we know it, see it, feel it in 1919, is a mean, ugly, contemptible thing, in which there is surely no good for the peoples of the world, now or in the future. But in an abstract and unpractised principle of Bolshevism there is something of a fair ideal. That was what it might have been, a movement for the complete emancipation of man—his social, industrial, economical, and intellectual independence, one that would afford him the greatest possibilities in life, the greatest efforts, the greatest rewards, and would institute a régime of perfect honesty, sincerity, and absolute fairness in every direction. But evidently man will have to live and work, progress and evolve, fight and die, and fight again for thousands and thousands of years ere he will have advanced spiritually so far that he can apply any such doctrines and ideas to his own case with safety and advantage. He is hopelessly unequipped at the present time. It is said that Bolshevism is anarchy, and so stands for ruin. It is certainly anarchy, and, as applied at present, would cause worse than ruin if successful. The world is not old enough for anarchy or anything belonging to it yet, for even in the main principle of anarchy there is an ideal of some quality involved—the state of perfect self-development, with full self-control and independence in accordance. In a million years it may be applied. Bolshevism is a form of anarchy, and, even if conducted by honest men, idealists, it could find no place in a world that is only beginning to try a little Socialism, and is blundering badly even with that. In Socialism there is a fine ideal which practically every man of sense and feeling would accept, but not in the way that some of its advocates would apply it. So it is with Bolshevism, sometimes called Revolutionary Socialism, which proposes to take a short cut to its own millennium, and, instead of moving along by steps both short and slow, seeks to snatch sharply at the supreme result anticipated. Therefore it would overturn

monarchies, constitutions, capitalists, the present systems of organisation of the State, industries, society, and all the rest, and start afresh on a basis of individual enjoyment, in full measure, of all the products of work and the world. And it would achieve it by force, tyranny, robbery, and slaughter. All men should be equal in labour, in remuneration, and enjoyment. This is not Socialism; it is not even Syndicalism; it is that which is beyond even the latter, and stands for the maximum hope or desire of those who would overthrow the existing system of things and begin this new millennium of all-round equality and happiness. That man, Karl Marx, whose centenary was celebrated only last year, was a forerunner in this kind of thing; but the Bolshevists go further than he did, though much of his teaching is as the basis of their own abstract principles, very abstract and utterly disregarded. These Bolshevists, then, are Maximalists, the most advanced of all. But alas! Lenin and Trotsky —the sublimer faith is not for them; their hearts are far away, with greed, tyranny, despotism, selfishness, insincerity, and every human disqualification in their company. Their Bolshevism is merely destructive; they have no constructive programme. These Russian leaders know how to exploit the weaknesses and the stupidities, the simplicities and the trust, of the proletarian mass. They have done it enormously for their own advantage so far, and having placed their agents everywhere, they have a vision of obtaining such an empire for themselves, such a world dictatorship, as was far beyond the dreams of any other tyrant. Keen exploiters, they start unfortunately with one great argument in their favour, of which the civilisation of the time, the people of our modern governmental systems, in all their stupidity, their insincerity, and their political mischief-making and bungling, have made them a present. The world, meaning our social and governmental systems, has really asked for Bolshevism, and must not complain that, at the present moment, which seemed indicated for it, it has come. Bolshevism pretends it would destroy those systems and start afresh with something new, upon original foundations, and not something that has been a slow building-up and patching, on a basis of rule which is contrary to much modern thought and ideas of freedom; and when Bolshevism proposes to destroy the system, it asks what there is in that system's record, particularly its recent record, that entitles it to consideration. The evolution of government through all the ages has come to such a pass of domestic and international intrigue, secret diplomacy, secret treaties, super-Machiavellian tactics in all matters of State, that it has culminated in the most ghastly war that the world has known, a repetition of which some years hence might conceivably destroy humanity itself. 'There you are,' the Bolshevists say, or seem to say. 'There are the fruits of your modern system! This is what you work for! And it is not a mere matter of kings, as some of you seem to think. It is the bourgeoisie as much as the others, or more. The bourgeoisie is hateful, insincere, decayed, corrupt. There is no health in it. Your bourgeoisie and its capitalists, in all their selfishness, their cupidity, their wickedness, have caused this war. There is your modern system! You do not like it? Then away with it and everything belonging to it! We will start afresh from the beginning.' The bourgeoisie, indeed, has placed this strong card in the hands of the Bolsheviks, and the latter in their game of gulling are making the most of it. For the bourgeoisie—that controlling class which is not of kingly origin, but the richer, more capitalistic, more authoritative and governmental of what we may call the common people—the Bolsheviks, and indeed most fairly advanced Socialists, have the supremest contempt. It is the bourgeoisie, those who are beyond the democrats but below the nobles, who, with all their insincerity, as the Bolsheviks see them, are responsible for most of the world's blunders and sufferings in modern times. So the Bolsheviks would finish them all. If there was thus a Bolshevik movement of any kind to be started anywhere, clearly Russia, a great country with infinite possibilities, where the people were starved under the worst of autocracies, was the place for it to be started. It was the natural birthplace of Bolshevism. And there Bolshevism rose long before the war, but moderately then. The fires of the European conflict heated it to whiteness.

* * *

See how Bolshevism began. Russia was slow to come by any sort of Socialism; the people were a backward lot, for all their sorrows, and there were difficulties. Yet Russia was the first to make its attempt to govern a European country on extreme Socialist principles. Some twenty or thirty years ago what were called *soyuzy borbi*, or fighting unions, were formed in various Russian cities, not by the workpeople, who knew nothing of the Socialist idea, and perhaps, bearing their burden meekly, thought less, but by the students and the intellectuals, who regarded this at first rather from the ethical standpoint more as a matter of high politics than as one of necessity, of life. The *soyuzy borbi*, however, set out to teach the workmen, encouraged them to demand higher wages, and supported them in their struggles. That was the beginning. Lenin seemed to come forward a little less than twenty years ago, when the first militant Socialist organisation was established. Lenin! His influence has been a sad one for the world; he is surely the most evil genius that a proletariat has followed; but, that granted, it is no less certain that he is a man of most extraordinary force of character, of indomitable will, one of the strong men of the age. Right away back at that time when Europe

was in peace and the only war in the world was that with which Britain was engaged in South Africa, a war which Russia hardly heard about, Lenin began his effort. A man of arresting appearance he was. Prematurely bald, they said, those who met him then or soon afterwards when he passed into exile—not to return until the Russian Revolution was established—the few hairs on his head were arranged in their special places with a keen proprietorial care. His face was somewhat rubicund, his nose a little blunt, his eyes small but piercing and suggestive of great determination and fixity of purpose, and his mouth was strongly set. He had a moustache, and a bit of a reddish beard on the chin only. Some said in France that he had the appearance of a country lawyer in the time of the Second Empire. Yet he seemed to be of good birth and had nice manners. They say that in the long years of exile that followed after 1905 he became in some ways much coarser, and that the pure intellect and force that he possessed in his first period in Russia became transformed into a kind of frenzy, that those little eyes burned with a sort of madness, that his enthusiasms had mastered and transformed him, that he had passed beyond reason. Such was a definite impression. Lenin and an associate, Martov, began their serious work in 1900, when they started a little Socialist newspaper in Switzerland, which they called the *Iskra*, the Russian word for 'Spark.' They had to prepare it in Switzerland because such a thing could not be done in Russia, and it was then circulated by various means among those whom it concerned. There were daring men associated with this enterprise, and they ran risks in smuggling the sheet into 'Holy Russia,' the land of the Czar, the 'Little Father,' whom all the people were supposed to love, according to the nonsense that used to be written. The object of the paper was to set Socialism at work in Russia as a definite organisation; it told the people that there was no happiness for them until they had seized the reins of government.

* * *

Lenin began as he meant to go on, and as he is acting now, in the way of the dictator. The simple Socialist and others preach equality and so forth, but some of the chief ideals of democracy fitted not well with the view of Lenin as to how Russia might be taken—and afterwards who knew what? He had his own ideas on the establishment of Socialism; and the chief one was that it should be done through autocracy and blood. 'See,' says he to-day, 'where now is the Socialist or the anarchist who dares to say that you can achieve Socialism without civil war? He would have lost his reason. Look through the entire literature of all the more or less responsible Socialistic parties, factions and groups, and you will find no responsible and earnest Socialist writing such nonsense as that Socialism can ever come in otherwise than by civil war, and that the landowners and the capitalists will relinquish their privileges. It would be a degree of simplicity bordering on imbecility.' Along with this principle went that of the necessity of dictatorship. The new Socialist organisation (secret as it was) that gradually came to life in Russia as the result of those 'sparks' which set the people thinking and then acting had few of the ways of democracy about it. It seemed to be the principle that there should not be democratic control of the committees by the general body, but dictatorship of the secret committees over the masses. They had to fight soon for their autocracy; and, strange to say, the first struggle for their principle engaged in by those autocrats was made in London sixteen years ago, and it was then that the Bolsheviks came out definitely as a party in opposition to others. The new Russian Socialists, being unable to hold a conference in Russia, held it in London, and the Bolsheviks strove, and successfully, having the majority, for the dictatorship of the party organisation; while another section, the Mensheviks, were for more democratic methods that would admit the workmen to an equality with the intellectual leaders of the party. 'No,' said the Bolsheviks; 'the extreme revolutionary character of the party must be preserved, and, if necessary, all democracy must be sacrificed for it.' What a whirligig! Here was inconsistency, if you like. To Socialism and the most perfect democracy through dictatorship of the most ruthless kind! It seemed a hard way. But Lenin was a hard man. He knew his mind, and he cared no more for the sacrifice of men than did Kaiser William. About a year ago he made an official report to his executive committee in which he said that it would be the greatest folly and the most stupid Utopianism to imagine that the transition from capitalism to Socialism is possible without compulsion and without dictatorship. He said that the Marxian theory had long ago and in the most definite way taken a stand against such petty bourgeois-democratic and anarchistic nonsense. The Russia of the present time, he said, had confirmed that Marxian theory so plainly, passionately, and impressively that only men who were hopelessly stupid or firmly determined to shut their eyes to the truth could any longer be mistaken in the matter. The conquest and abolition of capitalism could only be brought about by ruthlessly overcoming the opposition of the exploiters. Every great revolution, and especially the Socialist revolution, was unthinkable, he said, without an internal war—that is, civil war—which implied even greater disorder than external war. During the revolutionary disturbances of 1905 the Bolsheviks made their intentions very clear. The Mensheviks were for moderate measures, urging that Russia was a backward country, and could

not leap all at once from a feudal autocracy to a Socialist Republic, but must approach the goal by degrees. The Bolsheviks, however, said that they would not have a mere political revolution in Russia, but would lead the way to a general social revolution throughout Europe and perhaps the world. The effort of 1905 having failed, they set to work upon a scheme for a new rising. Theirs was an illegal movement, and they had to work in secret in Russia. Their leaders went abroad and organised from there. Lenin was the chief; he has always been that. He was the founder of the Bolsheviks, and their dictator from the first day. That was the beginning of Bolshevism. Later we may consider some other points about it.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE rain was still falling with sodden persistence. Few foot-passengers were to be seen, and these were all hurrying to their destinations. I looked up and down the street, and saw, plainly enough, the backs of the four men about thirty yards away on my left. The two ringleaders were in front under an umbrella, the other men a couple of yards behind, arm-in-arm, with their coat-collars turned up. All were walking fairly quickly, and none of them gave so much as a glance behind. They held on their way to the junction of Old Compton Street and Wardour Street, where they slowed down to a saunter. Next moment I heard the honk! honk! of a motor-car behind me. It passed, slowed down, and drew up abreast of them. With a word to the chauffeur, my acquaintance of the Naples train opened the door. The other three men got in. He raised his hat in a farewell salute, and the car started, leaving him on the kerb.

He tossed his cigarette into the street, settled his umbrella well down to his broad shoulders, and set out at a brisk pace. I followed him. From Piccadilly Circus he went down the Haymarket, and thence, *viâ* Cockspur Street, steered down the west side of Whitehall. It was easy to follow the big figure with its light waterproof, but I was wary, and did not come too near him. Unsuspecting, he never once looked round, nor did he slacken his steady pace until he came to Parliament Street, where he hesitated for a moment or two, and then bore to his right through some side-streets. In one of them a restaurant-by-day—pub.-by-night threw a cheerful patch of light on the steaming pavement. Near it he slowed down, looked at his watch, and then disappeared through its red-curtained swing-door. I took shelter on the other side of the street, well in the shadow, in a doorway which commanded a view of the house. There I lit a pipe and composed myself to wait, pluming myself on my great luck in having run across and shadowed my man.

The weather was of the kind that clears the streets of humanity, other than cabmen and policemen in oilskins or derelicts without them. My collar was sodden; I was cold and uncomfortable; but in the doorway I was out of the rain, and I made the best of it, for if I could track my man to his lair, there would be little difficulty in interesting Scotland Yard. From a passer-by I learned that I was in York Street, Westminster. Half-an-hour passed. The red-curtained door often opened and closed, but there was no sign of the rascal's burly frame. Another half-hour crawled by. By this time I was chilled to the bone, but I was resolved not to lose trace of him, and at last my patience was rewarded. The Westminster chimes heralded the hour. Big Ben boomed ten o'clock, followed by a great chorus of lesser voices. The mellow vibration from their deep throats had scarcely died away when the swing-door opened and my man appeared, lurching slightly as he stepped into the wet street. Excellent! I thought. It was plain that he had been at the bottle, and if the visit to the bar had blunted his wits, so much the better. It was now a hundred to one that I should be able to mark him down.

Keeping my side of the street in the shadow of the towering bulk of Queen Anne's Mansions, I followed him. Every dozen yards or so he would sway a little, then pull himself together and start off again with the ludicrous erectness that often labels the half-drunk. Once, undecided as to his bearings, he stood for a long minute in owlish meditation. Then, apparently having made up the remains of his mind, he lurched off again, going straight on until he came to a narrow, ill-lit court on his left, into which he turned. Quickening my pace to avoid losing sight of him, I had just arrived at the junction of the street with the court, when I caught sight of him standing near a lamp-post, unsteadily trying to light a cigar. I turned abruptly, and nearly collided with a couple of men who suddenly appeared out of nowhere. A hoarse voice said, 'Beg pardon, guv'nor!' The hum of a motor-car sounded near. A swift sense of danger clutched me, but before I could draw another breath I got a most workman-like, sledge-hammer blow on the point of my chin. A confused impression of being lifted like a baby, of blurred faces round me, the slam of a door, and then a horrible feeling of sinking into a fathomless black depth are all that I remember.

How long elapsed before my senses began to creep back I cannot tell. The first thing I was

conscious of was a steady and continuous humming in my ears. Also, there was a fierce eye glaring into mine. It was large and unblinking, and I could not get away from it. My dazed wits were groping round the staring eye and wondering what it was, when a voice, sounding thin and far away, said, 'Drink,' and I felt a flask held to my mouth. I swallowed some good brandy and came to myself with a gasp. The steady hum was explained. I was in a motor-car; the fierce eye was an electric light above me; and I was lying on my back on the floor. Presently an arm was put in mine and helped me to a seat, where I blinked for a minute, feeling very queer and dizzy. Sitting opposite to me was the man whom I had just been following, and beside him the two underlings.

'You are better, I hope, Signor Forbes?' he said. The sound of his suave bass voice and the sight of his carved grin filled me with nausea and anger, which must have been reflected in my face, for next instant I was looking into the barrel of a revolver.

'You must not raise your voice, unless you do not wish to see daylight again.'

His own voice was not raised. It was pitched in an ordinary conversational tone, but the little black sparks of his eyes watched my every movement.

'Nor need you ask any questions,' he went on. 'These and their answers will come in good time. Meanwhile, be assured that no harm will befall you now or in the future if you are a sensible man. We know you are unarmed. We took the liberty of searching you. You agree to refrain from raising your voice?'

I nodded. I was a little tired of the revolver-muzzle near me; but although I was still half-dazed, every minute was pulling me together.

Gradually I pieced together the events of the evening. Was this the man whom I had last seen come out of the York Street bar and lurch along the street? His eyes and his voice were clear. His hand was uncomfortably steady—the revolver had not wavered a hair's-breadth. There was no doubt about the scoundrel's alertness and sobriety. Not a trace, not a whiff, of alcohol from him suggested the opposite. Ruefully, I recognised that I was no match for him in cunning. I had been cleverly trapped. From the moment I had faced him in the restaurant he had planned my capture. His drunkenness was a ruse. He had counted on my following him, and I, the shadower, had been shadowed.

'You have a mobile countenance, signore,' he purred as he lowered the revolver and shook a fat finger playfully at me. 'It betrays self-reproach. I detect more than a little chagrin in it. In fact, I suspect you are in a towering rage.'

'What is the meaning of this outrage?' I tried to speak resolutely, but my voice was weak and quavering. The men's faces spun round me, and I felt uncomfortably like fainting.

'Gently! Gently! Compose yourself, Signor Forbes. You are not fit to talk, as yet,' said the smooth voice.

He watched me for a few minutes until I showed signs of recovery.

'You have invited attention to yourself, which you no doubt resent,' he continued in his oily, rich bass. 'But consider! Having tried, unsuccessfully, to inveigle a peaceful citizen' (this with a complacent grin) 'in conversation, you watched him in the "Bon Goût," and followed him, not, perhaps, with intelligence, but with a certain wooden persistence. The peaceful citizen, however, regarded this as a liberty, and, while you were shivering in the rain, arranged that you should have the opportunity of offering him, in the strictest privacy, a full explanation of your conduct.'

'Was it necessary for this that I should be knocked senseless and kidnapped?'

'Perhaps not necessary, in the strict sense,' he said, inclining his big head judicially. 'No, I prefer to call it prudent. Yes! Prudent is the word. My dear sir, what would you have done in the circumstances? I confess the poetic justice of the situation appeals to me.' He chuckled softly. 'Come! I am no sour dullard, as I hope you may discover. We can set you down in comfort near your own home, if you convince us that you are a man willing to listen to reason.'

His voice and eternal smile could not hide something ruthless in his every fibre. Notwithstanding his bland and easy manner, I felt that he had about as much conscience as a rattlesnake. In the Naples train he had passed for an agreeable, garrulous, chance acquaintance. Now his face was hateful. I was almost glad of the other men's presence. To have been alone with this smooth creature would have been like sharing the cage of a watchful reptile.

I found my tongue once more. 'Where are you taking me? I warn you that you shall pay for this.'

'A little trip to the country is proposed. You may suffer inconvenience, the precise amount of which depends, as I hinted to you, on the sense of justice you possess.'

'Justice!'

'On your common-sense, then,' he went on with a shrug. 'As for my paying for the disorganisation of your affairs, I hope this will be adjusted between us in a little "give-and-take," like sensible men. Permit me, however, to suggest that I cannot enter further on a discussion, however interesting, in the presence of my subordinates. You will be acting wisely if you compose yourself and, meanwhile, keep silent.'

The man's assurance, the leisurely boom of his veneered phrases, and his crafty grin fairly goaded me into losing my temper. I stormed at him, telling him that he and his gang were

known, and that my friends would speedily run them to earth. I called him names until I was tired, and the futility of it choked me; but the only reply he vouchsafed was to switch off the electric light. There he sat in silence, his face in the shadowy corner looking like some evil heathen god's.

(*Continued on page 279.*)

THE WAR-BALL.

By Bart Kennedy.

FOR a part of a second it was poised high in the air. The players were watching it. Then it began to come down. The tension that was upon the spectators and the players was such that parts of seconds were as seconds. The ball seemed to fall slowly.

It was down now on the field, and the players were upon it. No, they were not players. They were fighters—fighters as truly as if they were engaged in a life-and-death struggle. This big, elliptical ball! They were fighting for all that was in them for the mastery of it, side against side, fifteen against fifteen. Thirty fine, hard young men were struggling together upon this playing-field. They were fitting themselves to enter the dread world-struggle wherein the referee was the grisly figure of Death.

This elliptical ball was a symbol of the world itself—the world for the mastery of which vast armies were now fighting. The ball was a symbol of life's eternal struggle. The symbol of fighting, of change, which is the condition of the existence of life itself.

'Well played! Well played! School-house! School-house!'

These cries were ringing out over the field from those who were watching, and who were as much in the fight as the actual players. The air was electric with excitement. Every one was thrilled with the glorious contest.

'Day boys! Day boys! School-house! School-house!'

'Day boys! Day boys! School-house! School-house!'

Up again in the air was the ball. It sailed and sailed, spinning on its axis, on and on, as a world going through space. Evans had propelled it with a mighty drop-kick from the twenty-five line. On and on it went, spinning. And it passed in its flight over the cross-bars.

'Well kicked, sir! Well kicked, sir!'

Moments passed of a rushing and a struggling that were too quick for the eye to follow in detail. Outwardly it seemed but as a confusion of motion. But in this confusion there was exact purpose and plan. Behind it was definiteness. The flurry and the crush and the hustle of it were but as the flying outer garments of a swift-moving, balanced organism that was working harmoniously within.

Suddenly the sound of a whistle pierced through the air, a sound keen and sharp as the edge of a sword.

And all at once there was a lull in the fighting. The forwards came and packed themselves down, head to head—eight against eight. The scrum! This curious formation brought to my mind the picture of the Roman soldiers of old packing themselves down beneath their shields to advance upon a position. The scrum had the look of a strange machine-being—made up of arms and bodies and legs. There was about it a suggestion at once primal and sinister. It was as some composite monster of fighting; a combined human machine, alert and threatening; a thing of legs and backs and arms.

The ball was thrown into the centre of it, and all at once the scrum was a chaos of violent struggling. Here was fighting indeed—actual, physical, bodily, intimate fighting; a closer fighting than the fighting of hand-to-hand; head against head, arm against arm, leg against leg, body against body; a confusion of pushing and shoving and crushing. It lasted no more than five seconds, but they were seconds that were hard and vivid and concentrated.

And now came a bit of fine, quick play.

The ball was heeled out, and the scrum broke. The half picked up the ball and threw it to a three-quarter, who took it on the run. Like lightning he went till he was collared. As he was collared, he passed it to his neighbour, who ran with it till he was collared in turn.

This last three-quarter passed it to the wing, who swerved round the full-back, and scored a try. A fine bit of play!

In this combat here on the field there was no anger. But it was fighting none the less for that. It must not be forgotten that the most effective fighting of all is cool, methodical, unangry fighting. Anger in fighting is a mist that is against the clear directing of the forces that are under one's command. These fine young men were learning the secret that lies behind successful fighting: to fight without anger.

'Go low! Go low! Go—go low!'

Ah, that was a good collar indeed! Down came the player, sprawling. 'Follow up! Follow up! Follow up!' The war-ball was going ahead, moving in front, a thing living. 'Feet! Feet! Feet!' The ball was being dribbled. It was being passed and passed. 'With you! With you!' This from the players who were on the attacking side. On

and on and on. The ball jerked along in short, spasmodic movements. It was a glorious, exciting time of seconds. 'School-house! School-house! Day boys! Day boys! Day—School-house! Day! School!' The field was ringing with the shouting.

Again the sound of the whistle cut through the air. And again came the scrum. And again was the chaos of violent struggling. Heads and legs and arms and backs were going. And the ball was heeled out and the scrum was broken and dissolved.

Up in the air—how evenly and beautifully the ball sailed! Evans had propelled it again with a mighty drop-kick. A fine lad, this Evans! A powerful figure of a fighter! A fine lad!

They were all fine lads, lads that Britain might well be proud of. And they were learning to fight for their country here on this playing-field. They were passing through a searching test, a test mental and physical. They were fitting themselves to take their places in the fight for the honour and the existence of their country. Good lads!

The game was over. Which side won? Which side lost? Oh, that mattered nothing. It was the game, it was the sport, that was the thing. They had all won!

The losing side gave three cheers for the winning side. And then the winning side gave three cheers for the losing side. So you see they were all sportsmen.

Every man of 'em!

THE BLOWER OF BUBBLES.

PART V.

XII.

AND so, partly with banter, but with many moments that were tense with feeling, we talked while the afternoon wore on. Norman was in the midst of some anecdote of either Sindbad or Mr Jones, when he paused, and a look of delighted anticipation lit his countenance.

'That's the whistle,' he said. 'The train's right on time to-day.' He sighed happily, as a lover about to meet his sweetheart after a long absence.

'Sindbad,' he cried, 'pipe all hands to tea. Tell Mrs M'Gillicuddy we'll have it in the music-room.'

Telescope under his arm, the worthy buccaneer—for I am convinced he sailed under Captain Kidd—shuffled into the house, and the noise of the train could be distinctly heard as it emptied its crowd of one or two at the little station.

'I shall go and open the gate,' I said, but he stopped me.

'He is with her, Pest.'

'Who?'

'Wait. . . . I have kept a surprise for you.'

A minute later I saw his wife at the end of the path as she waved to him. She came through the leafy garden with a grace of movement that made the scene a delicate, colourful picture, and even before she had reached us I could see that her beauty was as exquisite, as perfect, as an orchid's. All sacrificed to an invalid. . . . .

With the tenderest of smiles in her eyes, which were blue as the sky, she advanced towards us and kissed him; and I, who detest things sentimental as I would the plague, thought it was the loveliest tribute I had ever seen. Before he could speak, she turned and gave me both her hands

'I won't apologise,' she said, and her voice was as sweet as a running brook, 'because I know you both enjoyed your talk of old times the better for my absence.'

'It was a wonderful afternoon,' I said, 'but it would have been doubly so with you here.'

And then I, the Pest, the cynic, the modernist, stooped and kissed her hand. It seemed the natural thing to do, and she accepted it with the understanding heart that Nature had given her.

'But, Lilias, where is the lad?'

'Oh,' she laughed gaily, 'the station-master kept him a moment to show him an entirely new button he had thought of. But here he is now.'

Coming up the path, carrying a couple of parcels, was a boy of, perhaps, ten years of age. His hair was golden and curly, and his eyes had a dreamy look that contrasted strangely with the strength of his chin. He had the poise and the appearance of a thoughtful, well-bred youth; but there was something, I could not say what, that told me he was not English.

He touched his cap to me as he came on the lawn, and smiled cordially to Basil.

'Do you remember the gentleman?' asked Norman.

The boy shook his head and unconsciously moved nearer to the woman, who placed her hand on his shoulder.

'You shouldn't forget each other,' laughed Norman, 'for once he played the drums under your baton.'

A few minutes later we went in for tea, the boy and Mrs Norman going first. I waited while Sindbad prepared to move the invalid, and then turned to him for an explanation.

'Klotz was killed,' said Norman swiftly, 'and his wife died a month later, after she heard of his death. We have adopted Siegfried as our ward.'

XIII.

That night a storm came up from the sea, and the house rattled and shook in the clutch of a November gale. The trees that looked like palms swayed and bent before the wind, and the many-coloured leaves in the garden fled like refugees before an attack, and covered the ground with their quivering bodies.

We were gathered in the music-room, the cosy warmth from a fire of logs making pleasant contrast to the snarling wind outside. The evening had been a memorable one. The woman whose beauty was as delicate as an orchid's had charmed us with her voice, her playing; charmed us without effort or knowing how.

From a lounge, Norman's vivacity, which always had in it the quality of sympathy, illuminated everything that happened. When she sang a little extract of the eighteenth century, '*Bergère Légère*,' it was he who knew that it had been a favourite of Marie Antoinette's. When she played the love theme which Puccini gives the strings in the first act of *Madame Butterfly*, it was Norman who, by a dozen deftly chosen words, created the atmosphere of Japan, and brought before us the cruel tenderness of Pinkerton's love for Cho Cho San. When Siegfried played MacDowell's conception of 'Mid-ocean,' Norman recalled in a moment the genius of America's greatest composer, the genius that had finally crossed the thin barrier to insanity. From that we talked of the sea, while the wind howled outside, and I spoke of the many moods of blue that coloured it in a single day, and, without giving the effect of quotation or of monologue, he brought his artistry into play with three lines of Keats's sonnet 'Blue.'

Whenever any of us spoke, his sensitive, rhythmic intellectuality seemed to hover about us, acknowledging thought where it struggled to the surface, adding some subtle touch of colour when our efforts seemed too drab. Under its influence we talked our best, we thought our best, we were our best.

At nine o'clock Siegfried rose to go to bed, and advanced to shake hands with me.

'Well,' I said, 'and do you still intend to be a conductor?'

He smiled a little self-consciously.

'There is much to learn,' he said, 'and—I do not want to leave my home.'

Norman lit a cigarette—his old mannerism when emotions were taut.

'Parents,' he said, 'and quasi-parents like us, march straight towards loneliness. Our greatest concern is to have our children ready to leave us as soon as they hear the call of the world, knowing that such a moment will be the proudest and the saddest of our lives.'

'Good-night,' said Siegfried to me. 'Good-night, Uncle Bubbles.' He turned wistfully to Mrs Norman, who smiled and linked her arm in his.

'Won't you come along?' she said to me. 'Siegfried is very proud of his room, and would like you to see it.' It was her way of hiding her knowledge that the little chap was frightened by the storm. So we saw him safely in bed, and admired his books, and wished him pleasant dreams. We had just left his room and were about to descend the stairs, when we paused as the sound of rain beating against the house came to our ears. We hurried about for a few moments seeing that all windows were closed, and were going to rejoin Norman, when I stopped her.

'Mrs Norman,' I said haltingly, 'it is never easy for an Englishman to express the emotion he feels, but may I tell you how touched I am by your devotion to your husband? Without you, his life would be—unbearable.'

She did not smile or protest, but her eyes looked straight into mine.

'To live day by day,' she said slowly, her fingers playing with a necklace that hung about her full white throat, 'near a soul like Basil's, to commune with a brain like his . . . to feel the inspiration of his nature that is so in tune with the beauty of the world, is a happiness few women can experience. If it were not too cruel, I could feel thankful for his wound that has given him so completely to me.'

I stood by her on the creaking stairs as the rain swept in torrents against the house, and her murmuring tones mingled with the sounds of the storm.

'Perhaps you cannot understand,' she said gently, 'but loving Basil as I do, and having him dependent on me, is a selfish happiness that only a woman could really know.'

And out of the night a truth came to me that, though it never, never could be mine, the most precious thing in this world is a woman's heart.

XIV.

It was eleven o'clock, and Basil Norman and I were alone. The storm had subsided, and, through the sound of the rain, we could hear the waves breaking against the shore.

'I do not want Siegfried to go to school yet,' he was saying; 'he is so full of promise and latent genius that I dread the risk of having it all standardised into what we call a public-school man. I am coaching him in languages and the three R's, but more than anything else I want him to form his own conception of the scheme of the universe, so that when he takes his position among the world's musicians—as I am confident he will—he 'll have the echo of what he interprets in his own breast. Music is so vast, yet musicians, as a class, are people of little depth.'

'Has the lad a chance in England with his German name?'

'Yes. England must realise that genius has no nationality.'

'What was Siegfried like when you took him first?'

'He was arrogant, sullen, and in his child's brain was the knowledge that his father had fought against us. To make him forget his unhappy past, and partly to satisfy a caprice of my own, I—well, you would say I blew bubbles. We invented a little city of make-believe. From the hill at the back of the house you can look down on all these houses, and at dusk, when the mist rises from the sea and the windows begin to glow with light, it is quaint enough for a study by Rackham. In our little City of Bubbles there dwelt such celebrities as Aladdin, Jack the Giant Killer, Midshipman Easy, Peter Pan, poor Wilde's Happy Prince, and Heaven knows how many more. They were very real to Siegfried and me, and Lilias used to have many a laugh over the troubles of our little family. But I had not counted on Sindbad; he was filling Siegfried with stories of buried treasure and men forced to walk the plank (all of them absolutely authenticated by the narrator), and the lurking Prussian began to appear. He stole down to Ventnor and bought books on the war . . . he began to glory in the stand Germany was making. So I was not surprised when, one day, he suggested that we should play soldiers.

'Pest, you should have been there. Siegfried was Napoleon, and I was Hindenlorff, his Chief of Staff. Sindbad was given command of a naval brigade, and was also in charge of a large fleet lying in hiding to cope with the Spaniard, should he emerge. In addition to these modest duties, he had to wheel my chair. Lilias came along as a composite representative of all the women's services. Napoleon's plans were that we should attack the City of Bubbles, which was being defended by a heavy force on the fringe of the hill. I omitted to mention our flying cavalry in the person of Mr Jones; but owing to a misunderstanding of our objective he waged separate war on birds all afternoon, inflicting no casualties, but covering an immense area of ground. We began the attack about half-a-mile back; but when Napoleon ordered Sindbad's naval brigade into action, we were unable to find him, until Mr Jones discovered him behind a rock, scrutinising a passing merchantman through the inevitable telescope. After some persuasion, we induced Sindbad to attack, but half-way to his objective he remembered that he had left his pipe in the kitchen, to which he repaired, leaving his troops in the air, as we used to say in France, and taking away the mobility which, as Chief of Staff, I needed urgently. There is no question that Sindbad possesses imagination, but it is an unreliable one.

'To make the story short, we won by a brilliant ruse of Napoleon's, who got word to the enemy that the tuck-shops in Ventnor were being evacuated, which was as effective as his famous "*Sauve qui peut*" at Waterloo, for they fled ignominiously, and we captured the city, after inflicting heavy casualties.'

I looked at him and waited. Behind the nonsense I could see some serious thought was lurking, but what I could not conjecture.

'The next day,' he resumed, 'Siegfried was tired, and asked me to tell how Peter Pan frustrated the pirates. "Peter is dead," said I. Siegfried suppressed a sob, and asked when he died. "He was killed in our attack," I said. After a long pause, he mentioned the probability of Mr Midshipman Easy being at home. "He is dead," said I. Again his question, and again my answer: "He was killed in our attack." He went out; but on going to bed that night he asked if Cinderella was really very pretty. "Not now," I said, "for she is lying dead." Does it seem ludicrous, Pest? That night he cried himself to sleep, and it is not easy to listen to a youngster's sobs when you know that a word from you will do away with them. For two long dreary weeks our City of Bubbles was a City of the Dead. . . . Then I suggested that we play soldiers again and make another attack. After all, Pest, it isn't every Tommy gets a chance of being Chief of Staff. I wish you could have seen his face. It was as though I had struck him with a whip, and he left me without a word. That afternoon the Wizard of Oz visited our city and brought them all back to life. That was some months ago, and our little dream-world is only a serio-humorous memory for Siegfried and me now. But during that night he cried himself to sleep I think the Prussian in him died.'

For several minutes we listened to the rain.

'The greatest of the Arts,' said Norman, very slowly, 'is life. I don't think our writers, our painters, our men who dream in bronze realise that. If they did, it would not be said that the English are the least artistic people in the world; for you and I know that is not true. Scott going to his death in the Antarctic snow was a great artist. The sailor standing to one side when the last boat is filled, and those six Tommies at Grieswald in Germany, holding their ground against a row of bayonets and taking a sentence of two years' imprisonment rather than aid the Hun in making munitions—are they not artists? Where we fail as a race is in our authors, composers, painters, who divorce themselves from the real spirit of England and wonder that the products of their brains quicken no pulse and stir no imagination. Our educationists, our leaders in every movement allied with culture, have too often striven to choke the imaginativeness and blind the eyes of our youth to the beauty of life that is one of its greatest truths. One has but to read the despairing lines written by bereaved mothers for their sons who have fallen, to feel the sorrow of England crying for expression; instead of which, our triumph, our courage, our artistry are mute and inarticulate.'

The rain had ceased, and the wind was moaning over the sea as if it had been balked of its prey.

'Mark my words, Pest,' he said dreamily, 'as a nation we shall have no self-expression until our artists take for their model the greatest of all Arts—*life*.'

A burning ember fell from the grate and lay on the tiled surface of the hearth.

THE END.

PEAT-MOSS AS AN AGRICULTURAL ASSET.

ALTHOUGH the value of peat as an aid to agriculture has long been known, the peculiar attributes of peat-moss are only just beginning to be realised. Peat, generally speaking, is no more than decomposed and compressed peat-moss, but the latter, as used for the bedding of live-stock, is not infrequently mainly composed of sphagnum which has retained its light and fibrous characteristics.

Now sphagnum, particularly when in the form of peat-moss, is a great absorber of moisture. It will drink up water like a sponge, and hold it, even under conditions of excessive evaporation, for a longer period than most substances of the kind. It is, moreover, practically indestructible, as the following instance will show. Twenty-five years ago a layer of sphagnum was entrenched in the subsoil of a garden, the object being to check the extreme summer drought from which the land suffered. Last winter this sphagnum, on being dug up, was found to be almost as fresh as on the day it had been buried.

These two properties of peat-moss being taken into consideration, it follows that if this substance were to be mixed with light, porous soil, the soil would be better able to support plant life during dry weather. The peat-moss would not only absorb and retain natural moisture, but any fertilising elements which it contained, whether from animal or artificial manures, would be retained also. Indeed, unless some 'holding' material in the form of vegetable humus is present in porous soils it is often hardly possible to use many artificial fertilisers at all; certainly not with economy, since the fertiliser is quickly washed down beyond the roots of the plant. Peat has been used by cultivators of light soil with the object of arresting this great loss of moisture and plant food (practically synonymous terms, since vegetable life subsists only on liquid nourishment); but peat-moss is proving of higher value, as its absorptive power is greater and its fibrous texture more lasting.

There is another important feature in favour of peat-moss, and that is, it is more easily obtained and handled than peat. Compressed into bales and extremely light, it can be conveniently carried any distance at a reasonable cost in freightage and trouble, whereas these factors render the use of peat almost impossible save by those who live near the deposits. It is mainly owing to this convenience in transport that peat-moss has so largely superseded straw as a stable litter; and there is no doubt that its power of absorbing the invaluable liquids, so rich in potash, of animal manure has done much towards awakening farmers and others to its peculiar uses as an asset in agriculture.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS

PERFORMANCE OF AEROPLANES PREDICTED BY MODELS.

WHEN an estimate of the power necessary for a new size or type of ship is required, an exact model of the proposed vessel is constructed in paraffin-wax, and towed through a long tank at a speed which corresponds to the desired speed of the full-sized vessel. (What the relation of these speeds is will be shown later.) During this operation delicate instruments register the pull exerted, from which the horse-power necessary for the new vessel can be calculated. Models having proved so successful for predicting the behaviour of ships, it is not surprising that attempts have been made to foretell the performance of projected aircraft by similar means, and a number of model aeroplanes used for this purpose by the Aircraft Manufacturing Company, of Hendon, were exhibited recently at the Royal Institution. Instead of the models being made to fly through the air, however, where their behaviour would be difficult to observe, they are suspended in a wind-channel, through which the air can be made to pass at any speed between twenty and forty miles an hour. In this connection it should be noted that the *corresponding* speed of a model is always much less than the speed of the craft which it represents. In the case of a ship and its model, their *corresponding* speeds vary as the square roots of their lengths; thus, a ship measuring two hundred and fifty-six feet, and having a speed of twenty knots, would be represented by a four-foot model with a speed of two and a half knots. (If the model were towed at twenty knots, her performance would be quite different from that of the full-sized ship.) So it is with aircraft, except that the reduction in speed varies

in a different proportion. The model aeroplanes are carried by instruments which measure the lift, drag, and other features of their 'flight,' for different designs and settings of the ailerons and the rudders. With the aid of suitable formulæ, the data thus obtained can be made to show what may be expected from the full-sized machines. The predictions are very close approximations to the actual results. Thus, for the De Haviland 10A bombing-machine, fitted with two four-hundred-horse-power Liberty engines, the model indicated one hundred and twenty-nine, one hundred and twenty-five and a half, and one hundred and nineteen miles an hour for altitudes of five, ten, and fifteen thousand feet respectively; the actual speeds obtained were one hundred and thirty, one hundred and twenty-four, and one hundred and seventeen miles an hour respectively. In one case the speed foretold by the model was exactly realised. The apparatus for testing the models and their behaviour under varying conditions was designed by Lieutenant R. Rolleston West.

THE CROSS-CHANNEL TRAIN-FERRIES.

Better means of communication between England and France have been suggested from the time of the great Napoleon, to whom a tunnel through which coaches might be drawn by horses was proposed by a Frenchman named Mathieu. So long ago as 1874 the French Channel Tunnel Company began operations from Sangatte, and a gallery a mile and a half long was driven under the Channel. Seven years later a section of nearly equal length was constructed at the Dover end, but the work was eventually stopped owing to the opposition of the British military authorities. More recently a train-ferry scheme was strongly supported, but only the need for the quick transport of war material led to the establishment of this method between the new 'mystery' port of Richborough on the one hand and Calais and Dunkirk on the other, and between the British port of Southampton and Cherbourg and Dieppe on the coast of France. The advantages of train-ferries for heavy through goods traffic are obvious, the time and labour occupied in unloading railway trucks into steamers and discharging the latter into railway trucks again at the other side being entirely eliminated. The steamers which carry the trains across the Channel measure three hundred and sixty-three feet in length, and have a breadth of sixty-one and a half feet over the fenders; while they 'draw' nine feet of water forward and ten feet aft, their displacement being three thousand six hundred and fifty-four tons. They are driven by twin-screws coupled to engines of nearly four thousand horse-power, which give the vessels a speed of about twelve knots (nearly fourteen miles an hour). The four rail-tracks on the deck are capable of accommodating fifty-four ten-ton trucks, having a total weight, when filled, of about eight hundred and fifty tons. Provision is also made for carrying motor-lorries and other road vehicles. Three vessels have been built for these ferry services, and one, slightly shorter, but wider and deeper, was purchased from the Canadian Government, she having been in service on the St Lawrence to deal with traffic subsequently carried by the Quebec Bridge. To enable the trains to run on and off the ferry steamers, bridges, hinged at the shore end and raised or lowered at their outer ends to coincide with the rails on the boats, had to be provided. These bridges range between eighty and one hundred and twenty feet in length, according to the rise and fall of the tide at the various ports. Very special arrangements had also to be made for holding the sterns of the ferry-boats (the sterns being the parts where the boats are loaded and unloaded) accurately in position, so that the ends of the rails should exactly meet those on the bridges. This is done by running the ferry steamers alongside a wooden jetty with a recess at the shore end between this jetty and another short jetty. This recess just admits the stern, and allows the boat to be brought up to the end of the bridge. Experience has shown that the boats can make the crossing safely in any weather that is suitable for the ordinary cross-Channel services. The train-ferries were started early in 1917, and up to the signing of the Armistice over a million and a quarter tons of war material had been shipped from Richborough alone.

WATER-SUPPLIES FROM DEW.

Almost every one must have heard of the famous dew-ponds of Sussex, in which water accumulates, despite the fact that they are fed by no springs, and that no streams run into them. Similar ponds are to be found in the Colesberg district of the Cape Province, in which the water-level rises every night, although no rain has fallen and there is no source of supply other than dew. The fall of dew depends upon the varying power of the air to hold moisture according to its temperature—the warmer the air, the greater its capacity to hold moisture in suspension, and *vice versâ*. At nightfall, therefore, after a hot day, the moisture with which the air has become charged is deposited on every available cold surface. This accounts for the bulk of the dew being caught by grass, which rapidly cools after sundown, whereas the bare ground retains its heat for many hours. These facts have been taken advantage of by Mr George Hubbard, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., and his brother, in the construction of a scientifically designed artificial dew-pond, with a view to demonstrating the possibility of obtaining considerable supplies of water by such means. According to Mr Hubbard's description of this experiment, given recently at a meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects, an area of flat, low-lying

ground, one hundred feet square, was dug out to a depth of eighteen inches, and lined with a four-inch layer of concrete, the surface being afterwards thickly coated with pitch. Next came a layer of fine sand, upon which were laid mica slabs two feet square by two inches thick, and spaced about one inch apart. The whole surface was then flooded with asphalt to a depth of three-quarters of an inch. It should be explained here that mica is an excellent heat insulator. The result on an autumn morning, after a still, clear, frosty night, was a thick coating of hoar-frost over the mica slabs, although very little showed on the grass beside the pond. Later the hoar-frost on the slabs was melted by the sun into hundreds of gallons of water. A noteworthy feature was the absence of hoar-frost on the asphalt above the joints between the mica slabs, these portions, owing to the absence of the mica, not being so well insulated from the ground.

A 'HAY-BOX' DE LUXE.

Several self-cookers working on the hay-box principle have been described in this journal from time to time, some of which can be easily made by amateurs, while others are manufactured in quantity, and may be bought ready for use from the makers. What may be called a hay-box *de luxe* has been placed on the market recently, of which every part has been devised with a view to convenience, high efficiency, and pleasing appearance; in fact, the appliance would form a handsome addition to the equipment of any kitchen. The box proper is of wood, stained and varnished, and is fitted with castors, handles, and a hinged lid with a hasp. It has a height of eighteen inches, and is thirteen and a half inches square outside. Inside is a cylindrical, cream-glazed, earthenware container, having a sunk lid and a flange at the top, which rests on a ring in the upper part of the box, the body of the container passing through and down to within about two inches of the bottom. The space between the container and the box is packed, both at the sides and along the bottom, with special material having a high value as a heat insulator. A flat, square case filled with similar insulating material forms the lower part of the lid of the box, and fits closely, thereby preventing any leakage of heat. Three enamelled pans, holding three quarts each, and fitted with lifting-handles, are provided for each cooker, and exactly fill the container. A fact not always remembered in connection with hay-boxes or self-cookers is that they form excellent ice-chests in summer.

A GAS-SAVING COOKER.

One can almost *see* the heat going to waste in an ordinary gas-cooker. The rise in temperature of the kitchen or scullery in which the cooker is located certainly makes us *feel* it, especially if we place the hand above the cooking-utensils standing on the various lighted rings. In addition, the large volume of air continually passing through the ordinary gas-oven is a great source of waste, as it has all to be heated to the cooking temperature. Several attempts have been made to minimise this loss of heat by the use of small ovens and grillers which fit over the rings at the top of the cooker. Among the most successful appliances for this purpose is the 'Imperial Multicooker,' which by utilising the heat from one gas-ring in the most effective manner cooks a meal that would involve the use of two or three rings, as well as the oven, if it were prepared on the ordinary gas-cooker. Various forms of this appliance are made for use with gas-rings, oil-stoves, and the burners above the domestic gas-oven, but they are all similar in principle. A form complete in itself, called the 'Super-Multicooker,' consists of an oven with a hot plate at the top for boiling, frying, &c. At the back, sides, top, and bottom of the oven are spaces which form one continuous chamber, allowing the heat to circulate freely. A row of burners at the bottom of the space at the back supplies enough heat for the oven and also for boiling or frying on the hot plate above the oven. When the oven is not required, the row of burners can be raised to the top, thereby greatly increasing the heat available immediately under the hot plate. It should be noted, too, that the oven is entirely shut off from the gas-burners; consequently the air inside it is still and pure. It is also moist, owing to the steam arising from the food which is being cooked. In the ordinary gas-oven, the gas-burners are *inside* the oven, and must be continually supplied with air, which becomes charged with foul gases, and passes away through the vent at the top, taking the moisture along with it. When meat is cooked in any oven it is bound to lose weight, owing to the evaporation of the moisture; but if the air is still, the loss is comparatively small. Indeed, tests have shown that the loss in an ordinary gas-oven is more than double that which occurs when an externally heated oven is used. The 'multicooker' for placing over a ring at the top of the ordinary gas-cooker consists of a shallow box, of which the top forms a hot plate, holes round the sides and in the top allowing the burnt gases to escape. In another form of the apparatus a small oven rests on one part of the hot plate, while sauce-pans or kettles occupy the remaining space, plates and cooked foods being kept warm on the top of the oven. Alternatively, the oven may be removed, and the whole of the hot top used for boiling or frying. A slightly modified form of the appliance can be used with the ordinary gas-ring; while another type, provided with legs, fits over a 'Primus' paraffin-stove. Apart from the advantages already referred to in connection with the oven, the main feature of the 'Imperial Multicooker'

is the saving in gas, only one-third of that used in the ordinary gas-cooker being required. Overwhelming evidence on this point is forthcoming from users, and a test carried out by the editor of *Popular Science Siftings* fully confirms the above claim.

CLOTHES FROM PEAT.

Few would consider peat to be a promising substance from which to make clothes, yet a company has been formed at Stockholm for the manufacture of 'fiberuld,' as the textile fibre obtained from peat is there designated. From this substance, with the addition of 30 to 40 per cent. of wool, an excellent cloth can be woven, which, it is said, is hardly distinguishable from pure woollen material. The peat fibre by itself has proved to be very suitable for mats and carpets; with the addition of 10 per cent. of animal hair, felt soles for slippers can be made from it. According to the *English Mechanic*, peat-fibre thread is very strong, having a breaking-strain of over twenty-eight pounds against just under twenty pounds for wool. Professor G. Sellegren, of the Technical High School, Stockholm, is said to have originated the investigations that led to the production of peat fibre.

A NOVEL RIVER DAM.

When a dam is to be constructed across a river, it is usual to divide off a section at a time by means of cofferdams, inside which the work can be carried on with ease and safety. This procedure is very costly, however. A cheaper plan is to form a dam of big stone blocks by simply dropping them into the water, the interstices being filled up with smaller stones and gravel. A variant of this method has been carried out in New Zealand, on the Kawarau River, a deep, swift stream, with steep, high banks. Two huge pillars of concrete were built —one on each side of the river—at the site of the proposed dam, one being sixteen feet square and forty-six feet in height, and the other thirteen feet square and thirty-six feet high, their respective weights being seven hundred and twenty and five hundred and thirty tons. Where the dam is required the current is very swift, as the river has just entered a narrow gorge, in which the water has a fairly uniform depth of seventeen feet. The intention was to fell these pillars across the stream, and the larger has already been successfully thrown into position, resulting in a rise of three feet in the water-level. The operation was carried out by firing a charge of gelignite under the pillar, which literally flung it across the stream, causing the spray to rise to a height of sixty feet. The engineer in charge of the work professed himself entirely satisfied with the result. The object of the dam is to raise the level high enough for water to flow into an intake, whence it will be carried through a flume for about two thousand feet to turbines which are to force water from the river up to a height of one hundred and eighty feet for purposes of irrigation. That the scheme is of some magnitude will be gathered from the size of the delivery-pipes, which measure thirty inches in diameter, and have a total length of over two thousand feet.

LIQUID AIR AND THE WAR.

In an interesting lecture on 'Liquid Oxygen and the War,' given recently at the Royal Institution, Sir James Dewar referred to the Haber process for the fixation of nitrogen, which was used by Germany for producing the nitric acid needed in the manufacture of explosives when her supplies of nitrates from Chile were cut off by our blockade. The process in question consists of passing a mixture of nitrogen and hydrogen at an enormous pressure and at nearly red heat over finely divided iron, whereby some of the two gases are caused to combine into ammonia, which contains one part of nitrogen to three of hydrogen. This ammonia can be obtained by absorption in water or by freezing, while oxidation of it yields nitric acid. Abundant supplies of nitrogen were available, being produced in large quantities by the fractional distillation of oxygen from liquid air; while pure hydrogen, of which huge volumes were required for filling Zeppelins, was obtained by the purification of water-gas. An interesting feature of the process is the part played by the iron in facilitating the combination of the gases into ammonia. In the absence of the iron only very slow combination would take place; in its presence it is brought about much more rapidly, though the metal itself is in no way affected. Used in this way the iron is known to chemists as a catalyst or a catalytic agent. Sir James also touched upon the manufacture of liquid air or oxygen for the use of airmen at high altitudes. Devices for using air in this form for breathing were found in German aeroplanes brought down over London. Liquid air has the advantage of being much lighter than the compressed gas carried in steel cylinders. The liquid was stored in vessels surrounded by a vacuum, as in thermos flasks, the vacuum in this case, however, serving not to keep the contents hot, but cold. Volatilisation was caused by heat, and the air was conveyed by tubes to mouth-pieces. Three methods of heating the liquid and turning it into air as required were mentioned, one electrical, and another consisting of screwing a rod of copper or aluminium into the liquid. In the third method the liquid was simply siphoned out through an adjustable valve into an evaporating-chamber, the heat from the surrounding air being quite sufficient to gasify it. Before being fit for breathing, however, the gasified air had to be warmed in coils, as when first vaporised liquid air is intensely cold.

A WONDERFUL TREE.

It is a question whether there is a more wonderful or more useful tree to man than the carnauba (or carnahuba) tree of Brazil. This tree abounds in the states of Maranham, Piauhy, Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Parahyba, and Pernambuco. It is one of the most stately of the palm tribe, with large fan-shaped leaves. Every part of this tree has some useful or economic value. Its roots have a depurative virtue, while the heart of the young leaves makes a good substitute for cabbage. Its trunk, which is of considerable girth, is employed in the construction of cabins or huts, for which the leaves furnish the roof-coverings. From the pith of the carnauba is extracted a nutritive sediment, which, by fermentation, gives a very agreeable drink. Its fruit serves as a food for man and beast; another portion of the plant yields a kind of sago; whilst the seeds are not only oleaginous, but are roasted as a substitute for coffee. The principal value of the carnauba-tree, however, resides in its leaves. In addition to their use as roof-coverings, very good fibres are extracted from them which are turned to account in many ways. Mats and hats are made from them, as well as the hammocks in general use in the north of Brazil. The leaves, when young, have on their lower surface a layer of powdery matter, which is the well-known carnauba-wax. When the leaves are old and dry this layer of wax is dispersed with the slightest wind. To collect the wax, the leaves must be cut when young, dried in the shade, and then beaten. This wax closely resembles beeswax, and can be used for the same purposes. In the north of Brazil it is largely employed in the manufacture of candles. Carnauba-wax has formed an important item in the list of exports from Brazil for some years, for it is much used in connection with the preparation of gramophone cylinders. After the outbreak of hostilities the demand for it steadily grew for a more war-like purpose, and a considerable increase was noticeable in the quantity exported.

A WISE PRECAUTION.

Acting on the advice of their medical officer, Dr F. W. Alexander, the Metropolitan Borough of Poplar took steps during the recent influenza epidemic which might well be copied by other municipal authorities in case of subsequent outbreaks. The council issued free a supply of their electrolytic disinfecting fluid, and by means of posters explained how it should be used in rinsing out the mouth, gargling the throat, and douching the nostrils, thus destroying or retarding the development of the germs producing influenza and pneumonia. This course of treatment is undoubtedly based on scientific principles, and where the electrolytic disinfecting fluid is not available, any suitable disinfecting mouth-wash may be used instead.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XIV.—*continued.*

VERY few of the Old Army men have plumbed the depths of the New Army. Privately, we think many of them are afraid of our intellects. They seldom get down to earth with us, and often seek refuge in the discipline which can hold us off. They are brave men, and, with a few exceptions, are gentlemen. But they believe we are swashbuckling imperialists, when in reality we are pacifists fighting for peace *now* and—*for ever*. The professional military mind is in many ways admirable. It is honest, direct, and cannot compromise. When it damns, it damns. But it is not elastic; it takes in slowly. Even now, after years of war, you will not get 50 per cent. of Old Army men to give you a correct analysis of our psychology.

At the school we were not understood.

Apparently it is considered necessary to give 'the new fellows' a lot of talk about the King, the Empire, the Cause, and 'the Correct Thing.' This is quite all right when presented by capable men, who will at least recognise that we have been to school. But when an old red-cheeked blunderbuss pops into the school on a visit of inspection, and commences to ladle out this stuff like a jingo orator on a soap-box, we squirm and silently rebel. We hate all this empty talk. Our King, our Empire, and 'the Correct Thing' have nothing to do with the making of this war. It is the Germans' war—the Kaiser's war. Lip-service is of little use to the monarchy or the Empire. We are not flag-waggers. We are plain, home-loving shopkeepers in arms. We do not question the right of King George or ignore the Empire's existence; but we are all determined, with the aid of God, bayonet, and high explosive, to root out the Kaiser, his chiefs, and all their works, because they and their foul gospel mean the moral ruin and the brutal domination of the world. On enlistment, when we held up our hands and swore by Almighty God 'to defend His Majesty, his heirs and successors,' *we meant it;* but we do think that in our terms of service there should be a contract that we be understood.

For all that, you must not believe that we New Army men resent *intelligent* discipline or

intelligent superiors. Oh no! We, I think, have the ability to distinguish between the system and the men who live under it. While we hate militarism, we have a deep and lasting affection for many of the professional soldiers. And it is this personal bond between officers and men that has helped to make the New Army effective. Their views are not our views, but their personal devotion and example are priceless assets in such a war. Indeed, the good officer is usually a good man. What always impressed us was the strong religious convictions of men like Maude, Kitchener, and Robertson. Example is the key-note of the true British officer. There are many instances to prove my contention. General Maude, in Mesopotamia, ordered all his officers and men to refrain from drinking or eating anything offered by a native. Yet, when receiving a native deputation, who offered him the hospitality of the country, he, like a courteous gentleman, realising how hurt and offended these simple natives would be if he refused, took the proffered cup, which reeked of cholera, and—DIED. There is no greater example of chivalry, and it is just that sort of chivalry which has endeared the best men of the Old Army to all in the New.

Again, there is that noble story of an air-raid on London when our barrage was rotten, and somebody in the War Office phoned to an aerodrome for some one to go up.

'We can't. The weather's against us. It's suicide,' replied the air commander.

'You must do something,' was the final order.

The air commander, realising that it simply meant ordering a junior to go to his death, went up himself, and was KILLED!

In Mesopotamia, a naval cutter was ordered to rush a bridge and break the boom across the river. The commander knew it meant death to the man who did it. So he took the hatchet himself, jumped over the bow, and commenced to hack at the hawsers. He was shot DEAD.

Now this sort of thing, and this sort of man, we appreciate. Personal bravery is a quality which can stir and develop the best in tyros at the military game. It was these glorious soldiers who gave the New Army the confidence to go on, the ability to stick it, and showed us the need for some kind of discipline, and the use of comradeship and *esprit de corps* to effect our purpose. What I want you to appreciate thoroughly is this: Militarism is a hateful creed, but the military life does show whether a man has 'guts.' War is not our business as a nation, but in war we, I think, are one of the toughest and bravest peoples on earth. The forte of the New Army is its intelligent grasp of the principles for which we are fighting. But only one British general has said we are out to destroy the brutal doctrines of war.

That general was Sir William Robertson.

Now, at the school we got all sorts of excellent technical stuff which was absolutely necessary, and which we fully appreciated. But we did not get what I have been writing about. We often talked about this. And all of us were agreed that it is dangerous to neglect the frank discussion of the principles, the politics, and the creeds which affect a nation in arms. War to-day is a complicated business. An officer must not only have mastered the technicalities of the military profession; he must be acquainted with the broad principles of high policy which guide the action of his army. He must appreciate the value of *moral*, and the need of cultivating it and sustaining it. But he cannot do so if he ignores the principles for which five millions have enlisted. It is all very well to know how to 'form fours' and 'slope arms;' but if an officer cannot distinguish Hindenburg from Liebknecht, Lloyd George from Lenin, Enver Pasha from the simple Turk, or Clemenceau from Bolo, then he is NOT educated. This knowledge can be given either in pamphlet form or in a couple of lectures. At present the voice of the New Army man is drowned by the louder cries of 'the old school.'

I am only a youthful person at this business, but I do feel that in this great and terrible war we should have an opportunity to pop our ideas into a collecting-box which will be taken direct to the War Office and opened by a bright, sympathetic young soldier of the General Staff.

Sir Henry Wilson will agree.

He, like General Maude, is a man of imagination.

(*Continued on page 284.*)

MOONLIGHT.

CLEAR and splendid is the gleaming
Of the moon upon the deep,
When the weary town lies dreaming
And the winds are all asleep.
I can hear the wavelets dashing
With a low melodious splashing
On the pebbles, silver flashing
From the deep.

Now the moon's bright silver stairway
Stretches out across the sea,
And I think that such a fair way
Straight should lead me, dear, to thee
Up the moonbeam which is nearest
I would climb where light shines clearest
Into Paradise, my dearest,
Up to thee.

DORA NICOL.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE WINGS OF THE MORNING.

By JOHN A. STEUART, Author of *The Minister of State*, *The Red Reaper*, &c.

PART I

I.

IN all circumstances a philosopher ought to be composed. The dominie was a philosopher, yet a glance would have told that he was deeply, painfully perturbed. He sat crouched over his desk, his chin on his hands, his face an epitome of acute distress. For a full half-hour he had sat thus—mute, motionless, miserable. Spread out on the desk before him was a letter, the manifest and immediate cause of his distress.

It was Friday afternoon, and still with the stillness of golden sunshine and perfect summer peace. The schoolroom was as silent as the tomb. Outside among the leaves not a bird twittered; the very winds were asleep. The day's work, the week's work, was done. The scholars had all gone. Nearly an hour earlier the last whoop of the emancipated boys had been swallowed by the all-devouring silence, leaving the master alone with his trouble.

Taking up the letter, he read it for the twentieth time. It was not addressed to him, and, properly speaking, did not concern him at all; yet it had thrown his whole world into confusion as by the sudden convulsive upheaval of an earthquake.

'Poor Margaret!' he murmured, laying down the letter with a sigh that seemed to be torn from the very roots of his being. 'Poor Margaret!'

He rose as he spoke, and stepping to the nearest window, looked out. The school stood high against a background which was a panorama of empurpled hills with peeping Bens behind, now lightly azure in the azure distance. Up there, between him and the sky-line, was Margaret Gordon, as yet unconscious of what the Weird Sisters had spun for her.

'Poor Margaret!' he repeated on a heaving heart-throb. 'My poor Maggie!'

Turning away, he paced up and down the room with jerky irregular step that sounded eerie and hollow in the emptiness. His thoughts were now on another tack.

Early in the afternoon Sir Hector had broken in on the humming babel of scholars and left the fateful letter.

'We can't talk of it now,' said the baronet. 'Come down to the Castle in the evening, and we'll discuss it. Come and dine with me; I am all alone.'

The pair ought to have been separated by all the rigid, impassable conventions which mark off the landed proprietor with wide possessions of 'brown heath and shaggy wood' (mostly brown heath), and a pedigree antedating the Flood, from the village schoolmaster with no patent of nobility save that stamped upon him by his Creator. But, to the confusion of fools and the scandal of snobs, they were fast friends, and often smoked a pipe together in animated, most amicable disagreement. To the discerning public eye the baronet appeared a long, lean relic of feudalism, with the figure of Don Quixote and the temper of Hotspur. To the same discernment the dominie was—just a dominie with a reserved manner, a caustic tongue (if put to it), a deal of superfluous learning, and a love-secret which kept him a bachelor. But the two men had the all-important mutual understanding and appreciation which Cicero forgot to mention when dilating on the essentials of friendship.

'There is not an atom of the toady in our good dominie,' the baronet declared admiringly. 'He neither fawns nor flatters, and he isn't afraid—even of me. When I blow off steam he just smiles. Yes, decidedly I like and respect Thomas Dunning.'

'Fiery and a bit sulphurous whiles,' said the dominie of the baronet. 'No denying it. But I'll tell you this, he's the very man I'd go to for a favour.'

Thus two utterly dissimilar men may admire each other to the point of affection.

The dominie received the invitation to dine with the remark, 'You dress for dinner, Sir Hector; I don't.'

'Confound you, what does it matter how you dress?' was the retort. 'Come in pyjamas if you like, or, if you like, come just in your garters. You must help me in this business. That's all.'

'Of course, if'——

'Never mind of coursing. It's a way fraudulent lawyers have, which I don't like. Some son of Ananias in London has sent me a new

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brand or blend of tobacco to sample. We can test it and talk. Anyway, come.'

II.

The dominie went, and that evening Sir Hector did not dress for dinner. When the servants had gone, and the two were thickly enveloped in smoke, the baronet remarked from the midst of the cloud, 'Well, you'll go and tell her.'

'I'd say it's your place to do that,' was the reply.

The baronet fanned aside the smoke to see if his friend could be in earnest. 'My place! How on earth can I tell her? I put it to you frankly, Dunning, how the devil can a man have the face to sympathise with a woman to whom, as she thinks, he has behaved badly?'

'Not easy for a gentleman, certainly,' agreed the dominie.

'Gentleman!' snorted the baronet. 'We'll let that fly stick to the wall, if you please. You know how things are between us?'

'Yes, I understand she is under notice to go.'

'She was,' corrected the baronet. 'It's a long story. You'll admit Duncan, her late husband, wasn't exactly an angel in temper, especially when he was in drink. If all tales be true, neither am I—even when I'm sober. Maybe even angels fall out whiles, just to clear the atmosphere. Anyway, Duncan and I didn't get on too well together, and it didn't mend matters that M'Watter the factor was always coming to me with tales of arrears of rent. After the husband came the son, and things were worse. As the old dog snarls the young one learns to show its teeth. The father scowled at me; the son defied me. One day I think he was for thrashing me—and his mother a tenant in arrears with rent!'

'Foolish, but not cowardly,' said the dominie significantly.

He thought of another encounter, of which the baronet was ignorant. The young heir, home from Eton for a holiday, met Aleck Gordon. Old feuds took fire, and there was a fight. Eton was the heavier weight, yet Eton suffered defeat—and lied bravely in explanation of results. Ever after the dominie, who knew all, thought well of Eton.

'Aleck Gordon was no coward,' said the baronet decisively. 'We have proof of that. But any fool can be wise after the event. If I was mistaken in him, possibly he was mistaken in me. Two such mistakes, and you have hate in the making. M'Watter was for getting rid of the whole breed, and I consented. That's the extent of my crime. Now there comes this, and—and I'm bowled over. So you'll go and face Margaret Gordon for me, Dunning. Tell her the law's off. M'Watter will be here early to-morrow morning, and I'll tell him; and the lawyer body in Aberfourie will be instructed to the same effect. Honour and gratitude can do no less.'

'Then go and tell Margaret Gordon that yourself,' insisted the dominie. 'It will be one of the finest things you ever did.'

'No I won't, because I can't. Pride, you say. No, sir, cowardice—pure cowardice. You see, she'd be bound to cry, and I'd lose my head and skedaddle. Nice tit-bit for the gossips, eh? No; you'll go. I ask it as a favour. And look here, Dunning, as to the future, let it be whatever you think proper in the circumstances. You see what my boy says—"For my sake, do all you can." There are certain things I cannot do—would that I could; but what I can I will do. It'll be little enough, seeing what I owe. I'd send M'Watter, only he'd be even more of an ass than myself. Besides, I remember that Margaret Gordon and you are old friends.'

'Yes,' said the dominie, with a sudden twitch of the features; 'very old friends.'

'Old friends are best in a crisis,' said the baronet. 'So to-morrow you will do me the favour of going to Margaret Gordon.'

'To-morrow, Sir Hector,' replied the dominie, 'I will go to Margaret Gordon.'

III.

Next morning, after a restless, sleepless night, the dominie rose to face the most trying ordeal of his life. Janet, his elderly, gaunt, and active housekeeper, complained that although she prepared a breakfast 'fit for a prince,' he paid her the ill compliment of leaving it almost untouched.

'And, mercy on us, Mr Dunning,' she cried, coming to a sudden halt before him, 'what's happened that your collar's a' bluidy?'

She recalled his strange aspect of the day before, and was terrified by thoughts of attempted suicide.

'I—I must have cut myself in shaving,' he returned, lamely, as Janet felt.

'Ay,' she said, still cold with the suicide theory, 'razors are unco unchancy things.' It was in her mind to hide his and let him go unshaved—at any rate until he should recover his wits.

He put on another collar and went out, remarking that, as he did not know when he would return, Janet need not trouble about dinner for him. This was confirmation of her worst fears.

'Puir, doited thing, what's come ower him?' she thought, watching him as he went. 'A' last nicht I could hear him tramp, trampin' his room when he should have been sleepin'; an' this mornin' no breakfast, an' a face like a ghost's. It's for the hill he is,' she added, noting his direction, and instantly a cold shiver went through her at thought of a certain tarn of evil name that was just the place for a

would-be suicide. 'A soaked, draigled corp—it fairly gies me the cauld grue juist to think o't.'

She had an impulse to rush after him, and by sheer force, if persuasion failed, compel him to come back.

Lacking courage—for the dominie was not a man to be lightly meddled with—she went inside to her household duties instead.

Meanwhile, all unconscious of the terrors he inspired, the dominie climbed the steep slope above the schoolhouse. Once out of sight, he sat down, took Sir Hector's letter from his pocket, and read it as a man might read his own death-warrant.

'He should have come himself,' he muttered. 'Yes, he should have come himself.' Yet not that either, for, above all things in the world, Thomas Dunning wished to be with Margaret Gordon in this crisis of her fate.

He went on again, cold at heart, though the sun shone warmly. When at last he sighted High Croft nestling in the little green dip of the hills, its windows and whitewashed walls gleaming in the brilliant light, he stopped as if afraid to proceed. Then with a sudden prick of courage he hurried on, like one hypnotised by the very dread and peril of his enterprise.

IV.

Roger the collie spied him from afar, and rushed forth, all bark and bristle; but midway his ears fell back and his tail began to wag joyously. Next instant he was licking the dominie's hand, as in apology for his unpremeditated rudeness. For the master was no stranger at High Croft. A maid followed the dog, gazed a moment at the approaching figure, and disappeared. When the dominie reached the door Margaret Gordon herself was there to welcome him.

'Having a Saturday dander, Tom?' she remarked smilingly, in response to the salutation of the soft slouch-hat. 'It's bonnie among the hills the day, isn't it?'

'Yes; one of the days that come just to show what the Highlands can be in a good mood,' he returned. 'How are you, Maggie?'

In the presence of others she was Mrs Gordon, and he was Mr Dunning; but by themselves she was still Maggie, and he was still Tom.

'I mustn't complain,' she answered, Scots fashion. In the national creed of her country complaint in the matter of feeling is tantamount to a reflection on Providence, which is straitly forbidden. 'Come away in by and rest. It's a warm pull up here on such a day.'

She turned, and he followed her into 'the room,' which in rural Scotland is the equivalent for city drawing-room or parlour. 'You'll be for having something?' she added, setting him a chair.

'No, thank you, Maggie. I haven't long breakfasted.'

'A drink of milk at least,' she coaxed. He had a glass of milk which was nine-tenths cream, not because he was thirsty, but to please her, and incidentally to rally and compose his own fluttering faculties. As he drank he watched her face. When he knew it first that face was radiant with a beauty that might have made Helen jealous; but time and trouble lay heavy upon it, giving it a look of settled, wistful sadness, such as beautiful faces sometimes wear. It wore the habitual look now.

'She doesn't know anything,' he told himself. How was he to tell her?

'Any news from Aleck lately?' he asked in the ordinary tone of ordinary conversation.

'A letter two days ago,' she replied. 'Here it is. Read it for yourself.'

It was a letter written with Cæsarean brevity. The writer was in 'the thick of it,' and he was glad to say the Boches were getting something of what they deserved. He was well, and would write again just as soon as he could. He often thought of High Croft and his mother. She was not to worry. He thought of his friends too, and the night before had dreamed of the master, a funny dream about fighting Sir Hector.

As he handed back the letter the dominie had a painful lump in his throat.

'It's comforting to think he's been spared to me so far,' said Margaret simply. 'God can save on the battlefield as well as on the quiet hillside.'

The dominie coughed, thinking of that other letter in his pocket. Then he blew his nose with a force that was like a sudden explosion; and a close observer might have sworn that a corner of the big bandana handkerchief swept his eyes.

'I happened to see Sir Hector last night,' he said with some difficulty. 'He had just got a letter from young Mr Hector, and he mentions Aleck.'

'Good news?' she asked quickly.

'Yes, good news.' He could say so much truthfully, and the relief was infinite. 'What do you think, Maggie? Aleck's won the V.C.'

'The V.C.!' she repeated. 'That's a big honour, isn't it, Tom?'

'It's the one honour that every soldier covets,' was the reply. 'It's for valour, Maggie—for valour,' he repeated in a thrilling voice. 'The whole army salutes the man who gets the V.C., be he private or general.'

'Ay,' she said, as if trying to understand what she heard. 'Just before going out Aleck was speaking that way. I was wiping my eyes a wee. "Never mind, mother," says he; "maybe I'll get the V.C. Don't be down-hearted. I'll make a proud woman of you yet." That was how he talked.'

'And he's done it,' said the dominie. 'He's done it. You are proud, Maggie. Any woman would be.'

She whipped away a tear; mothers will have moist eyes when they are overcome with joy. 'Yes, as you say, any woman would be proud.

I used to think Sir Hector and the rest of them were a little hard on Aleck. But we'll not speak of that. You'll notice he says nothing about the honour himself.'

The dominie explained that in war-time the postal authorities indulge in vagaries of transit.

'Aleck must have won it just after he wrote,' he said. 'You see, Mr Hector's letter may have had better luck in getting through quick. Anyway, your boy has won the V.C.'

'And what was it for?' she asked eagerly. 'What did Aleck do to win what the whole army covets?'

The dominie regarded her a moment, as if speculating how she would take the answer.

'He saved young Mr Hector's life,' he said then.

'Saved young Mr Hector's life!' she repeated, her eyes wide with amazement.

'Yes. As you know, they have been out there together. In the heat of the fighting Mr Hector was badly wounded, and lay where he fell. When the fight was over Aleck saw him, went out under fire, and carried him back to safety.'

'That was just Aleck all over,' said Margaret; 'and you know what took place between them at home here!' She smiled wistfully; her smile cut the dominie to the heart.

'Aleck didn't stay to think of that,' he returned. 'He just went and did as his own brave and generous heart prompted. That is always the way of heroes.'

'It's hard for his old mother to understand it all,' she remarked, as if such mysteries were beyond her simplicity. 'But Mr Hector wrote it, and so it must be true. What else does the letter say? Is Aleck safe?'

The dominie's heart stood still. In a sense he could answer 'Yes, Aleck is safe,' but not as she would have it.

Her eyes were fixed upon him. She saw that he hesitated. She saw also that his face had become seared and drawn as in a sudden spasm of pain, and her mother's intuition flashed in alarm.

'Tom,' she cried, a quick terror in voice and face, 'you have ill news as well as good. Has anything happened to Aleck? Is he also wounded? Tell me. Don't—don't keep me in suspense!'

He rose and took a step towards her, she, too, rising. He would have taken her in his arms, but that the proprieties forbade. Once she had nestled in them and been rapturously happy, but that was long, long ago, and everything was different now.

'They got in quite safely,' he said, struggling against a choking constriction of the throat. 'Then'—his head swam, and it seemed the air was thick with darting sparks of fire—'then—just as Aleck was laying Mr Hector down, a sniper's bullet'——

'Hit Aleck?' she gasped.

'Hit Aleck.'

'And—and killed him.'

The dominie bowed his head, fearing to look into the stricken, agonised face before him.

V.

When he ventured to look up again Margaret Gordon stood blenched and rigid, one hand clutching the back of the chair from which she had just risen. He took her gently by the arm. 'Sit down, Maggie,' he said softly.

She obeyed mechanically, and the dominie sat beside her. She did not seem to be aware that he was there, that he held her hand and was chafing it in an anguish of sympathy. From her bloodless lips came a low moan, to him the inarticulate cry of a breaking heart.

'Margaret,' he whispered. 'Dear Maggie, the mother of a hero cannot but be brave.'

'Aleck is dead,' she said, as if that were the end of all things.

'He died nobly and gloriously,' said the dominie, striving to keep a steady voice. 'Nobly and gloriously, as the great, the good, and the brave of all ages have wished to die.'

But she could only repeat dismally, 'Aleck is dead—dead. My Aleck is dead, and I cannot even see him.'

Her heart had no room for any other thought.

The dominie had come primed with consolation from the sages. He knew all that Solomon, Socrates, and the rest of them had said on the great questions of life and death. He believed with the Greeks that the beloved of the gods are taken young. He meant to say—what was simple, literal truth—that in his heart he envied Aleck. 'Gone at twenty, a hero who gave his life for another,' he told himself on the way up. '"*Greater love hath no man than this.*" Oh! rare good fortune of the happy boy warrior!'

Heroes, he felt, should die young, while the lustre of glory was still fresh upon them. 'Ere the evil days come,' he had often thought; 'ere the evil days come.' How lucky to spread wings and soar off in the roseate morning, rather than be kept lingering and dawdling into the darkness of night; to escape for ever, without scar or taint, all the corrosions of time, all the malice of fortune! Surely Aleck was fortunate, thrice fortunate, in his going. On his way to High Croft the dominie had said all this and more to himself with absolute conviction and sincerity. But face to face with her, he could not say it to Aleck's mother, not if it were certified wisdom, set with rubies and bound in gold. He could only stroke the hand he held, incoherently murmuring commonplaces of comfort.

At last she suddenly leaned forward upon the table and broke into a storm of weeping; and Thomas Dunning was devoutly glad, for he knew that to the stricken heart tears are salvation.

(*Continued on page 296.*)

THE FUTURE OF FISH AND FISHERIES.

By W. V. Roberts.

THE war has caused tremendous changes in the food-supply of the United Kingdom, and in a variety of ways has involved the future of the world's fisheries. As compared with pre-war days, the quantity of fish landed on our shores fell off by two-thirds, while its cash value (per cent.) was trebled. Now, it would be a grave mistake to assume that with the restoration of peace conditions matters will automatically right themselves by a return to normal catches and prices. Several new factors are coming into play, and are likely to affect the quantity of fish caught, methods of preservation, and the system of distribution; the position being also influenced by new and greatly increased imports from Canada and Newfoundland, and possibly by reduced exports to Germany and the Continent. The whole situation, therefore, is instinct with changes that may be felt in almost every household.

Consider, first, the question of quantity. There is ground for the belief that during the war fish round the British coast have enormously increased, the reduced catches of the last three or four years having had substantially the same effect as a series of close seasons. At the same time, the Government have made a beginning with a small grant or loan through the Fishermen's Society to enable individual fishermen off the Cornish coast to install motors in their boats, so that they may go and return with catches without waiting for wind or tide. It is accordingly expected that, while larger quantities will be available, improved methods of catching and landing fish will be adopted, with satisfactory results to the consumer.

But the war has made clear also the great need that exists for some vastly improved means of preserving fish when caught. If enlarged catches are now to aggravate the gluts which periodically occur, this need will be decidedly accentuated. It is, therefore, to possible systems of fish preservation that private enterprise is keenly directing itself, so that both supplies and prices may be, so far as possible, regularised. The whole position may perhaps be best illustrated by reference to the humble herring, whose food value has in recent months been so strongly insisted upon. If we go back to the last normal fishing year before the war—that is, to the year 1913—it will be found that the fish landed on our shores amounted in quantity to about twenty-four million hundredweights. Few, however, realise that of that huge total nearly half, or, to be precise, eleven million eight hundred thousand hundredweights, consisted of herrings. But herrings are often caught in shoals that cannot be disposed of with sufficient promptitude as fresh food. They may be unsaleable in one week because of their abundance, and unobtainable in the next owing to their scarcity. The British public have not taken to them in a pickled form. Consequently an export trade grew up, pickled or otherwise cured herrings being sent to other countries, especially Germany, where the demand for them was insistent. The result was that 80 per cent. of the herrings landed by British fishermen on the British coast were cured and exported. It will be seen at once from the figures just given what an enormous inroad 80 per cent. of herrings means on the whole catch of fish landed on our shores in the course of a year. During the war the export to Germany, of course, stopped. The Government, to save them for food, took over immense quantities of pickled herrings, and readers must have noticed what efforts were made to popularise them.

It is to meet this condition of things that attention has been turned to cold storage, which during the war played an ever-growing part in connection with the food problem. Various projects are in the field. There is the dry freezing process, which means freezing in the air of a cold chamber at a suitable temperature. But that is held to be far from satisfactory, as the time occupied in freezing—about twelve hours—involves loss of weight and flavour. Then there is the plan of brine freezing advocated by Professor Stanley Gardiner, F.R.S., and Professor G. H. F. Nuttall, F.R.S., both of Cambridge. Under this system the fish would be plunged into a bath of ordinary salt brine at a temperature below sixteen degrees Fahrenheit, and would be completely frozen through in two hours. After that they could be packed in barrels, which might be left for months in a cold-storage chamber. It is claimed that when thawed out they would be found to have suffered no appreciable loss in either flavour or weight. If the system proved successful, it could, of course, be applied to every kind of fish, the finest as well as the coarsest. It would mean almost a revolution—fish in times of plenty being preserved almost automatically for use in times of scarcity.

It might be applied, for example, to pilchards. These are seldom seen in this country outside Cornwall, except in tins as 'Cornish sardines,' or 'Pilchard sardines.' The bulk of the supply, it is believed, finds its way to Italy, and it is said that many of the pilchard-curing establishments in Cornwall are controlled by Italians. But if pilchards are held in such high esteem in Italy, why not in the United Kingdom also? The supply might range from fifteen hundred to six or seven thousand tons a year.

In 1917 the Government appointed a strong committee to go thoroughly into the whole sea-fisheries question. The Food Investigation Board of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research for its part appointed a committee to inquire into the present methods of freezing, storing, and preserving fish. As the Government recently made a grant of over three-quarters of a million sterling for the extension of cold storage, it may fairly be assumed that for fish at any rate that system will receive a considerable impetus.

Then comes the question of imported fish. In 1913 the fresh fish not of British taking landed on British shores worked out at two million three hundred thousand hundredweights, a large proportion being cod from Norway and the deep-sea fisheries. Thus the total of imported fresh fish equalled about a tenth of the British catch. But in the same year we imported also one million three hundred thousand hundredweights of canned and cured or salted fish, canned salmon alone accounting for six hundred thousand hundredweights. The curiosities of public taste in the matter are illustrated by the fact that, while in the year named we exported cured or salted fish (chiefly herrings) to the value of five million three hundred and thirty-one thousand and forty-two pounds, we imported canned fish (chiefly sardines, salmon, and lobster) to the value of three million two hundred and twenty-one thousand seven hundred and six pounds. It is here that a great change is foreshadowed. Why should imported salmon be canned? Soon after Canada despatched troops to take part in the war, the Dominion Government resolved to send them rations of fish. Major Hugh A. Green, of the Canadian Quartermaster-General's Staff, was appointed to organise supplies for camps and hospitals, and the experiment was so successful that it was extended to United Kingdom troops as well. The fish was transported in refrigerator steamers, and defrosted in cold water. Samples lately shown in London of fried sole from Prince Rupert and the Pacific, boiled cod and hake from the Atlantic western bank, halibut from Vancouver, and other fish were pronounced excellent. Experts believe the supply of such fish to be inexhaustible. Yet in the past it has remained untouched during half the year for lack of markets. Now one cold storage at St John's, Newfoundland, will hold twenty million pounds of frozen fish, and freezes a hundred thousand pounds daily. Lord Morris, long the Prime-Minister of Newfoundland, has given the weight of his authority to the view that with cold storage and proper collection there could be a great development of the trade with the Mother-Country. That opens up a new prospect, as hitherto Newfoundland has salted its surplus fish, and sold most of it to Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Brazil.

Another subject that has attracted attention is that of making more use of certain kinds of fresh-water fish. Here, again, the Government have appointed a committee, who have already made an interim report. But the possibilities do not appear to be great, as they are in the case of sea-fish. The area of the lakes and the rivers of England and Wales is estimated at only three hundred and forty square miles, as against the one hundred and sixty-two thousand square miles of the North Sea; and most of the waters are privately owned. Lord Desborough, the chairman of the committee, estimates the annual growth of fish-life in the fresh waters of England and Wales at about two thousand tons, and the present stock at about four times the annual growth, an amount that would not go far as food. Of the fish caught that are available as food, trout, grayling, pike, perch, and eels are generally considered most worth eating. The committee 'believe that fishing for eels in the United Kingdom might be developed with advantage.' The taste for eels is not perhaps universally shared, but it exists, and the Fishery Departments are seeking to give effect to the committee's recommendation that the output be increased. Possibly even here something has been learned from the Germans, for the Fresh-Water Fish Committee, in a second interim report on eel culture, state that before the war the Germans established a large elver—young eel—catching depot on the Severn, whence about 80 per cent. of the total supply handled by the German Fisheries Association was exported to Germany for development. Now the authorities seem to be stimulated to emulation, for the Fresh-Water Fish Committee have, during the past season, supplied considerably more than a million elvers for stock, and the Lea Conservancy Board alone have placed fifty thousand in the rivers Lea and Stort.

Clearly it is mainly to the sea-fisheries that we must look for developments. There will be a call for men. Before the war rather more than a hundred thousand men and boys were engaged in the sea-fishing industry. Over 50 per cent. entered the naval service, and were employed in mine-sweeping and other dangerous occupations. Many lost their lives—sacrificed them for their country in its hour of trial. There will be a call for boats. In 1913 some four thousand steamers and about twenty thousand sailing-boats were available; but every one who watched the losses through submarine ruthlessness knows how steadily fishing-boats were put down. Many sinkings must be made good before the fishing-fleet recovers its former strength, to say nothing of necessary increase. So, too, with capital. It is difficult to discover the exact position, for estimates vary, but some have computed that the capital devoted to the fishing industry has hitherto amounted to only ten million pounds, which is a small sum in view of the results achieved and the possibilities ahead. But whether, as some suggest, the State should step

in and take over the industry is another matter. The facts which have been cited show how diverse and widespread must be the interests concerned. Already the English, Scottish, and Irish Fishery Departments have done splendid service in giving direction to scientific knowledge, and in framing needful regulations for promoting all that is best in fishing enterprise. Perhaps it is in that direction that the State will continue chiefly to help. But the field is exceptional. Man grows the fruits of the earth by the sweat of his brow; but the fish of the sea are always ready to his hand, to be had for the simple labour of taking as he will. It is true that the taking may be often a matter of peril and of hardship, but none the less the harvest of the sea remains abundant and perennial; and when, with the coming of peace, men are able to turn their attention freely to it once again, the result, in increased food-supply for the people, will probably be more fruitful and more certain than in any other field of human endeavour.

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

NOT a glimpse of the outer world was visible beyond occasional blades of light which came from the streets through an eye-hole in one of the blinds. The car was running evenly at, I guessed, some twenty miles an hour. Now and then it slowed down to thread its way among busy, rumbling streets; but gradually the traffic thinned, the fitful flickers of light from street-lamps and windows showed at lengthening intervals, the voice of the city fell to a mutter, and the car forged ahead at a much swifter pace. All the time I sat in intolerable suspense and inaction, without uttering a word.

My captor sat back in his corner in silence, smoking a cigar; nor did the other two men speak even to one another, beyond exchanging a whisper or two in Italian. I could not read the face of my watch; but, my hunter having no glass on its face, I felt the hands with my fingers, and made out that it was about a quarter to eleven.

I was wondering how long the strange journey would last, when the light was again switched on, and my *vis-à-vis* leaned forward.

'We shall leave the car soon,' he said. 'I must ask you to give me your word of honour that you will make no attempt to attract attention.'

'And if I refuse?'

'We shall be under the unpleasant necessity of gagging you before we leave the car. But I am unwilling to submit you to this indignity,' he rejoined, with odious politeness. 'As it is, I am afraid that we must blindfold you; but if you promise not to call out, this is the only liberty that I propose to take—at present.'

Argument or expostulation would have been alike useless; the compulsitor of events was too strong for me. The scoundrel meant what he said, and as the three of them could easily have overpowered and gagged me, resistance promised nothing except the certainty of further violence.

Swallowing my mortification, I replied as unconcernedly as I could, 'Very well; I promise.'

'I am obliged to you. I know that you will keep your promise. Now, be so good as to bind this over your eyes.'

He handed me a handkerchief. I blindfolded myself (not very carefully, I confess), and as I did so the car slowed round a sharp corner. The wheels crunched on soft gravel and came to a standstill.

'Now, Signor Forbes,' said my Naples friend, 'our little trip is at an end. Please accompany me. Remember your promise of silence.'

He put a muscular arm in mine, and one of the men took me by the wrist on the other side. The handkerchief was pulled down well over my eyes, the door of the car flung open, and I was led out and up a flight of five steps. After two or three paces forward I was taken into the warmth of a house, and, I thought, inside a hall. Here my coat and hat were taken from me, and the door was closed. The lock rasped, and without a moment's delay I was guided along a passage and into a room. Both the passage and the room, I noted, were to the right. Not until I was well inside the room did my captors release my arms and slip off the handkerchief. An electric light was switched on, and revealed to me a small apartment, uncarpeted, scantily furnished with a couch and a couple of chairs, and having a single heavily shuttered window in an embrasure. There was no fire, and the room had the unmistakable old musty smell of a place that had been shut up and disused for some time. The leader gave a nod to the others, who left the room at once.

'Where am I?' I began hotly.

'All in good time. I am not master here.'

'I know that. Your master is the man who calls himself "Wakeford." We know his real name, and I recognised him as well as you in the restaurant.'

'Is that so? I confess that I suspected you knew me. I may as well tell you that you are right about Mr Wakeford. He will arrive immediately. I ought to warn you that, unfortunately, he has not my easy temper. It is improbable that you will leave this house alive

unless you completely satisfy him on certain points.'

In a gust of anger I took a couple of steps nearer him. He never blinked an eye, but with swift dexterity covered me with the revolver. There was no veneer of politeness in his voice now.

'I fear you also have a doubtful temper,' he growled. 'I counsel you to keep it on chain, for I warn you that you will not get two chances if you attempt any violence. By the way, what a fortunate accident it was that led you to the restaurant!'

'You are the man I met in the Naples train. My presence in the restaurant was not accidental. I went there to seek you.'

I lied boldly, but he was not put out in the least. With a shrug of his shoulders he sat down opposite me.

'Whether by accident or by design, your arrival was the one thing I wanted. As for the incident in the Naples train, Signor Forbes, I regard it as one of my most amusing experiences.' He put on his dark-rimmed spectacles, and gave me a villainous leer. 'I must compliment you upon your strong head. My cigar took a long time to induce repose.'

Just then a footstep sounded in the corridor. He backed to the door, keeping his wicked little eye on me, and admitted the tall, clean-shaven man who had joined him earlier in the evening. Then, silently, he left the room. The new-comer locked the door, and having motioned me to a chair, sat down on the opposite side of the empty fireplace, and, without a word, took some papers from his pocket. At close quarters the lines of his handsome face bespoke resolution, even ruthlessness. Having turned over the papers with a white and delicate hand, he selected one, glanced at its contents, then leaned back in his chair and addressed me with well-bred composure.

'I am unwilling, Mr Forbes, to cause you more inconvenience than is necessary, and I am anxious to give you your liberty at the earliest possible moment, but your liberty, and indeed your future, depend on your prudence and good sense.'

'I am in no mood for circumlocution,' I said coldly. 'Pray come to the point at once!'

'Your directness is all in your favour. I am of your mind. Let us waste no time. You have, or you had, in your possession a document which I must get from you. It was taken by you one day last month from the little house in the Italian village of Ubriano after the Englishman died. The document was stolen from its rightful owners, whom I represent.'

'Surely the simple course is to send for the police,' I rejoined.

His face relaxed in a flicker of a smile. 'Ah! The police! Believe me, I am not one of those who underrate your Criminal Investigation Department. Indeed'—again the faint smile—'no one, if I may say so, is more familiar with its methods than I. But I do not propose to invite its excellent assistance in a matter like this, which, believe me, requires delicate handling.'

I thought of the drugged cigar in Italy and the knock-out blow from which I had barely recovered, and raised my eyebrows.

'I am sorry,' said he. 'Coarse methods are repellent to me, but they were necessary. One cannot always choose one's instruments. You must give me the document.'

'Must?'

His eye met mine steadily, and a hard ring came into his voice.

'Realise at once that if the document is not forthcoming you do not see daylight again. I have neither the time nor the inclination for half-measures. Do you pretend that no paper was taken away from the Englishman Forbes?'

'I do not,' I said, for I saw little to be gained by evasion; 'but it is not in my hands. It is with its rightful owner.'

'Rightful owner!' There was a contemptuous frown on his brow, but he leaned forward with an eager note in his voice. 'His name?'

'I will not tell you,' I answered firmly. 'If the document was, as you say, stolen, I repeat that your remedy is to inform the police. When and where was it stolen, and by whom?'

'That is beside the question. It was given to you by the Englishman Forbes, or stolen by you after his death.'

I kept a tight rein on my temper, for I had an idea that I might be on the track of useful information.

'Let us assume that it did come into my hands,' I said. 'Your associate who has just left us tries, with the aid of a drugged cigar, to steal it from me in a railway-carriage. He fails; and the next time I see him, he arranges with you to have me knocked senseless and kidnapped. Do these methods strike you as likely to be employed by honest men trying to get their own property back? Your name is not Wakeford. You are one of The Searchers!'

Surprised out of his real or assumed imperturbability, he sat up suddenly, frowning, his eyes fixed on mine.

'What can you—— Pshaw!' He snapped his fingers contemptuously. 'What conception have you of our Society? Any country policeman knows of your ludicrous British imitations of it. We—the Brotherhood—flourished long before any of your mushroom Ancient Orders of This, That, and The Other Tomfooleries in England were thought of. It is centuries old. It has its traditions, its history, and its rules, and—one of them has been broken.'

'Yes. I know that you have been outwitted lately,' I said coolly. It was a random shot. I had not the least idea what his reference to a rule having been broken meant, but his next

words—'Whence comes your knowledge?'—told me that I had found a joint in his harness.

'That I propose to keep to myself,' I said. 'But you know that it is accurate. Meanwhile, I warn you that my absence will be remarked, and I am willing to make a sporting bet that your Society of peculiar methods—The Searchers—traditions or no traditions, will soon be heartily sorry that they laid their hands on me. If I am not set free in another half-hour, my friends, who, I assure you, know the position, will find me.'

'Alive?'

'Alive or dead.' I thought that my answer was unexpected, for he frowned, but said nothing; and I went on: 'But if I am dead, you cannot fail to see that your object is defeated once and for all. "Dead men tell no tales" is a two-edged saying.'

He did not reply immediately. Watching him, I had more than a suspicion that under his cool mask he was weighing my words. His vertical frown deepened, and a momentary twitching of his throat was a plain sign of disquiet. From that moment, too, his voice lost something of its arrogance. This man, I thought, was more highly strung than the Naples knave.

'What do you mean?'

'My words were plain enough. Unless I am set free at once from this trap, you and your associates will get your deserts. I think Scotland Yard has a few scores to settle.'

'I can only assume that you do not realise the position you are in. Foolhardiness offends my sense of proportion. You must be aware that you are completely at my mercy. This room, if I but lift a finger, becomes your *oubliette*. This is my last word. I will not alter my terms. You will never—*never*, you understand—be seen or heard of again if I do not receive from you the document taken from Italy.'

'My answer is also final. We understand each other. I will not discuss the subject further.'

He walked slowly to the door, and having unlocked it, turned to me a face pale with anger and disappointment.

'*Nous verrons!* Meanwhile, pleasant dreams, Mr Forbes!' The door closed behind him, the key turned in the lock, and his footsteps soon died away.

I went to the door and listened intently. A curious noise like the faint rumble of traffic, but coming from within the house, reached me. I caught its sound a few minutes after I had been left alone, at first low and indefinite, afterwards louder, until I likened it to the purring of some monstrous animal. I should have put it down to the starting of the motor-car, had not the purring gone on steadily for a quarter of an hour. Then it ceased altogether, and there fell a silence so uncanny that after another quarter of an hour I came to the conclusion that my quarters were cut off from the rest of the house, and that the walls were deadened.

Ordinarily, the thought of being spirited away in civilised, police-rated London would have been too fantastic, but the thing had happened! Within a short distance of Scotland Yard, I had fallen into the hands of a gang of dexterous scoundrels who would stick at nothing to gain their ends. The swiftness and the cunning which had plucked me out of the lighted London streets made it plain that The Searchers had diabolical resources and organisation. I confess that I was badly frightened; but after a few minutes' sterile brooding, I resolutely abandoned conjuring up cases of mysterious disappearance, and turned to an examination of the room.

A strict inspection of it put any attempt at prison-breaking out of my mind. The locked door was massive, the shutters of the window were secured by padlocked iron bars, not a crevice showed in the walls, and the chimney was narrow and impassable. There was nothing for it but to nurse my nerves till the coming of morning, and present a bold front to my captors.

One circumstance heartened me. It was evident that my knowledge of The Searchers was totally unexpected by their leader. In ignorance of how much my friends and I knew, he might shrink from the consequence to himself of even undiscovered murder, for it was obvious that his one desire was to lay hands on the paper. Foul play to me would make his chances of getting possession of it a thousand times worse.

(*Continued on page 292.*)

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN THE WEST INDIES.

By the Rev. MONTAGUE L. FOYLE.

THE average Briton probably knows nothing of the Dutch West Indian colony of Curaçao; even to the ordinary Dutchman it is little more than a name. The Hollander has found the East Indies more attractive than the West; and Java, Sumatra, and Borneo have offered ample scope for Dutch colonial enterprise. In the West, Surinam, with its vast unexplored interior stretching away towards Brazil, its extensive river-system, its possibilities for the gold-digger, and its wonderfully fertile soil, has naturally exercised most fascination for Hollanders whose lot was cast in that part of the world. But Curaçao holds the proud distinction of being the premier Dutch colony, having belonged to the Mother-Country since 1634.

The colony consists entirely of islands, six in all, which fall into two distinct groups. The southern group comprises Curaçao, Bonaire, and Aruba, all adjacent to the coast of Venezuela, and sharing in the general features of the mainland. The inhabitants of this group are largely Venezuelan in origin; Roman Catholic in faith, they speak a manufactured language, called Papiamento, without syntax or grammar, a compound of Spanish, Dutch, English, and native words. The northern group of islands is some five hundred miles away, and embraces Saba, half of St Martin, and St Eustatius, all adjacent to the British Leeward Island of St Kitts. This group is English-speaking, and overwhelmingly Protestant. All the islands are small. The total area of the entire colony is four hundred and five square miles, with a population of some fifty-seven thousand. The area of the northern group is only about thirty square miles. The capital is Willemstad, on the island of Curaçao.

It is the purpose of this article to give some account of St Martin and St Eustatius. Small and insignificant though the former may seem—its total area is less than forty square miles—it is yet remarkable for the fact that it belongs to two of the nations of Europe, being almost equally divided between France and Holland. The northern side of the island is occupied by the French, and the southern by the Dutch. There is an elevated ridge of rugged hills which forms a natural boundary. According to local tradition, the division was arrived at in a very simple way. The French and the Dutch found themselves on the island simultaneously, and agreed to a peaceful partition. So a French soldier walked to the right, and a Dutch soldier to the left. Round the island they marched till they met, and the dividing line was drawn from their starting-point to their place of meeting. The local name of Concordia is supposed to commemorate the scene of this harmonious arrangement. The two communities have always lived on good terms, despite the fact that two faiths, two sets of laws, two capitals, and two official languages are all contained in some thirty to forty square miles.

St Eustatius, or, as it is called locally, 'Statia, has experienced many vicissitudes, especially during the Napoleonic wars. The island was first colonised by the Dutch in the early part of the seventeenth century, and was soon declared a free port for the ships of all nations. As such it became a centre of trade and commerce unsurpassed by any West Indian island, and was a rich and coveted prize. It won the name of 'The Golden Rock,' and nation after nation struggled for its possession. In 1665 the Dutch were expelled by the English. Then France and Holland united and turned out the conquerors, holding the island jointly till by the Treaty of Breda in 1667 it was given back to Holland. War soon broke out again, and the island was captured by the French, who were ejected by the English, who restored the island to Holland at the Peace of Ryswick in 1697. The island was captured for the British by Rodney, whose work of destruction will never be forgotten. There fell into his hands a warship of sixty guns, several merchant-vessels, and property on the shore valued at four million pounds sterling. Seldom have eight square miles yielded such a prize to a conqueror. But his triumph was short-lived, for the French descended from Martinique, and again the island changed hands. And so 'Statia continued to be the shuttlecock of the nations till the general Peace of Paris in 1814, when it was finally restored to Holland, whose property it has been ever since. Like St Martin, the island has greatly deteriorated, and can scarcely now be regarded as a prize worth capturing. The ever-increasing influence of America in the West Indies has been greatly enhanced by the recent transfer to the U.S.A. of the Danish islands of St Thomas, St Croix, St Jan, and Santa Cruz, an event which has naturally raised once more in the neighbouring small Dutch islands the question of annexation. So far, the sentiment of the Mother-Country has proved loyal to her little possessions. But the influence of America is strong, and emigration to the States is unceasing. Only very occasionally does one hear of a native of these islands making a home and living in Holland.

No steamers call at these isolated spots, and consequently they are seldom visited by tourists. Basseterre, in St Kitts, is the nearest steamer port of call, and the traveller who goes on board the small one-masted sailing-vessel to cover the twenty miles to 'Statia, or the forty to St Martin, must be prepared for the terrors of the ocean. Sloops are not built for passenger comfort; it can never be said for certain when a start will be made, and it can never be foretold when the destination will be reached; all depends on the wind. Cabin accommodation is primitive. There may be a torrential tropical downpour, but usually during the day-time the fierce, merciless sun beats down on the sea. Constant tacking may necessitate double the distance being covered, whilst in the narrow channel between the islands the current may run high and the sea be lashed into fury. Especially during the hurricane season from July to October is sloop travelling dangerous, and it is noteworthy that in both islands that particular period of the year is ushered in by a special official divine service of intercession, and is closed by one of thanksgiving. But once the islands are reached, there is much to interest the visitor. 'Statia's magnificent white cliffs, called the 'White Walls,' remind the Englishman of the cliffs of Dover as seen from Calais. The island, which is really an extinct volcano, rises

from the sea like a huge cone with the top cut off, and presents a magnificent view. The little town of Oranjestad is approached by a steep path cut out in the face of the cliff. The old fort stormed by Rodney still stands, and is used as court, post-office, and prison. The ruined Dutch Reformed Church, with its ancient vaults, is of great interest. Several large dilapidated graveyards scattered around the town testify to the size of the population a century ago. The Jewish burial-ground, unused for many a year, shows the former influence of the Dutch Jew. Horseback is the method of travel, and the ride round the island reveals a succession of ruined estates. The ascent of the Quill, as the top of the volcano is called, is *the* sight of the island. The view from the summit is grand beyond description. On a clear day six other islands can be seen, whilst the whole of St Eustatius lies mapped out at the traveller's feet. The descent can also be made into the deep crater, from which there once flowed streams of lava. Now it is densely overgrown with luxuriant vegetation. The mountain cone has been described as one of the most romantic spots in the West Indies.

Philipsburg, the capital of Dutch St Martin, stands on a spacious bay with a small signal-station at the entrance, boasting the proud title of Fort Amsterdam. Behind the town are extensive salt-ponds, the island's chief source of revenue. A large area of land is flooded by the sea, the water is allowed to evaporate, and the salt is then 'picked.' It is a pity that St Martin is not better known. One experienced missionary wrote: 'It is unsurpassed in its romantic scenery, presenting to the traveller such a variety of mountain and valley, hill and dale, as can hardly be found anywhere in the torrid zone.'

Both islands suffer much from drought. St Eustatius has neither river nor brook, and the water obtained by sinking wells is so impregnated with salt that it cannot be used for domestic purposes. Horses and cattle will, however, readily drink it. Whence, then, do the inhabitants obtain water for household use? The answer is, from the clouds. Rain-water is universally used. The houses are furnished along the eaves with gutters which, instead of leading the rain away into drains, conduct it to large cisterns prepared for its reception. Among the first questions asked in taking a house in these dry islands are: 'What is the state of the roof and the guttering?' and 'Does it possess a cistern?' The quality of the water is another vital point. That from a sheet-iron roof is generally cleaner than that from a shingled roof. The question, 'When were the shingles last painted?' is also of importance. Rain-water has a regular market-value, and during a drought its price steadily advances as cistern after cistern is emptied. The possession of a good cistern means a substantial income for the fortunate owner. The soil is naturally fertile, and, despite the limited rainfall, produces excellent crops of yams, cassava, sisal, sweet potatoes, sea-island cotton, and arrowroot. 'Statia is a regular port of call for the South American whalers, who depart loaded up with provisions. But it must be confessed that since the abolition of slavery, with its cheap and abundant labour, the islands have not been developed on any large scale, and have been allowed to run to waste somewhat. Till quite recently modern methods of agriculture were unknown, and the small holding worked with the hoe, whilst giving a very satisfactory income to the petty planter, has not tended to the development of the islands and the opening up of uncultivated lands.

The population consists chiefly of coloured and black people descended from the slaves, with a small proportion of white folk, the descendants of old Dutch settlers. Perhaps in no part of the West Indies do the people stand so near to slavery days. Emancipation was granted only in 1863; ex-slaves are still alive; and such phrases as 'emancipated people,' 'when we got free,' and 'I belonged to the family of So-and-so' are in general vogue. The coinage and the postage-stamps are specially prepared for the colony, the stamps being much sought after by philatelists. The doubloon and the piece-of-eight of pirate fame are occasionally met with. The national songs are most patriotic; witness the following translations:

Who Neerlands blood feel nobly flow in current pure and free,
Whose hearts for queen and country glow, come raise the song as we,
With hearts alive and spirits gay, attuned from breasts serene,
The soul-inspiring festal lay of Fatherland and Queen.

Or again:

I to William of Nassau and to the Fatherland
Do plight my troth for ever,
With brain and heart and hand and wealth and blood,
Yea, dear life hold ready for the call,
To yield them up as freely as William gave them all.

Lastly, it may be mentioned that whilst each island is under the general supervision of His Excellency the Governor-General of the colony, yet they all enjoy well-organised local self-government. Each boasts a resident governor or *gezaghebber* (frequently a Dutchman, and always appointed direct from Holland), a court, a queen's attorney, local councillors or *landraaden* elected by ballot, a harbour-master, a small detachment of Dutch military, a doctor, a staff of qualified school teachers, a Protestant minister, and a Roman priest.

JOHN BROWN.

By R. W. CAMPBELL, Author of *Private Spud Tamson; Dorothy, V.A.D., and the Doctor;* &c.

CHAPTER XV.—MOTHER COMES TO SCHOOL.

YOU will have gathered ere now what a dear old soul my mater is. How tender her love! How trusting in all things! To an artist she is a dream-picture. So quaint, yet so dignified; so innocent, yet so human. When dressed in black brocade, with white collar and cuffs, with her silver-haired ringlets hanging on each side of her head, she looks a charming Victorian—just the sort of old lady you see stepping out of an ancient picture-gallery. She is of the past—the beautiful past—when life was slow, yet kind and true.

She lives in a rustic manor in sleepy old Berks. There she is sheltered from the storms. Her four interests in life are *The Times*, the Tory Party, her Wyandottes, and—ME. Whatever our modern Delanes say, my mater endorses with emphasis. When Lloyd George was appointed Premier, she had no sleep for four nights, and had it not been for the reassuring leader in *The Times*, the mater might have been tempted to stuff a bomb in a highly flavoured dead Wyandotte and send it to 10 Downing Street. However, I did my best to assure her that David was thoroughly respectable, and that his Conservative colleagues would keep him in order. That ended all opposition.

She has implicit faith in me. I am the idol of her heart. This devotion is really embarrassing. I am not worthy of it. Now, the mater loathes liquor, and she has a dread of girls. Her boy must be kept from the bottle and the hussies at all costs. In this age—indeed, in all ages—that has been impracticable. But it made me a sort of hypocrite, for I would not have shattered that dear old lady's illusions for all the wealth of Carnegie. Yet, somehow, I also felt that her sweet faith always kept me within bounds. A man could not be a bounder with a mother like Mrs John Brown. Still, like all youths, I was having my 'fling,' and out of your 'fling' comes strength or ruin. Life is a series of temptations. The man who can taste and leave them goes forward. The man who is ensnared is damned.

We have all got to go through the mill.

As I have said, the mater is innocent in affairs of the world, especially in military matters. She mixes things up. For example, an 'offensive' she thought was a nasty smell at the front. One day she inquired, 'John, when are they going to make Douglas Haig a sergeant-major? I am sure he deserves it. Don't you think I should write to *The Times*?'

'You mean a field-marshal, mater.'

'What 's that?'

'Oh, field-marshal is the highest. He carries a baton.'

'What a common thing to do!'

'Why, mater?'

'Well, I thought it was only plain policemen who did that. *The army is very strange, my boy.*'

I did my best to enlighten the dear old lady, but I had no success. When colonels and majors came to tea, she called them corporals or sergeants, to the enjoyment of all. They never disillusioned her. She was such a kind old soul. And now that I am a military cadet, she has got the idea that I am a most important person. She confided in Aunt Jane's ear that I should soon be a 'brass hat.'

'What 's that?' asked Aunt Jane.

'Oh, the pretty men who ride in front of the band and give orders.'

'How nice!'

Aunt Jane is mater's youngest sister. She is almost forty-five, unmarried, quite a fine woman to look at, and a good soul. When I was at school she used to send me mince-pies, plum-puddings, and cigarettes. (Mater didn't know about the cigarettes.)

The greatest weakness the old lady has is jumping to conclusions. Like a silly ass, I had written and said I had caught a cold on a route march, owing to the awful weather.

She replied:

'MY DEAREST BOY,—How shocked I was to hear you had got a cold on such a day! It is abominable to think that boys are taken out on a wet day. You might have died! I am so annoyed about this that I have asked our Member to put a question in the House. I have also written to *The Times*. It is shocking!—Your loving MOTHER.'

When I got this I almost had apoplexy. Something had to be done. I wired the Member: 'For Heaven's sake, don't put mother's question: writing.' And I also wired to *The Times*. That saved the situation.

The mater couldn't understand war, nor did she realise that soldiers are not mollycoddles. She didn't mind my dying at the front, but she *did* object to my getting a cold at home. Rather a mixed-up point of view, but quite motherly. And there are lots of mothers like that, as I have since discovered.

This route march incident apparently decided her visit to our school. Aunt Jane was invited to accompany her. She was delighted. The two old dears simply wired: 'Coming to see you. Ask the rector to let you off.'

The rector! How the old 'com.' would have laughed if he had seen the telegram! The mater gave me no clue as to how she would come, or when I might expect her. However, I knew Aunt Jane would look after her. Meantime, I asked all my pals to have tea with the ladies at the local hotel. I insisted particularly on Nobby's coming, for I knew she would like to see the Radical.

There was going to be fun.

Unfortunately I was not about when they landed. They came from the junction by motor-car, and were deposited at the gate.

'I don't see John,' said the mater.

'Never mind! We'll soon find him.'

The first man they saw was the commandant. He was looking well that day—the picture of a powerful mandarin. The ladies got a little nervous. They wondered whether the 'com.' was a fierce sergeant-major or a regimental policeman. He was so impressive! But they tackled him.

'Can you tell me where to find the rector? I want to see my son,' said the mater.

'I'm afraid, madam, there's no rector here,' the old man said with a smile on his face.

'Oh, well, the manager, or whatever you call him. I really don't know the right terms.'

'Well, I'm the commandant.'

'Then you must be the head-master.'

'Exactly!' The colonel blinked. He loathed these civilian terms.

'My boy's name is John Brown.'

'Indeed! He is a very bright boy. I am delighted to meet you. Will you ladies kindly come into the anteroom?' The old sport took them into the mess and gave them afternoon tea. Mother and Aunt Jane enjoyed this immensely.

'I hope you see my boy wears flannel next his skin. He's rather delicate, you know,' ventured the old lady.

'Oh, yes. The boys have a platoon commander who acts as a sort of mother. He spanks them when they are naughty, and tucks them up at night.'

'Does John ever give you trouble?'

'Not a bit! He has never been before me. Your boy is a great credit to you. I'm awfully proud of him. Do have some more tea.'

Wasn't the old 'com.' playing the game?

Meantime a dozen officers were scouring the school for me. They discovered me in the gym. having a bayonet-fight with Beefy.

'Come along, Brown. Look smart! Your mother and a friend are here.'

'Oh, thanks, sir.'

I was over at the mess door in a jiffy. As the tea-party was over, the 'com.' and the ladies came out.

'Here's your boy, Mrs Brown. Now, off you go. He may have leave for the day. Good-bye.'

I led them away, and all I could get out of them was, 'What a delightful old gentleman!' Aunt Jane was quite struck with the commandant, and bluntly asked if he was married.

'He's a widower.'

'How interesting!' That was all she said, but I wondered! I wondered!

'Here's our hut, mater.'

As we entered Ginger and Beefy hurriedly pushed some liqueur-bottles under the blankets, while Tosher discreetly flung a rug over a series of wall pictures taken out of the *Sketch* and the *Tatler*.

'This is the Reverend Billy Greens.'

'How pleasant to meet you, Mr Greens! I am so glad you and my boy go to prayers so often.'

'Yes, we are great friends,' said Billy, tactfully evading discussion of what really was a terminological inexactitude invented by me.

Ginger and Tosher were next introduced, and then came Nobby.

'Ah! I wanted to meet you, Mr Clarke. You really don't look like a Radical at all. You are much too nice for that.'

'I'm being converted, Mrs Brown,' said Nobby maliciously.

'How splendid!'

'What do you think of our happy home, mater?'

'Well, it *does* look untidy. And what a lot of papers and books.' She picked up the *Tatler*.

'John! Do you read this?' she said, pointing to a wonderful picture by 'Fish.'

'Well—no, mater. The Red Cross send us old magazines to use for shaving-papers.'

'I am so glad,' she returned.

I did feel a rotten hypocrite.

'Now, do all of you sleep in those little wooden things?' pointing to the trestle-beds.

'Oh, yes.'

'Dear me! I thought you only got those things in jail. Oh! What's that?' she exclaimed, spotting Adela's photo over my bed. She went nearer, put up her pince-nez. 'Dear, dear! A girl! A girl, John!'

'An old friend, mater. She's—she's really quite nice. Her uncle is a vicar.'

'Does she live near here?'

'Well—not quite.'

'I must speak to you about this later.' Then she turned to the boys again, and had a pleasant chat.

Meantime I had got two cars, and pushed the party into them. We sailed off to the local hotel, where we had a ripping tea. Poor Aunt Jane wasn't in the piece, for mother had so many things to ask my friends. They gathered round her, and she simply treated them as her own little boys. Even Ginger enjoyed it. It was so natural, so human, so much like his own dear mater, who was—dead. Her whole concern was about their boots, their clothing, and their spiritual welfare. And did they write every day to their mothers, like her own dear John? Tosher, the materialist, fell head over ears in love with the dear old mater. She taught him to appreciate this fact, that the strength of the Old Country lies in the wonderful women who

have suckled a manly and virile race. The party was all too short, and the ladies were sorry to go. We escorted them to the station. Tosher, with true Canadian generosity, bought a huge box of chocolates; Beefy presented some flowers to Aunt Jane; and Ginger, Nobby, and Billy loaded them up with magazines and books.

'You dear, dear boys!' said mother.

'Good-bye, mater.'

'Good-bye, Aunt Jane,' they all shouted as the two dearest women in the world were whirled away on the south express.

'Good-bye, dear boys. And, John'—— mother shouted.

'Yes, mater?'

'Button up your collar—it 's cold!'

. . . . . .

'DEAR JOHN,—Will you thank all your friends for such a delightful time? They are such nice boys. By the way, I've found out that your commandant has a sister in the next village.

'*We are going to call next week.*

'AUNT JANE.'

(*Continued on page 312.*)

THE 'BLOODY FALL' MURDER.

By GEORGE C. WELLS.

I.

SOME few years ago two priests of the Oblate Order, Fathers Rouvier and Le Roux, went into the Far North of Canada to labour among the Eskimo. At first they were highly pleased with the docility and the friendliness of those strange primitive people, and wrote back glowing accounts of the hospitable manner in which they were received. They were given the best of everything; and so polite were the Eskimo that, when the fathers happened to visit one of their homes, the owners would even ask permission for themselves to enter. The latest message received from them was dated in 1913, and was to the effect that they would accompany the Eskimo as they moved farther north to the sea.

After the lapse of several months their friends began to fear that something had befallen them, and early in 1915 Inspector La Nauze of the Royal North-West Mounted Police (that fine body of men which maintains law and order throughout the wilder regions of the great Dominion) was sent out from Regina (the capital of Saskatchewan and headquarters of the Royal North-West Mounted Police) with instructions to ascertain their fate. At the Peace River Crossing in Alberta (three hundred and twelve miles north of Edmonton) he was joined by two constables. Proceeding *viâ* the Peace and Slave Rivers, Great Slave Lake, and the Mackenzie River to Fort Norman, where the Great Bear River joins the Mackenzie, the party was augmented at that point by two special constables, one of them an Eskimo named Ilavinik, who acted as interpreter.

It was not supposed at that time that the priests' disappearance would be accounted for by foul play, the belief being that they had died of cold and hunger or had met with some accident; but Indians whom Inspector La Nauze's party met near Fort Norman stated that some of the Coppermine Eskimo living at the mouth of the river of that name were wearing 'church shirts,' whose ownership they declined to explain, and told the inspector further that they feared the fathers had been killed for what they possessed.

After hearing what the Indians had to say, the inspector determined to make for the mouth of the Coppermine, but so difficult is travelling in that country, and so great are the distances, that, while the party left Fort Norman towards the end of July, they did not reach the point where the Coppermine empties into that arm of the Arctic Ocean known as Coronation Gulf until late in the following spring, having been obliged to winter *en route*.

Eskimo encountered on the journey were curious to know what the white men wanted, but were simply told that they had come, under orders from the 'Big White Chief,' to show them what was right and what wrong, and nothing was said about the missing priests for fear of arousing antagonism.

II.

On the shores of Coronation Gulf the party met Corporal Bruce, whose headquarters were at Herschel Island (lat. 69½° N., long. 139° W.) —most western, most northerly, and, probably, most desolate and lonesome of all the Royal North-West Mounted Police posts—but who was then travelling with the Canadian Arctic Expedition engaged in survey-work. Bruce had with him a number of articles belonging to the two fathers, which he had found in Eskimo caches or had purchased in their villages. Among them were a cassock marked 'R. Père Rouvier,' a crucifix, a rosary, and a couple of books, one of them a Latin breviary with Father Le Roux's name written in it.

Shortly afterwards Eskimo in a village which was visited by the searchers told them that the priests had been murdered, and by whom; and in the same village they located a man named Koeha, who impressed them as being particularly truthful, and who said he had visited the scene of the tragedy, and gave a detailed account of it.

The place where the murder had been com-

mitted already bore a sinister reputation, and was known as 'Bloody Fall,' for the reason that there, when Samuel Hearne,* of the Hudson's Bay Company, visited the spot in 1771, being the first white man to reach it, the Indians accompanying him fell upon a number of Eskimo spearing salmon, and exterminated the whole band.

The information received warranted Inspector La Nauze in ordering the arrest of two Eskimo named Sinnisiak and Uluksuk, who were located after a long sled-journey across the ice of Coronation Gulf to Victoria Land, and who surrendered without resistance. Sinnisiak was discovered sitting on some skins in his hut, engaged in making a bow. When the inspector and the constables entered he looked up and asked what they had come for, to which Ilavinik replied they had come to take him away. 'What for?' 'You kill two priests.' Then, 'You going to kill me?' Sinnisiak demanded, and the interpreter answered, 'No; nobody going to kill you, but you got to come along.' Ilavinik, in relating the story of the arrest, said further, 'He say he no want to come. I tell inspector, and inspector say he got to come. I tell him, and he come.'

The other man was arrested in just as simple a manner.

Under preliminary examination by the inspector, both men confessed to killing the priests, but claimed that the latter had beaten them and threatened them with their rifles, and that the killing had been done in self-defence.

As by this time it was late in the summer of 1916, and it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reach civilisation before winter set in, the inspector decided to take his prisoners to Herschel Island, and there remain until the spring. And a dreary enough time he and his party must have had! The island is but twenty-three miles in circumference; it has neither drinking-water nor fuel; and for six months of the year it lies in almost complete darkness.

As soon as navigation opened in the spring of 1917, a start for the south was made, the party consisting of Inspector La Nauze and the two prisoners, Corporal Bruce, two constables, Ilavinik, the Eskimo Koeha, who was taken along as the most important witness, and a sixteen-year-old boy named Patsy Klengenberg. Patsy's father was a Dane or a Norwegian, and his mother an Eskimo, and, being bright and intelligent and able to speak English as well as his mother's tongue, he was engaged as an improvement on Ilavinik as interpreter.

The long journey of the inspector, covering some six thousand miles, was completed when, the last stages from Vermilion Chutes on the Peace River having been performed by 'up-to-date' steamer and railway train, he landed his charges safely in Edmonton, the capital of the province of Alberta. There court was opened on August 14 before the Chief-Justice of Alberta, a great deal of interest being taken in the trial. Incidentally, it may be said that the sittings had to be limited to two hours, as that was as long as the Eskimo, accustomed to a cold climate, could stand the warm atmosphere of the court-room.

III.

The men were charged first with the murder of Father Rouvier. Relics of the unfortunate priest's belongings were displayed in court, including a rifle and a diary kept by Father Rouvier, very much dilapidated, but still decipherable, in which the last entry contained in French the following significant statement under date October 15, 1913: 'Foot of Bloody Fall. Arrived at mouth of Coppermine River. Some families have already gone. Disappointed with the Eskimo. Threatened with starvation, and don't know what to do.'

The story of the tragic event, as brought out by the evidence and the confessions of the prisoners themselves, seems to have been as follows. The friendly feeling at first displayed by the Eskimo had evaporated. Their food-supplies ran short, and the fathers were no longer welcome. Some of the young men coveted the wonderful rifles and other possessions of the white men. One of the rifles was stolen, the thief claiming, when charged with what he had done, that Father Le Roux had promised it to him. Though it was given back, friction increased; and at last the situation became so strained that the priests decided to leave the Eskimo village and return to the nearest point at which they had left supplies *en cache*, some nine days' journey distant. Koeha, the witness, testified that he accompanied them part way on the first day's journey and helped them with their dog-sled. Next day they were overtaken by Sinnisiak and Uluksuk, who were travelling light, having only one dog and little ammunition, and who said they were going to meet a party of friends. After some bargaining, they agreed to help to pull the sled. All went well the first day, and when night came the priests cooked supper, while the Eskimo built a snow house, in which all four slept.

Next morning there was a snowstorm, and the going was heavy. The Eskimo did not want to get into harness again, and there was a dispute about the road. The situation had become desperate for the priests—their food was running low and they had a long distance to cover. So they resorted to intimidation, and when the Eskimo declined to proceed, they forced them to do so at the point of the rifle.

Finally, Sinnisiak made an excuse to get out

* It was Hearne who, as governor of Fort Prince of Wales (Churchill), surrendered it in 1782 to the French under La Pérouse, without attempting any resistance.

of the harness and manœuvred so as to come behind Father Le Roux, whom he then struck in the back with his knife. The priest fell in the snow, and Sinnisiak called to Uluksuk to give him the rifle, which was on top of the sled. 'Then,' said he tersely, in telling the story, 'I finished him.'

Father Rouvier was unarmed, and started to run away, but was shot by Uluksuk. As he was not killed by the bullet, both knife and axe were brought into requisition, and an end was made of him also.

Then the two Eskimo cut open the bodies of their victims, and ate a small piece of the liver from each. This was done, according to their story, 'so they wouldn't come back.' Uluksuk said he had been told by his grandfather to take this precaution if he ever killed a white man.

Taking the rifles, the Eskimo returned to their village; and next day a party, including Koeha, the witness himself, came and divided up the remainder of the spoil.

There was no doubt about the killing—that was admitted by the accused—but there was some uncertainty as to the motive. The Eskimo declared that they feared the fathers were going to force them to go a long way and then kill them, and that they were quite innocent of any evil designs when they overtook the priests on their last journey; and so skilfully did the counsel for the defence handle the case that the jury of Edmonton citizens brought in a verdict of 'Not Guilty.'

IV.

The Government was not satisfied with this result, and as public feeling in Edmonton was very much in sympathy with the accused, and there was no likelihood of a different verdict if the prisoners were put on trial there on the second charge (that of killing Father Le Roux), it was decided to hold the other trial at Calgary. The prisoners accordingly were removed to that city, and again faced a judge and jury. This time a verdict of 'Guilty' was returned, it being proven that they had pursued the priests with intent to kill, so as to obtain possession of the coveted rifles and other effects. The presiding judge told the accused, through the medium of the boy interpreter Patsy, that they had been found guilty of killing the priests, which they had no right to do, and that, according to the law, when a man did that he had to give his own life in return. However, he would himself send word to the 'Great White Chief,' and perhaps he would not be too hard on them. Sentence of death was pronounced; but, on a strong recommendation to Ottawa, this was commuted to life imprisonment. For the place of incarceration the Royal North-West Mounted Police post at Herschel Island was chosen, the climatic conditions there best suiting the prisoners' constitutions. They were sent north under guard during September to be kept at Fort Resolution (on Great Slave Lake) till spring, it being too late to reach Herschel that season. It is pretty well understood that, while the sentence is for life, the murderers will be released after a time and allowed to return to their friends, among whom, it is hoped, their experience will have a salutary effect in protecting the lives of any white men who may chance to visit Canada's Arctic regions.

From the time Inspector La Nauze set out from Regina to the departure of the prisoners under sentence nearly two and a half years elapsed. Much hardship was undergone, many perils were faced, and a very considerable amount of expense was incurred; but it was considered very necessary that the Eskimo wards of the Canadian Government should be taught respect for human life, and that the writs of Lex Britannica should be shown to run even within the Arctic Circle.

To the credit of the prisoners—and of their captors as well—it may be said that they were never once handcuffed or locked up. While at Calgary the prisoners and the witnesses shared the guardroom together, with only a constable on guard outside to prevent an escape if one were attempted. Wonderful were the sights seen by the Eskimo on this their first journey into the White Man's country—electric light, water-taps, trains, steamboats, automobiles, and tram-cars were marvels indeed; and the tales that will be told in the *igloos* along the Coppermine River and Coronation Gulf will far surpass in interest any that the most fluent story-teller has had at his command heretofore.

THE LADS THAT WERE.

THE foeman is vanquished; we triumph and mourn;
And it's oh for the lads that will never return!
For silent the hill-tops, the corrie is lone;
From their nest in the aerie the eaglets are flown.
The maids and the mothers are waiting afar;
But they'll ne'er see the lads coming home from the war.
Dark, dark lies the moorland, deserted the shore;
For the lads will return to the shealing no more.

In vain comes the spring-tide, the woods to adorn;
Sere, sere lies the oak that the tempest has torn.
Though it's far o'er the uplands the lassies may roam,
Soft, soft sleep the lads that will never come home.
Ye may pluck the pale primrose that grows by the burn;
But the stream shall run dry ere the laddies return.
And it's oh for a voice, for a foot at the door;
But they'll meet their dear lads in the gloaming no more.

Ye fathers, arise in your sorrow and pride,
And tell of the death that the dear laddies died;
Ye mothers and orphans, uplift your sad eyes,
Where new constellations are set in the skies.
They died that the land of the proud and the brave
Shall ne'er be dishonoured by tyrant or slave;
And matchless the fame, as their fathers' of yore,
Of the lads who'll return to the shealing no more.

HILDA SKAE.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE WAR AND THE PLANETS: STRIKING COINCIDENCES.

By JOHN J. ROSS, M.A., B.A.

I.

IN connection with the terrible world-wide war waged during the past five calendar years, there have been several remarkable instances of coincidence in time between prominent celestial occurrences and terrestrial events. Without suggesting for a moment that there was any relationship, other than accidental, between the two, it may be of interest to point out a few of the cases which seem specially worthy of note.

Among those major planets whose orbits are more remote from the sun than ours, our first neighbour is the red planet Mars, which is called after the Roman god of war, and has from ancient times been associated with ideas of 'martial' conflict. On 1st January 1914, the opening day of the year which brought the nations into the direful contest, Mars was at its nearest to the earth during the course of the synodic revolution period (a little over two years) then current. In a well-known Scottish newspaper the present writer commented at the time on the circumstances as follows: 'Whether or not the fact should be regarded as of sinister omen in an astrological sense, the year 1914 has entered with the Planet of War in a position of extraordinary prominence. After the moon, it is at present the nearest celestial body to the earth, as well as the most brilliant in the night sky. About 6 A.M. on New Year's Day the nearest approach of the earth and Mars for the present occasion took place.' The paragraph containing these words was headed, 'The Opposition of Mars. Prominence of the Planet of War.' It is curious that these comments should have proved, in the light of events which occurred a few months later, to be so regrettably appropriate to the occasion.

On Sunday 13th February 1916 there took place a very close conjunction of the planets Venus and Jupiter, the brightest star-like objects which ever adorn our sky. These were then evening stars, and their exceedingly close juxtaposition attracted universal notice. By multitudes of spectators the unwonted sight was mistaken for the searchlights of some aircraft, hostile or friendly. A similar occurrence in August 1826 was the theme of a poem by the American writer, William Cullen Bryant, 'The Conjunction of Jupiter and Venus.' In that poem he alluded to the struggle of 'hapless Greece,' then fighting against great odds to free herself from Ottoman tyranny, while Europe was idly looking on. On the occasion of the conjunction of 1916, Greece was again prominently before the world's notice; this time the enemy of her freedom was a traitor king, happily soon to be expelled, like the former Turkish oppressor.

II.

The next instance to which attention may be directed is of a more directly astrological nature. Astrologers have always attached particular importance to the position of the planets at the exact instant of the commencement of one of the four astronomical seasons. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter begin respectively when the sun enters the signs Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricornus. The planetary positions at such an instant are supposed to be prophetic of events immediately to follow. The spring equinox, in particular, is regarded as an epoch of special importance, as it has often been looked upon as the natural astronomical commencement of the year. National affairs are deemed to be 'presignified' in each case by the positions of the planets relatively to the horizon of the metropolis of a state. In 1917 the sun entered Aries, marking the commencement of spring, on 21st March at 4.37 A.M. (Greenwich time). At this moment of ingress all the nine planets (including in the term the sun and the moon) were beneath the horizon of London, a condition which existed three-quarters of an hour, between the setting of Neptune at 4.10 A.M. and the rising of the moon at 4.57 A.M. The chances against the nine planets being thus all below the horizon at any one point of time are five hundred and eleven against one, certainly a very large balance. But this is not all. By 6.8 A.M. (i.e. an hour and a half after the moment of ingress) six of the planets had risen—namely, Moon, Uranus, Venus, Mars, Sun, and Mercury. At the time of ingress (4.37) all these six were situated in what astrologers call the 'first house'—that is, the twelfth part of the celestial sphere immediately below the eastern horizon. With astrologers it is not a case of 'out of sight, out

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of mind.' The first house is also called the 'ascendant,' because it contains the celestial bodies about to rise; and though out of sight, these are considered, from the imminence of their ascent above the horizon, to be then powerful in a pre-eminent degree. The saying that one's 'star is in the ascendant' has become an expression of everyday occurrence. As there are twelve houses, the chance of any one planet being in the ascendant at a specified instant of time is one in twelve, and the chance of these six planets (or of any six *chosen* planets) being simultaneously in the ascendant is only one in nearly three millions (2,985,984). This calculation, however, assumes that six particular planets are selected. If only the sun and the moon are selected, and any other four planets are allowed to complete the group of six, the chance of fulfilment becomes one in eighty-five thousand three hundred and fourteen; if the sun alone is selected, the chance becomes one in fifty-three thousand three hundred and twenty-one. Even if no restriction is laid down, the chance of any six planets whatever being simultaneously in the ascendant is no higher than one in thirty-five thousand five hundred and forty-seven. Therefore, even if we include all the four seasons of the year, such a concentration of planets in the ascendant as occurred at London at the spring equinox of 1917 cannot mark the commencement of a season oftener upon an average than about once in nine thousand years. The year signalised by its occurrence was certainly one of notable successes for British arms, including the liberation of Jerusalem from the long-continued sway of the Turk.

Shortly after the capture of the Holy Places a celestial occurrence of pleasing appropriateness took place. The planet Venus was then a brilliant object in the early night sky, and on 5th January 1918 it reached an epoch of maximum brilliance as an evening star, an event which occurs at successive intervals of about five hundred and eighty-four days. At such times Venus shines with a lustre so surpassing that it has often been spoken of by imaginative beholders as a return of the 'Star of Bethlehem.' As an evening star the planet is always to be seen in the western heavens, and it is obvious that the 'Star of the East,' though viewed in the east (terrestrial locality) by the Wise Men, must have been seen shining in the western sky, since their journey was towards the west. The 5th January is the eve of (or day preceding) the Church festival on which is commemorated the Epiphany of Our Saviour and His Adoration by the Magi. If we suppose the 6th January to be indeed the correct anniversary of the day upon which 'star-led chiefs' did 'Assyrian odours bring,' there appears the interesting fact that soon after the 'little town of Bethlehem' was restored for the first time for centuries to Christian rule, the brightest and most beautiful of planets—Star of Bethlehem or not—shone down upon the city with its maximum brilliance on the night corresponding to that of the conclusion of the journey of the Magi to the shrine at Bethlehem. Surely a felicitous coincidence!

III.

Some weeks later, on 21st March 1918, an extremely critical phase of the war was entered upon. This again was accompanied in point of time by noteworthy configurations of the planets. The 21st March, it may be observed, is the precise date of the sun's crossing the equator, or the spring equinox. As has been pointed out, the year 1914, in which the war commenced, was ushered in with Mars at its nearest and brightest. This position of Mars was repeated (after one intermediate occurrence in 1916) on 18th March 1918, just preceding the equinox and the opening of the great German offensive. It may thus be imagined as having presaged the bitter struggle which immediately followed. If so, the fact that the 'auspicious planet' Venus attained almost simultaneously (on 16th March) its greatest brilliance as a morning star might with equal reason be regarded as emblematic of the propitious influence which averted the menace to the French capital and rendered the enemy's successes but partial and temporary.

The turning-point in this critical phase of the struggle came some three months later, and was immediately preceded by the two most outstanding astronomical events of the year 1918. Of these one was predictable, and its exact time was known many years in advance. The other, which was of an entirely unpredictable nature, chanced to fall on exactly the same day—namely, 8th June. The predictable event was a total eclipse of the sun, during which the moon's shadow traversed the United States of America, from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast, its track forming a relatively narrow stripe across the country. The other event was the bursting out of a new star in the constellation of Aquila, the Eagle—the brightest new star which has appeared since 1604. There was thus the triple combination of an eagle, a star, and a stripe, all familiar as symbols of the great Western Republic. Further, the 'stripe' was actually traced upon United States territory. To add to this chapter of coincidences, on precisely the same day (8th June) a vessel was launched for the British Navy, and was christened *The Eagle;* the christening ceremony was performed by Mrs Page, wife of the then United States Ambassador. This ceremony had, of course, been arranged a considerable time in advance; the new star was not seen until the evening; the coincidence was obviously unpremeditated. Altogether there was thus in June last an extraordinary accumulation of omens suggestive of that effective entry of the United States into the contest, which was very

soon to turn the scale decisively against the Teuton foe. In the subsequent months, when the successes of the Allied arms were shaping events towards victory, Venus, the auspicious 'Planet of Love,' was prominently in evidence, appearing successively in conjunction with other planets. On 27th July it was in conjunction with Jupiter, on 5th September with Saturn, and on 15th September with Mercury. All of these conjunctions presented a spectacle of exquisite beauty in the morning sky, and in view of the influences traditionally ascribed to Venus, they might be regarded as prophetic of the termination of hostilities that was soon happily to be consummated.

In 1914, the first year of the war, the planet Mars, or 'Planet of War,' as we have seen, made a closest approach to the earth early on New Year's Day. It is most remarkable that on 1st January 1919, the opening of the first year of re-established peace, an event occurred which forms almost as exact a counterpart as could have been devised if designedly arranged. Jupiter, which is the mightiest of the eight major planets, and hence reputedly a most influential one, and, further, one to which human fancies have always ascribed a beneficent influence, made a closest approach to the earth a few minutes before 2 A.M. on New Year's morning 1919. Such approaches occur near to the time of an 'opposition' to the sun of the planet concerned. In the case of Mars they happen about every twenty-six months, in the case of Jupiter about every thirteen months. It is, therefore, extremely remarkable that the early hours of 1st January in the years 1914 and 1919—respectively 'a time of war and a time of peace'—should in each case have witnessed a closest approach of one of these planets, and in addition that in each case it should have been the planet whose traditionally accredited influence was in keeping with the terrestrial events of the newly born year.

IV.

One or two other coincidences may here be alluded to. In September 1913 a comet was discovered in Aquarius by Delavan, a South American observer. A year later it was easily visible to the naked eye. In the words of the great French astronomer Flammarion, 'A comet that will be known in future as the "War Comet" reigned in the heavens throughout a year, and it will be visible for the ensuing five years. Such a long period of a comet's visibility is unknown in astronomic annals. . . . Without asserting the influence of the stars upon our planet's events, the coincidence is, to say the least, worthy of notice.' At the time of its greatest brilliance (September 1914) this comet was passing close beneath the 'Plough' or 'Charles's Wain,' the asterism formed by the seven brightest and best-known stars of that most familiar of all constellations, the Great Bear. The alteration of appearance which its presence temporarily produced in the constellation attracted much attention, and as the Bear was long a symbol of the great Muscovite Empire, the occurrence naturally suggested a connection with the war. It was hailed as an omen for the success of the Russian arms—surely, however, a case of the wish being father to the thought, for comets have always been looked upon as portents of evil. The sequel showed that the traditional view would rather have been justified. Also, as stated above, the comet was at the time of discovery in Aquarius, and this, according to tradition, foreboded misfortune to kings under Aquarius. Aquarius is reputed by astrologers to be the ruling sign of Russia and Prussia. It must be granted that this tradition also has been abundantly justified by the event. These facts are almost as striking as the coincidence which marked the return of Halley's Comet in 1910. Halley's is the most famous of all comets. Its visits to our neighbourhood occur only at intervals of seventy-six years. Yet on that occasion its nearest approach to the earth (one day out of seventy-six years) occurred on the very day of the late King Edward's funeral. Little wonder that some of his South African native subjects believed the huge and imposing ethereal visitant to be a chariot sent to bear the monarch's soul to celestial regions.

Another coincidence, though not astronomical, may be added to the list. According to the Biblical chronology in general use (Ussher's), the parting of Abraham and Lot, and the Divine promise to the former that his descendants should possess the land of Canaan, are dated as at B.C. 1918. In A.D. 1918 that land was freed from its long suppression to the Turkish yoke. It might be objected that the Old Testament date is to some extent uncertain, and that the adopted positioning in time of the Christian era is believed to be at least some four years too late. But notwithstanding this, it may fairly be claimed that the coincidence of the numbers stands. The date B.C. 1918 was assigned to the events mentioned centuries before this war was thought of, so the liberation of Palestine in A.D. 1918 presents a striking arithmetical coincidence, to bring out which no artificial manipulation of figures whatever is required.

The writer desires to add that he has no belief in astrology. In fact, most of the coincidences mentioned have no connection with the rules and principles of orthodox astrology, and therefore cannot be taken as affording any evidence in support of its truth. But he thinks that several of them are at any rate of much interest, even if regarded as purely fortuitous coincidences, especially the extraordinary configuration of 21st March 1917, the probabilities against the occurrence of which have been shown to be so colossal.

It is rather strange that the official 'astrologers' seem to have been oblivious to that remarkable adverse balance of probability, as well as to most of the other coincidences which are here pointed out, and have left it to the present writer to discover them.

This article cannot, perhaps, be more fittingly closed than by quoting some of the lines of William Cullen Bryant in reference to the conjunction of Jupiter and Venus in 1826:

> Look, even now,
> Where two bright planets in the twilight meet,
> Upon the saffron heaven—the imperial star
> Of Jove, and she that from her radiant urn
> Pours forth the light of love. Let me believe,
> Awhile, that they are met for ends of good,
> Amid the evening glory, to confer
> Of men and their affairs, and to shed down
> Kind influence. Lo! they brighten as we gaze,
> And shake out softer fires! . . . Happy they
> Born at this hour, for they shall see an age
> Whiter and holier than the past, and go
> Late to their graves. Men shall wear softer hearts,
> And shudder at the butcheries of war,
> As now at other murders.

Let us hope that the aspiration to which the poet gave voice may now at last be realised, by the institution of a League of Nations, and the inauguration of an era when man shall practise war no more.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XX.

THE silent night dragged on. I had groped my way to the couch, and lay, awake and unrefreshed, until in the dark early hours I caught the sound of some one stirring in the house. Footsteps halted in the corridor outside, the key turned in the lock, the electric light was turned on, and my interviewer of the previous night entered. He was still in evening-clothes, and carried a soft hat and a dust-coat. These he tossed on to the couch, and having locked the door, he put the key in his pocket and sat down on the chair opposite me.

He began by apologising for interrupting my rest, and his tone at first was more conciliatory than before.

'Come, Mr Forbes; surely we can arrive at an understanding,' he said.

'I have nothing to add to what I have said,' I told him. 'You can, of course, do what you please, but the document is not mine, nor is it in my keeping. Short of your stealing it, you can never lay hands on it.'

He controlled himself, but with an obvious effort.

'Consider,' he said again. 'It can be of no use to you,' and this time there was almost a pleading note in his voice. 'I assume that you value your life, and that you know you cannot pit yourself against us.'

'Your own life would be short if mine were lost or even endangered. There are two or three matters to which Scotland Yard and the Sûreté of Paris have given some attention, and in which you are interested. For instance, there are the little affair of the Plymouth mail-packet, the Linovada Hotel Syndicate, and'——

'Bah!' he interrupted. 'These incidents are of the past—dead and buried. We defeated both Scotland Yard and the Rue de Jérusalem; and they know it.'

He drew his chair close to me.

'Mr Forbes, if I am not mistaken, I can convince you of the uselessness of persistence in your attitude. No doubt it is "British" and "bulldog," and all that your strange nation worships. But it is senseless. Listen. I have money and power at my disposal. The Searchers have a history; and, strange, incredible though it may seem to you, I have a sentiment—a foolish kink of the mind, if you like—regarding it. You may not be able to understand this feeling, but it is there. Pray do not imagine that we shall fail in this quest. It is not the experience of the Brotherhood to be thwarted. We have a way of surmounting difficulties. You are one of these difficulties, and you can easily be dealt with. Regarding ourselves as ordinary citizens, I have no personal animosity to you. Rather the reverse! You have certain qualities which extort my admiration. You have the misfortune to stand in my way; that is all. But I am a trustee, a sworn member—nay, a leader—of a great organisation. We permit no defiance, and have only one sentence for it. I am (to avoid—shall I say?—extreme measures) about to suggest a fair and sensible arrangement, which will ensure your freedom now, and an equitable compromise of the matter between us. What price do you put on the document?'

'It is not mine.'

'Pouf! Negotiations are not impossible.'

'So far as I am concerned they are.'

His face grew dark.

'Where is this document?'

'Beyond your reach, and safe with its rightful owner.'

'For the last time I ask you, who and where is he?'

'That I refuse to tell. To force or cajole his name from me is the reason why I was brought here.'

He looked at me with a savage earnestness, and suddenly burst out: 'If you are in league with the miserable, thieving, red-haired traitor, I swear that your fate will be the same as that

which is surely overtaking him. I swear it,' he said, with cold and ferocious deliberation, his eye searching mine. 'You and your ingenious friend Keene-Leslie succeeded in outwitting us in Italy, but you will not do so a second time. My time is short. Here are my terms: On the delivery of the paper you shall receive a sum which will mean affluence for life. The details can be arranged promptly. These are fair terms; but if you reject them, to save your life will be out of my power. The Brotherhood will deal in its own way with you. I am empowered to offer you in return for the paper a princely sum. The Leopard's Eye alone is worth a fortune. Think what it means to you.'

I risked a bold card.

'A discussion of terms is out of the question with persons whose next appearance will probably be in the dock.'

He jumped up from his chair, but I held up my hand and raised my voice. 'This house is known. You and your gang are known. The game will soon be up.'

His face became transfigured with fury and menace. To this day I believe that, for a moment, my life was in danger.

'You are in league with the snake, the traitor. I swear,' he said, his anger choking him—'I swear that you and he shall pay the same penalty. I shall watch you die by inches. I shall hunt him down'—and this with a great oath—'I shall watch him die. . . . I shall'—— He came a pace nearer me, livid with passion.

His loss of self-control was his undoing. As he made a spring, I ducked, just in time to escape his hands on my throat, and in the same instant I got my left straight on his solar plexus. The blow knocked the breath out of him, and before he could give a second gasp, I followed with an upper cut from my right on his chin. He dropped like a stone. I was not 'seeing red,' but knowing, without the shadow of a doubt, that mercy to him meant death for me, I lifted him up and heaved him against the opposite wall. The impact of his skull on the wall, and the limp, motionless huddle of his body, told me that he would not trouble me for at least some precious minutes. Grimly thankful that I had been a useful three-quarter in the old days at Raeburn Place, Edinburgh, I bent over him. He was breathing, but unconscious, and a trickle of blood came from one ear.

I got my wind back, and listened intently, but there was not the slightest sound from the house. Silence reigned. I had not a moment to lose. The man lay still, breathing heavily, his eyes closed. Slipping his revolver into my pocket, I ran my fingers through his evening-clothes for the door-key, and in search of anything which might be of use to me afterwards in the way of information; but I found nothing. His fawn-coloured coat and soft hat were lying on the couch. I put them on, pulled the coat-collar quickly up to my ears, jammed the hat well down, and with my mind made up, if the need arose, to fire at sight, I cautiously unlocked the door, and, with the revolver ready, peered out into the corridor. It was empty and dark, except for a faint greenish gleam five or six yards or so to my left. Having noiselessly locked the door, I put the key in my pocket, and holding my breath, tiptoed a foot at a time down the corridor towards the light. This, I discovered, came from a single electric bulb held aloft in the hand of a marble statuette round the bend of the corridor, at its junction with a well-carpeted hall. The light was dim, and after half-a-dozen stealthy steps forward into the hall, I blundered into an alcove lined with coats and hats. It was well that I found myself there, for I had hardly reached its shelter when a sudden shrill noise close beside me stiffened me with fright. It was only a telephone-bell; but its uncanny presence in the dark—like some invisible watcher—positively made my scalp creep.

There was just time to crouch in the darkest corner of the alcove, when quick and heavy footsteps sounded on the floor above me, and then began to descend the stairs. My heart was beating unpleasantly when their owner neared my hiding-place; but he hurried past, and went straight to the telephone. It was Benedetto; I heard his rich bass voice saying, 'Yes. . . . Ah! . . . It is you, signore. . . . Other business on hand just now. Your message must wait.' (I felt horribly certain that the 'other business' referred to me.) 'I cannot disturb him just now; but the car is waiting, and if he does not send for me in a quarter of an hour, I will deliver your message. It must keep until then. Yes. . . . The affair went off like clockwork. So did Signor Forbes! Ha! ha! . . . Yes. . . . We got here without an incident—not so much as a kick. . . . Ah! Call me in a quarter of an hour, then.'

He rang off, and walked briskly back to the foot of the stair, where he stood and listened for a moment. Then, satisfied, he went upstairs, humming an air. I heard a door shut, and once more his footsteps on the flooring overhead. My luck had held. I drew a long breath of relief. Neither shooting a man nor being shot appeals to me, and had the old villain discovered me, my only chance would have been to fire first. There remained the danger of the man in the room regaining consciousness. The slightest noise—the upsetting of a chair, a false step—and the house would spring into life.

In my jacket-pocket was a box of vestas. Having covered it with the overcoat to stifle the sound, I struck a light and looked round the corner of the alcove. The way to the door was straight, and clear of furniture. I blew the match out and moved noiselessly forward.

A thin current of air met me, and, to my astonishment, I found that the door was slightly open. Drawing it wider, stealthily, inch by inch, I stepped out into the chill night air. One—two—three—four—five steps, and my feet were on the gravel. Another twenty yards with my nerves taut, and, 'Here I am, signore. The car is ready,' came a voice out of the darkness in a wary half-whisper. I own that I got a bad shake. Chagrined, beaten 'on the post,' I stood stock-still for a second or two, straining my eyes into the gloom, when, 'This way, signore,' came the voice again, and I saw the pin-point of an electric torch leading the way. Recovering my scattered wits, I followed the light boldly, but not trusting myself to reply, for the man had obviously mistaken me for somebody else. Then came the rattle of a key and the sound of the gate being opened. I hunched my shoulders into my coat-collar and went forward, to find my confiding guide holding open the door of an empty motor-car. There was a chauffeur on the driving-seat, who turned round and touched his hat. The glare of the head-lamp threw me into shadow. '*Buona notte, signore*,' came from my guide. Not a second did I hesitate. I jumped in; the door was shut; and after an intolerable delay (it seemed to me) during which the guide said a word or two to the chauffeur, the gate closed with a clang. Next moment the car started.

Where it was going was a minor consideration, so long as it put miles between me and the accursed house. I did not risk switching on the light. The chauffeur had not seen my face, and was looking steadily ahead, intent on the steering-wheel. I struck a match and looked at my watch. It was almost half-past two. In a couple of minutes the car was running swiftly and smoothly—much too quickly for me to risk jumping out; but I made up my mind to leave without ceremony when it slowed down. Feeling like the central figure in a nightmare, I kept my eyes on the driver and waited for developments. None came. The man's stolid back never turned. The car hummed along at a good pace, past lamps and the dim shapes of houses, now and then over street pavements. We were nearing London, I was sure. Once there, I reflected, I was comparatively safe, and the feel of the revolver-butt heartened me wonderfully. So far I had escaped by the skin of my teeth, but I was by no means out of the wood. Three o'clock. Now the street-lamps became more numerous. Every minute was bringing me nearer safety and freedom.

(*Continued on page 309.*)

LEECHES.

By Mrs F. A. Douglas.

AMONGST the many curious occupations of the human race is that of leech-gathering. Once it was a feature of our English countryside, but our supply has always been comparatively limited, and it has continued to decrease. Even in Wordsworth's day the 'leech-gatherer on the lonely moor' complained:

> Once I could meet with them on every side,
> But they have dwindled long by slow decay,
> Yet still I persevere and find them where I may.

The picture of this old man is full of poetic pathos, and has cast something of romance over the thought of this old-time occupation. However, lingering by muddy pools, stirring them and watching them in all kinds of weather, must have been peculiarly productive of rheumatism; and if, in the end, leech-gatherers made a poor living by it, it is not surprising that one hears little of the practice now. One subsidiary cause of the dwindling of leeches in England is the extensive drainage and cultivation of waste land that has gone on during the last hundred years.

As a matter of fact, leeches have for some time been imported, mainly from the continent of Europe. The war led to a very serious shortage of them. A correspondent of the *Times* pointed out a year or two ago that there were only a few dozens left in London, and *they* were second-hand! America and Canada were applied to without success; but, finally, an ingenious doctor succeeded in getting some from India. They stood the journey and the change of climate well, and, when last heard of, were in a state of promising vigour and salutary hunger. In a word, they were ready for work. Leeches are not used nearly so much now as formerly. About 1830 as many as fifty-two millions a year were used in Paris alone. Still, they were in considerable demand in the hospitals during the war, and the shortage was a distinctly serious matter.

The use of the leech is, of course, a survival of the old system of blood-letting. This method of reducing the excessive vitality of our too buoyant ancestors was, in those days of gargantuan eating and drinking, no doubt beneficial if not carried too far.

Such was the part played by the leech in old-time medicine or 'leechcraft' that it confirmed (if it did not occasion) the application of the same name to the physician or the veterinary surgeon. In both senses the word is derived from Old English *lǽce*, 'one who heals,' variation in form or spelling having doubtless been obviated by the intimate asso-

ciation in the public mind between the leech and its prescriber.

The ancients had a mighty belief in leeches. Pliny held they were good for the gout, and also said that the ashes of burned leeches, made into a paste with vinegar, would remove hair from any part of the body to which it was applied. Leeches, it was affirmed, removed 'offensive humours from the body.' One wise old physician attempted to cure 'lethargy' by applying leeches to the fore and back parts of the head. The leech was preferred to the lancet for children.

Leeches should be thrown into warm water, to clean them before use, and removed from the water one hour before you wish to apply them, so that they may be hungry and ready to bite. If they hang on longer than you wish, you can detach them by drawing a horse-hair across their sucker, or by sprinkling them with salt.

Leeches, however, are contrary creatures. Like fleas, they will not bite everybody, and are probably connoisseurs in blood, objecting to the acidity that spoils so many people's circulatory supply. One remembers Dame Fripp in *Mr Gilfil's Love-Story*. She made a pretty penny by not only keeping leeches, but knowing also how to apply them. She was understood to have a remarkable influence over 'those wilful animals,' and to be able to make them bite 'under the most unpromising circumstances.'

The partiality of leeches for flesh has been in some places their undoing, for on the Continent people sometimes catch them by simply wading bare-legged in the pools they frequent. The leeches fasten on to the legs of their own accord, and as nothing sticketh closer than a leech (unless it be a limpet), they are easily captured.

Leeches take their predominant colour from the soils in which they are found. For instance, leeches found in peaty soil near Glastonbury are black; taken in red soil they are reddish; and in yellow clay they are yellowish. In winter they love deep water, but in summer they come into shallow water to get the sun. When their pools freeze they burrow deep into the mud at the bottom to keep warm, and reappear when the thaw comes. Just before a thunderstorm they come right to the surface, and that is the best time to gather them.

Cowper said of leeches that 'in point of the earliest intelligences they are worth all the barometers in the world.' A clergyman in France kept one in a jar of water in his window. When the weather was likely to be good the leech remained at the bottom of the jar; when rain was coming it mounted to the surface. When the weather threatened to be boisterous it moved restlessly about, and on the near approach of thunder it was very restless indeed.

The leech has considerable vitality—probably owing to its diet. It takes five years to grow to its full size, and sometimes it lives twenty years. It can be kept in confinement for as long as ten years. In spite of its vagaries, it can to a certain extent be controlled and kept from straying. It feeds in its natural state on the larvæ of aquatic insects.

There are medicinal leeches (*Hirudo medicinalis*), horse-leeches (*Hæmopis sanguisuga*), and land-leeches (for example, *Hæmadipsa Ceylonica*).

The leech has two suckers, one at each end of its body. It resembles the earthworm. Its suckers enable it to elongate and contract its body, and render it capable of very varied activity. The anterior mouth, with which it sucks human blood, is furnished with three tiny, strong jaws (semicircular 'saws,' each armed with eighty or ninety minute teeth of lime and chitin) which inflict a peculiar triradiate bite. It has ten small eye-spots on the head. Leeches require to scale off their epidermis frequently, and if kept in plain water they cannot do so. In pools they are aided in this operation by the aquatic plants, against which they rub themselves. The horse-leech is a big bully of a leech—of no real use for medicinal purposes (its teeth are not sharp enough); it feeds on its cousins the earthworms. Old amateur surgeons, however, if we may judge from the following extract, appear to have used them.

'Horsleches,' says the writer, 'are wholesome to drawe forthe foule blood, if thei are put into a hollowe rede, and one of their endes cutte of, whereby the blood maie run forthe.' It may be that he confused the horse-leech with the medicinal leech.

The land-leech is a curious little wriggling thing about an inch long, inhabiting mostly hot countries. There is a tiny insidious species in Japan. You do not know it has attacked you until you find yourself running with blood. In Ceylon land-leeches drive horses distracted, worry through stockings, and hang in bunches on the bare legs of the natives.

It is not wise to swallow leeches. Travellers in hot countries drinking hastily from stagnant pools too often regret it. A French army marching through the desert once quenched its thirst at a muddy pool, and the results were disastrous. If you do swallow leeches, you are recommended to drink vinegar and eat garlic; but a salt-and-water emetic is really the best thing. They *are* digestible, for a French doctor, having caused a patient to vomit some, examined the recovered leeches and found them semi-digested.

It may be that we shall gradually learn to do without leeches, yet this natural and ancient method of extracting superfluous or unwholesome blood will always remain of great interest to students alike of hygiene and of manners.

THE WINGS OF THE MORNING.

PART II.

I.

NEXT day was Sunday, but instead of putting on Sabbath-day blacks and dutifully answering the call of the kirk bell, the dominie decided to take his weekly allowance of preaching by proxy. Accordingly Janet occupied the 'school pew' in solitary state and vast secret displeasure. For Janet had a grievance, the sort of grievance trusting women so often have against sly, deluding man. She had not been deceived, thanks to her own cuteness; but the attempt to deceive was palpable.

'I wouldn't have believed it o' him,' thought Janet, as the small, broken-winded organ began to wheeze out a jerky prelude. 'No, I wouldn't,' she repeated, as the minister, stately and solemn, entered, and mounted the pulpit stairs. 'What would *he* think o' ane o' his elders tryin' to bamboozle his auld hoosekeeper? To tell me he was for a whiff o' hill-wind to cure a heidache, when a' the time I kent fine he was off to see Margaret Gordon! David was richt. Men are a' quirky; and he's juist like the lave o' them. It's for marryin' her he'll be, for a' that's come and gone. What I'm wonderin' is if ae hoose will be big enough to hold me an' her.'

She knew what had happened, and of course was sorry for Margaret Gordon, with the sorrow of a spinster for a weeping Rachel. But she could not forgive the dominie. These thoughts so engrossed Janet that she could not find the text in all her Bible, heard not a word of the sermon, and almost broke into singing when others were composing themselves for prayer. When the ordeal of public worship was over, and gossip had been duly exchanged at the kirk door, she returned to a cold dinner in an exceedingly hot state of mind. That she had the dinner all to herself was part of the dominie's duplicity.

A charge of duplicity was perhaps justified, though not precisely as Janet suspected. While the church bells jangled out their cracked summons Thomas Dunning 'looked in' at High Croft, 'just to say, "How d'ye do?"' in the passing. He remembered that Margaret had not seen Mr Hector's letter. Perhaps she would like to read it for herself. He would, therefore, leave it, and call for it on his way back. No, thanks, he would have nothing. One climbed all the better for going light. Then, remarking that the day was warm, and good for growing crops, he turned once more to the hills above. Margaret understood. 'Tom is always tactful and delicate,' she said to herself. On his part he was saying, 'She hasn't slept a wink all night, and her eyes—oh, poor thing! I could scarcely bear to look at them.'

II.

For a quarter of a mile—that is to say, as long as he was within sight of High Croft—the dominie walked rapidly; then, finding himself in solitude, he sat down on a mossy, sun-warmed rock and thought of Margaret Gordon.

Three hours later he returned, and she was waiting for him, pitiably white, but dry-eyed and composed. Together they went inside, and this time he consented to have refreshments—of scone, fresh butter, and creamy heather-milk, which would have superseded nectar had it been known on Olympus. Thus braced, he cleared his throat—somehow he had all at once become a victim to hoarseness—and cautiously referred to Mr Hector's letter.

'It's a fine, generous letter,' said Margaret simply. 'I'll always love Mr Hector for what he says in it. Yes, though I'm far, far away from High Croft.'

The last part of the statement was a clear lapse, and nearly cost Margaret her studied, resolute self-possession.

'Yes,' he agreed, noting her effort to be calm. 'The letter of one brave man paying tribute to another. Sir Hector is deeply touched.'

He appeared to be going on, but, instead, turned abruptly and looked out of the window. The rich flush of midsummer was on the scene; a Sabbath peace was in the air. All thought of war seemed remote, alien, and incongruous.

'It's bonnie,' he murmured. 'Theocritus would have loved it.' And then, with a sidelong look, 'You wouldn't like to leave it, would you, Maggie?'

'It just needs that to break my heart altogether,' she answered. 'That would do it.'

There was a long pause. 'Wouldn't it be hard for you to carry on alone?' he asked then.

'Oh! I could do it,' was the emphatic reply. 'And now that they're all gone, it's what I'd like to do.'

The dominie gulped something invisible. 'Maggie,' he said, not too successfully keeping the gulp out of his voice, 'there's one thing I have to say, and it's this—that, go or stay, Sir Hector is your very good friend. I have seen him again, and he authorised me to tell you that.'

She looked at him searchingly. 'Tom,' she cried, 'you have been pleading for me.'

'Never a word,' he replied promptly. 'Never so much as a single word. You should have heard what he says about Aleck.'

'Then if he's my friend he'll let me stay here,' said Margaret. 'I have some help, and I'm used to working. Tom, do this for me, and

tell Sir Hector he will have every penny of his own—every penny.'

'Believe me, he's not thinking of that,' the dominie assured her.

But he did not argue. Instead, he acted.

III.

The very next day Margaret received a letter which made her giddy with excitement. She glanced at the address—'Carbenny Castle;' she glanced at the signature—Sir Hector's. The letter, in the baronet's own hand, was as follows:

'Dear Mrs Gordon,—Our common friend, Mr Dunning, informs me that you desire to remain at High Croft. I greatly regret that I cannot see my way to comply with your wish' (Margaret nearly collapsed) 'because it is contrary to pending arrangements. In the providence of God and at the call of duty, you have been deprived of those to whom you would naturally look for help. My heart goes out to you—but I will not dwell on that. What I have to say is that for all our sakes I think it best you should leave High Croft. Therefore you shall have choice of two other houses. Whichever you choose shall be rent free as long as you care to occupy it, and I trust you will accept such a supplement to your income as will be sufficient for the comfort I should like you to have. I beg this as a favour, and not in any sense as a return for what you and yours have done for me and mine. That is beyond payment. You see, I assume you will do us the honour of remaining on the estate. For the rest, with your permission, you shall have assistance in winding up things at High Croft. My advice, dear Mrs Gordon, is that you just leave the bother of winding up and flitting to us men-folk.

'My son is already in hospital in London. As soon as ever the surgeons are done with him he will be home. His mother, who sends her love and sympathy, thinks our Highland air will do him more good than all the apothecary's stuff in England. You may be sure he will take the very earliest opportunity of calling and expressing to you in person something of what we all feel.

'Please let me know that all this is agreeable to you. God sustain and bless you, now and always.'

Margaret was glad she was permitted to read this letter by herself, that no one was by to witness the grateful, tender, distressing tears she shed over it. 'My Aleck,' she sobbed, 'saved me in the end, as he said he would. And Mr Hector—yes, I'll always love Mr Hector.'

IV.

She met Mr Hector soon, but not in the quietness of her own Highland hills as had been planned. Before he could come home she went up to London, first class, at Sir Hector's expense, to receive from the King's own hand the decoration won, but never worn, by Aleck. The dominie accompanied her, for, as Sir Hector pointed out with clinching force, she could never be trusted to go alone.

'The tumult and confusion would simply stun and bewilder her,' he said. 'Ten to one, she'd be run over by some careering fool or ever she got near Buckingham Palace. So she needs you. Eh! What's that? The school? Fiddlesticks! The Board aren't idiots; and when did scholars object to a holiday?'

The scholars accordingly had their holiday—'in honour,' the master was careful to explain, 'of one who has brought lasting glory to our school.'

The weather being fine, it was an open-air investiture; and when Margaret, who would fain have hidden at the last moment, was conducted into the Royal presence, a small, white, trembling figure, lost, as it seemed, in the sea of uniforms, the Cockney crowd cheered lustily. There was more cheering when the King presented the little Maltese Cross with the bit of crimson ribbon which would for ever tell the tale of Aleck's valour and sacrifice. She curtsied in acknowledgment, and was turning away, but the King detained her to praise Aleck's bravery and say how well the proud distinction was deserved. Finally he shook hands, 'warm and friendly, just as if he had known me all my life,' said Margaret afterwards. She had not imagined kings capable of shaking hands in that fashion. As she made her way to the rear, smiling through her tears and holding her treasure tight, the watching, eager crowd exploded in another and more prolonged cheer. She turned quickly round, as if afraid. 'Don't you be a-takin' on, missis,' she was told sympathetically. ''E was a good boy as got 'e *that*, mum.'

'Thank you for that,' said Margaret simply.

Mr Hector stood beside the dominie, waiting for her. He was on crutches (that was why he had not attended her before them all), and at sight of him she stopped, a quick look of pity in her face.

'Oh, Mr Hector dear!' she cried, scarcely noticing his salute, 'but I'm sorry to see you like this.'

'I am very thankful to be like this, Mrs Gordon,' he answered. 'If it hadn't been for Sergeant Gordon I shouldn't have been here at all. I'm glad to have seen what I've seen to-day. My father has told you all, hasn't he?'

'Yes, sir, he has told me all.'

She caught her lip. He understood, and withheld something he greatly wanted to say. By-and-by she would be better able to listen.

A motor was in readiness, and he took the two to the little hotel off the Strand (recommended by Sir Hector) where they had put up for one night. Thence he took them to Euston, and, in spite of crutches, insisted on conducting Margaret to her carriage.

'Tell them at home I'm getting on famously,' he said at parting, 'and that I'll be north in no

time. It's mortal dull work getting well here in London.'

Only when the train was starting and he held Margaret's hand a moment did he venture to hint some fraction of what was in his heart. She was infinitely grateful for his reticence.

'I don't think I could have held up if he had spoken much of Aleck,' she confided to the dominie.

V.

Janet, with a small company of intimate and particular friends, received Margaret in her new home, which was just ready, and passed by Sir Hector as fit for occupation. By one of the coincidences in which truth plagiarises so shamefully from fiction, it chanced to stand next neighbour to the schoolhouse. Janet looked wise and prophetic.

'Ay, juist so,' she remarked. 'I'm thinkin' it's no exactly for nothing they're gable to gable. It runs in my mind that it's under the same roof they'll be afore a's ower.'

And Janet was right. One day, some months later, a gossip ran to her, in a state of high excitement, with a certain question.

'Ay, it's quite true,' announced Janet, 'as I kent weel it would be. Margaret Gordon is to be Margaret Dunning. Astonished, are ye? Ye'd be fair dumfoonered if ye saw what I see. Daft, that's what the puir man is—clean daft. Canna eat or sleep for thinkin' o' his dearie. An', my word, sic preparations! The drawin'-room's to be pented an' papered. There's to be grand new upholstery an' picters an' a carpet, forby a braw brass bed an' a wheen o' whigmaleeries upstairs. An' the pension's to go on. The maister an' Sir Hector had words ower it; but Sir Hector would have it so, or doon comes the moon aboot our heids. No, I'm no leavin'. *He* says I maun bide an' take care o' her. Twa to cook an' clean for instead o' ane. It's grand to be so muckle thocht o'. My certie!'

Janet was the most loyal of women and the best of housekeepers; but the mysteries of sentiment were far beyond her ken.

THE END.

BACK TO THE WEEDS—NOURISHMENT FROM NETTLES.

By I. I. Brants.

EUROPE of late years has listened to the call of the land. She has grown conscious of over-industrialisation, of artificiality, of a one-sided, shiftless, and helpless development. Back to the land, then, is the gospel for our super-civilisation. And it seems that the war has accentuated this tendency. Shipping troubles have forced nations to produce their own sustenance and their own raw materials. In industrialised countries farming once more is coming to its own.

But the movement has not stopped there. Not only does scientific agriculture strive to enhance the yield of every acre, to increase the produce of every grain of seed through selective improvement, but botanical explorers scour the valleys of the world for new possibilities to vie with the regulation crops.

Not the least interesting venture in this direction is the effort nowadays made all over the European continent to turn to benefit indigenous vegetation hitherto considered harmful or, at least, useless weeds. Certain of these attempts have already been crowned with success. Ethnographical and other research tends to show that many of these weeds, at some time or other in the historic or prehistoric past, were put to economical use. In this respect the movement is a return to the 'forgotten truths' of our Neolithic ancestors, the flint-armed dwellers of the caves. And it is a remarkable fact that this re-exploitation of the native weed should have had its origin in Sweden, by common consent of anthropologists the cradle of our Neolithic race, the country where the physical characteristics of this race have been most purely preserved.

In Sweden it is Erik Lundström and his followers who teach the people to profit by whatever grows. Their greatest 'boom' recently has been in stinging-nettles, *Urtica dioica* and *Urtica urens* alike. Want of cotton has taught people to obtain the textile fibres from the stems of the stinging-nettle (as did their ancestors), and not only in Sweden, but in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland likewise. What used to be called 'nettle-cloth' is again brought on the market, not merely as a substitute for cotton, but as an improvement on it both in fineness and durability. For this reason 'nettle-cloth' is almost certain to remain on the market even after the war.

In the boggy regions, so common in a sparsely populated country like Sweden, people have begun to cultivate nettle-fields. Nor is this culture intended exclusively for the spindle and the jenny. The leaf of the stinging-nettle constitutes an excellent foodstuff. Properly speaking, this is not a discovery or even a rediscovery. All over the European continent there are country-folks who in early spring use the first nettle-sprouts for making soup. They claim the nettle—and rightly so—to be the great purifier of the blood. As cried the Mermaid of Glasgow to the oarsmen who rowed the coffin down the Clyde,

> If they wad drink nettles in March,
> And eat muggons in May,
> Sae mony braw maidens
> Wadna gang to the clay.

But April come, even the cottar forgets his

nettles. There is some sort of superstition that with this month the leaves cease to be suited for human consumption, and at best can be used only for fodder. This tradition the Swedish scientists have proved to be altogether mistaken. It is true that in early spring nettle-leaves produce a daintier dish than in the height of summer, but even in latest autumn they are perfectly edible and highly nutritive. The analysis of the Swedish chemist Almén has given the following results: albumen, 5·5 per cent.; fat, 0·6 per cent.; carbohydrate, 7·1 per cent.; salts, 2·3 per cent. As concerns food-values, the Swedish experiments have shown that one kilogramme of beans can give 548 calories to the human system, one kilogramme of carrots 355 calories, one kilogramme of stinging-nettles 590 calories. This sufficiently proves the importance of the said 'weed' as a vegetable.

In Sweden nettle-leaves are eaten both in the form of soup and as a substitute for spinach. Quite recently the leading school of cookery at Gothenburg, Sweden, has been most successful in producing *nettle-bread*. For this purpose the nettle-leaves are first boiled in water, which eventually is poured off. The cooked leaves are then passed through a mincer, after which leaven is mixed with them and one part of rye-flour to every three of nettle-mush. The best results are reached when the bread is not baked too thickly. Apart from being much more nourishing than ordinary bread, the nettle-loaf allows considerable economising of the bread-card in rationing days.

It is not necessary each time to gather the leaves fresh from the stem. They can be preserved in jars for winter use like any other vegetable, and it is also possible to dry them. For this latter purpose the leaves are simply spread out for a couple of days on paper, after which they can be kept indefinitely in bags or boxes, if not exposed to damp.

S.O.S.

By F. O. O.

THE vault-like silence of the dug-out had been unbroken ever since the night relief had come on duty, five hours ago now. Since then an unusual stillness had reigned, emphasised rather than ruffled by the faint sounds that required an attentive ear to detect them: the deep breathing of the sleeping telephonist, the scuffling of a rat among the pit-props that supported the roof, the slow drip of water somewhere in the dark corners. The greater part of the place was in shadow, hiding strange, grotesque forms of telephones and all the apparatus of the signallers, for this dug-out was the fighting-post of the battery. Only above the table at which sat the subaltern on duty hung a hurricane-lamp, casting its uncertain light on the back of his head as he leant, half-asleep, over the maps spread out before him.

A faint, blue haze of smoke from the smouldering logs piled in one corner hung about the place. This fire was a source of perpetual trouble. There was only one direction of the wind in which the smoke consented to go up the hole in the roof that served as a chimney; at other times it drifted about the dug-out, finding an eventual exit by the door, and nearly stifling the inmates in the process with its pungency. It was a choice between freezing and suffocation, and the night relief invariably chose the latter. By the fire, at a spot where it seemed as though the glowing embers must fall out and singe her fur, sat the battery cat, luxuriating in the warmth and the stillness. She was supposed to be useful as well as ornamental, a catcher of mice as well as a mascot; but a recent visit to the battery cookhouse had rendered her completely indifferent to the scuffling of the rats, or even to a faint squeaking in the dark corners.

Outside, up the long flight of muddy steps that led to the entrance of the dug-out, the night—or rather morning, for it was nearly two o'clock—was pitch-dark, and dismal with unceasing drizzle. November is never a particularly dry month in Artois, and this November must have been one of the wettest on record. The country-side was a swamp; the roads had degenerated into water-courses; the wood in which the guns were concealed, and among the roots of whose trees the fighting-post had been contrived, was sodden with fallen leaves and dripping with great drops from the naked branches. To one coming up out of even the faint glimmer of the dug-out, the darkness seemed like an impenetrable wall. The way to the guns was a devious one by day; on a night like this it was fraught with a thousand pitfalls. The wood was a favourite target for the German gunners; they were pretty certain that it must conceal something, probably guns, but they had never succeeded in discovering exactly where these were located. Consequently they had amused themselves from time to time by sending over a few high-explosive, which had scattered the branches of the trees and made deep craters, now full of dark-brown water. The paths through the wood wandered between the trees, skirted the edges of the shell-holes, took wide sweeps to avoid swampy tracts where the fallen leaves of countless years had decayed. This labyrinthine battery position was no place for any one who did not know its ramifications by heart. But here and there, scattered at irregular intervals among the undergrowth,

was all that complicated organisation that constitutes a heavy siege battery: the big howitzers under their woven canopies of branches, piles of shell and cartridges in cunningly constructed shelters, dug-outs for the men to live in, a cook-house, a workshop for the artificers. The wood had become a settlement of cave-dwellers.

In the fighting-post the telephonist on duty rose from his seat, glanced at the watch on the officer's table, then stirred his sleeping comrade with his foot. 'Wake up, Jim,' he said. 'Your turn for a spell.'

Jim leapt to his feet without a word. One gets used to waking up instantly on service. He stepped over to the fire and stirred it carefully. 'Stick it a minute, mate, while I boil up the tea,' he said, putting a mess-tin on the embers as he spoke. The other man nodded and turned to his instruments again. Suddenly the insistent note of the buzzer cut into the stillness like a knife —GL, GL, the battery call, impatient and sharp.

Instantly the place sprang into life. The telephonist adjusted his receiver more closely to his ears; the officer leapt to his feet and turned up the lamp; the cat opened her eyes, stretched herself, and proceeded to wash her face preparatory to taking an interest in the proceedings. Then the telephonist turned to the officer and handed him the instrument. 'Brigade want an officer at the telephone, sir,' he said.

The subaltern put the receiver to his ear. 'Yes, officer speaking,' he said. 'Very good, sir; S.O.S. Auchonvillers South.'

The telephonist snatched the big megaphone from the nail on which it hung when not in use, and thrust it into the officer's hand as he put down the receiver. Armed with this, the subaltern bounded up the steps, sent one clarion call resounding through the dark wood, then rushed back to his table to make out the orders for the guns. It may be explained that 'S.O.S.' calls—that is to say, sudden calls from the infantry for artillery support—are all arranged for beforehand, and the orders to the guns worked out. All that remains to be done is to issue the orders to the guns corresponding to the sector from which the call comes.

But during the few seconds that it took the subaltern to look up the orders in his list many things had time to happen. The wood had passed the night in a strangely peaceful silence, broken only by the steady plashing of the rain; but before the echoes of that sharp call, 'Battery, action!' had died away, it woke into sudden life. It seemed as though the notes of Gabriel's celestial trumpet had burst upon a dead world. From every corner unseen figures could be heard rushing to their posts; here and there bright flashes betrayed the electric torches of the 'Numbers One,' as the N.C.O.'s in charge of the detachments are termed, or fainter flickerings showed where the battle lanterns were being lit. The darkness slowly gave place to a dim, ghostly light, which revealed a scene of apparent chaos, in which dark figures rushed helter-skelter among the dim shadows of the trees. But this apparent confusion was really the working of an exact and rigid machinery, elaborately worked out to the last minute detail, whereby each man performed his duties in the smallest possible fraction of a minute. When artillery support is wanted, it is wanted immediately, and the first test of a battery's efficiency is the speed with which it gets into action. This particular battery had a reputation to maintain, a reputation very dear to every soul that had helped to build it up, and a call to action meant a desperate race between the detachments for the honour of being the first to report ready. Under such circumstances no fraction of a second was likely to be lost by a single member of the gun-teams.

The detachments on duty spent the night round the guns, so as to be ready for instant action. They had built themselves curious wigwam-like shelters of woven branches, lined with tarpaulins, which were far more effective in keeping out the wet than they looked. It was, therefore, merely a matter of two or three seconds before they were on the guns; but getting into action involves other preparation than this. For one thing, not more than half-a-dozen shell are kept at the guns ready fused. Shell unfused are most unlikely to explode, even if they receive a direct hit from a hostile round; but if they are fused the danger is greatly increased. Both shell and cartridges are, therefore, kept in small quantities scattered about the battery, the former unfused, in order to minimise the risk of damage from an unlucky round. As soon as the battery comes into action, sufficient ammunition must be collected at the guns to ensure an uninterrupted rate of fire. Hence the figures struggling among the tree-trunks under the burden of the heavy shell, causing the wood to assume the appearance of a disturbed ant-heap.

Suddenly a familiar sound made itself heard above the noise of preparation—a long-drawn whine that rose in rapid crescendo until it became almost a roar. Nobody paid any attention to it; probably very few even heard it—they were far too busy for that. The shell burst harmlessly a few hundred yards behind the battery, the first round of a favourite form of 'counter-preparation' by which the Germans hoped to neutralise the guns opposed to them, before they could interfere with whatever mischief was on hand.

But before a battery can be effectively neutralised, it must be located, and this the Germans had never succeeded in accomplishing. Knowing this, they resorted to indiscriminate 'searching and sweeping' of the wood, hoping for a lucky round. The shell came over in salvos, dropping here and there among the trees with a series of dull roars and lurid flashes. Splinters sang through the air, with a high, buzzing note like a swarm of giant mosquitoes, lopping off twigs in their

passage, or thudding angrily into the tree-trunks. Sometimes one burst near enough for its flash to light up the toilers at the guns, pursuing their business oblivious of the turmoil about them.

All at once a new note came into the whine of the approaching shell, and before the salvo had fallen the battery resounded with shouts of 'Ware gas!' The shell burst with a curious soft pop, quite unlike the roar of high-explosive, which was followed by the deep, metallic clang of a length of railway-iron being beaten with a steel hammer. Well within the six seconds allowed for the operation the detachments had their gas-helmets on, and the sentries detailed for the purpose were running from one dug-out to the next, arousing their sleeping occupants. The only danger from gas lies in being caught unawares.

The men were too used to gas-bombardments to be greatly impeded by their respirators, and the work went on without slackening. But the scene—viewed by the light of the battle lanterns, which by now were burning fully, and casting dim rays through the glades of the wood—became more weird than ever. The detachments, muffled in their greatcoats, their faces hidden by the unearthly shapes of the respirators, seemed like creatures of some perverted imagination, toiling at the half-seen monstrous bulks of the big howitzers. The wood took on the appearance of a gnome-haunted forest, mephitic, inhabited by wailing ghosts and toiling demons.

Away out beyond the wood towards the trenches the night had blossomed into intermittent fire. Hardly had the coloured rockets, the signal of the infantry that something unusual was happening, soared up into the low-lying mist and been lost, than a bright constellation of Very lights, blurred and yellow through the driving rain, rose along the whole line. Closely following them came the flashes of the field-guns, seeming to light up the whole heavens with the bluish glare of summer lightning. So thickly were the guns massed that the glare was continuous, penetrating even into the darkness of the wood. But the mist and the trees seemed to muffle the sound, so that no distinct reports could be heard, only a great reverberating roar that made the ground tremble beneath one's feet, and shook the big drops in showers from the overhanging branches. Against the background of this roar played a continuous rattle of musketry and machine-guns, reaching ever farther to right and left as the alarm spread.

Thirty-five seconds after the call to action had sounded through the battery, the subaltern on duty came running up to the guns, a paper with the orders written on it in his hands. It is not much use to try to shout orders through a gas-mask, but probably fatal to take it off for the purpose. As he ran with the paper from gun to gun, showing it to the 'Numbers One,' they reported their guns loaded and ready for action. Each emplacement was lit by two hurricane-lamps that seemed only to render the darkness within the canopies visible. But a well-trained detachment works by touch as much as by sight, and the lack of daylight seemed no hindrance to speed. More than ever the drill gave one the idea of the ordered movements of some well-oiled machine. The breech-blocks swung open to receive the shell, brought up on its loading-tray by four sturdy gunners. No sooner was this in position than the rammer, impelled by the weight of six men, drove the shell with a satisfying clang into its seating in the gun. A swift hand placed the cartridge behind it, and the breech-block swung to as the hand was removed.

By this time the layer was at his sight, flashing the light of a torch upon its graduations, and manipulating the traversing wheel until the gun was laid. Then the blunt muzzle swung into the air, the lanyard was hooked, and the detachments stood still as statues, waiting for the order to fire.

The race between the guns ended in a virtual dead-heat; there could barely have been a second between the first and the last. The subaltern glanced swiftly up the line of guns, put his megaphone up to his respirator, and bawled out one word as best he could: 'Fire!'

Nothing more articulate than a muffled bellow reached the men at the guns, but that was enough. The wood swayed and rocked under the roar of the simultaneous discharge of the great howitzers, and a blinding flame that seemed to fill the whole world shot out from their lips, leaving the eyes dazzled and lost in the utter gloom that followed. It seemed as though the mighty voice of the guns must shatter the senses of the men working in the emplacements, as though they must stand a few moments, dazed and stunned, before their will-power could prevail over the shock and force them to their work again. But to the servants of the guns the voice of their masters is familiar and encouraging, and in the silence that followed the crash of the first salvo, a silence broken only by the dwindling drone of the shell as they sped on their way, the detachments were already reloading the guns and laying them in readiness for the next.

The major, roused by the gas alarm rather than by the noise of his guns, came up from his dug-out and walked up to the subaltern. 'What's all the noise about?' he asked.

'Only an S.O.S. call, sir,' was the reply.

'How soon did you get the first round off after you got the call?' said the major.

'Forty seconds, sir,' replied the subaltern.

'Not bad work with respirators on,' said the major approvingly. 'Let me know if it develops into anything serious.' And with that he disappeared again in the direction of his dug-out. Like a wise man, he never interfered when things were going properly.

The second salvo was more ragged than the first; the order was 'Gun-fire!' which means that each gun reloads and fires as soon as it is ready. In a trice the fire developed into a rapid sequence of independent rounds, each gun-team working with desperate haste; but there was no sign of disordered hurry; everything was carried out with mechanical precision, although the guns were striving one with another, as always when gun-fire was ordered, to see which could get most rounds off. These totals formed an eager subject of discussion in billets afterwards.

The officer stood behind the guns, watch in hand. The orders for S.O.S. calls laid down that fire was to be as rapid as possible for the first five minutes, and after that at a certain definitely slower rate. At the end of this period he passed the word to the guns, and the series of explosions became more deliberate. But by that time over six tons of steel and high-explosive had been poured into the German lines, more than enough to make a flaming hell of the small sector upon which the battery was concentrated.

The battery settled down to its more decorous gait of one round per gun per minute. In the intervals between the rounds the rattle of machine-guns could still be heard in the distance, but fainter and less insistent. The night seemed darker than ever, and the rain, which had been little more than a heavy drizzle when the alarm was given, was now pouring down in slanting lines, visible against the gun-flashes. The gas bombardment had ceased by now, and a rising breeze was sweeping away the deadly traces that it had left. Out in front, towards the trenches, the Very lights still rose gracefully, but in ever-diminishing number. Even the thunder of the field-guns was growing less intense. Their flashes were no longer continuous, but rather resembled the last lightning of a dying storm. The alarm, whatever it was, was evidently subsiding.

The subaltern felt a touch upon his arm, and turned to find the telephonist at his elbow, with a message-form in his hand. He flashed his torch upon it, and grunted approvingly as he read. 'I thought so,' he muttered, then put one finger under the fabric of his mask and sniffed cautiously. Finding no trace of gas in the air, he swept the mask from his face in one swift movement, and put the megaphone to his lips. 'Cease firing! Take your respirators off!' he shouted. Two guns that were loaded emptied themselves with a final roar, and then silence settled down once more. The detachments set to work to clean their guns and to cover them with their tarpaulins, while the officer went round to inspect and to receive reports of the number of rounds fired. Then he returned to the fighting-post.

It was much as he had left it. The double blankets over the entrance had kept out the gas that tended to drift into it. The steady flame of the lamp and the glow of the fire made it seem like home, the most desirable place on earth, despite the pungent smoke from a hissing pile of fresh logs that filled it. The subaltern drew a deep breath of satisfaction, and turned to the telephonist.

'Call up brigade for me, will you?' he said. 'I want to speak to the adjutant.'

The man put the call through, and handed the instrument to his officer.

'Halloa!' said the latter. 'That you, Gibbs? Here's my report. Convolvulus speaking. S.O.S. Auchonvillers South, 2.13 A.M., 182 rounds fired. Ceased firing 2.29 A.M. I say, what was it all about, anyway?'

'Thanks!' came the voice from the other end. 'Raid of some kind against our line in front of Y Ravine. Repulsed without casualties, they say. I'll let you know when I get further particulars. Good-night.'

The subaltern put the instrument down, and returned to his table to enter the particulars of the shoot in the book kept for the purpose. The telephonist bent down to the fire, picked up the mess-tin that had been keeping warm on the ashes, and divided its contents carefully among three enamelled mugs, which he handed round with the gravity of a professional waiter. The cat, bored with the whole business, turned her back on the company, and composed herself to sleep. In a few minutes the fighting-post had returned to its previous restfulness.

But behind the German lines the stretcher-bearers were busy with their dead, and where the support trench had been was nothing but a row of smoking shell-holes.

THE TIAHUANACO MYSTERY.

By JOHN SHARP, Consul for Bolivia.

AS one beholds the colossal walls and monoliths of Tiahuanaco in Bolivia, which towered in the height of their splendour before Solomon of the Old World had erected his famous and wonderful temple, Horace Smith's soliloquy in the presence of the mummy of Thebes rushes with almost overwhelming meaning to the mind:

> When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
> And time had not begun to overthrow
> Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,
> Of which the very ruins are tremendous!

The study of these ruins (which lie in an arid plain, south of Lake Titicaca) is one which deserves the attention of the world, one worthy

of all scientific research, pointing as it probably does to a solution of the important problem of the priority of races in the New World.

Unfortunately everything relating to Bolivia prior to the period of the Spanish conquest is shrouded in mystery to such an extent that, so far, few satisfactory results have rewarded the most careful investigation. Happily, however, such is the overpowering fascination of the long ago to the human mind that success in a large way may be considered certain, as scholars will follow scholars from generation to generation until the spell is broken and the world is made acquainted with what the ancient races of that part of the New World did and thought, and what they had to say to their kind.

The gigantic ruins, as now seen, represented a shattered record of past greatness when the Incas set up their dynasty. They are but the remains of a second, and probably a third, Tiahuanaco; and it is certain that it was not a contemporaneous civilisation that wrought such marvels of progress, but the peoples of successive or even remotely separated periods, not necessarily of identical origin. The earlier structures seem to have been swallowed up at a time, forgotten ages ago, when a great seismic upheaval changed the face of the Bolivian plateau and buried out of sight evidences of culture advanced far beyond anything the same race attained subsequently.

Much of the architecture of Tiahuanaco at the present day represents unfinished temples and palaces, giving the impression that the work had been abandoned on account of some great calamity, or disturbed—and afterwards forgotten—during a sudden invasion by an enemy, who drove the workmen from the scene, never to return. Between La Paz and Guaqui lie huge rocks intended for structural purposes. One measures ten feet in height, thirteen feet in width, and nearly two feet in thickness, and its approximate weight is ten tons. This is the *Puerta del Sol*, 'the door of the sun,' as the great doorway of the temple is called. The hieroglyphics are only partly finished, there being a space where the artist had made merely the outlines of the design, at which he seems to have been working when the place was suddenly abandoned. Around this spot lie colossal blocks of stone, some of which may be estimated as weighing fully one thousand tons. These rocks, including those used for the foundations of the palace Tunca Punco, for the obelisks, and for the largest of the columns of this great structure, appear to have been transported from a hill five miles away, and were probably conveyed by the same system of inclined planes as that used by the Egyptians. The material forming many of the monoliths of Puma Punco, where the carved doorway of the temple stands, is volcanic lava. It is thought that this material was brought from Cerro de Japia, an extinct volcano situated on the Isthmus of Yunguyo, about fifty miles distant from Tiahuanaco. The founders probably made use of the liquid lava of this volcano, which was at that time in eruption, bringing it, by means of canals, to the foot of the mountain, where it flowed into earthen moulds, a primitive method employed to-day in the moulding of liquid iron. In support of this theory, moulds are found in Tiahuanaco which indicate that they were used for casting idols.

From whatever standpoint they are viewed, there is something intensely interesting in the aspect of these gigantic ruins, and speculation as to the probable uses for which the various blocks were intended has resulted in the popular naming of each of these huge pieces. A cyclopean cube, carved as if for the purpose of holding writing materials and other accessories of the writing-table, has been named 'The Inca's Writing-Desk.' There are also 'The Inca's Bath,' the table of the officiating authority in the Palace of Justice, the stairway to the throne-room of the great palace, and a number of other furnishings, any of which would be worthy of adorning the ancient palaces of Egypt. The wonderful perfection of these stones, the apparently carefully chiselled outlines, the exquisite carvings, the well-polished surfaces, are such that the best sculptor of our day, using the finest steel chisels and other instruments, would be unable to improve upon the work. Although the name Inca has been associated with these remains, it is, of course, only by popular use, as it is known that these monumental ruins were in the same condition as they are at present when the Incas first visited Collasuyo.

The beginnings of various structures are to be seen over the entire area, and at the base of the great carved doorway of the temple excavations have been made which add another element of mystery to this archæological problem of the West. Huge idols, of which there are several, made in human form, and measuring from ten to fifteen feet in height in standing posture, occupy a prominent place in the ruins. These are curious-looking figures, more primitively fashioned than the ancient Egyptian idols, and bear some resemblance to the monuments of Easter Island. But the Tiahuanaco figures are better carved than the latter, and show many hieroglyphics on the arms and on the cincture around the body.

One is at a loss to understand why the builders fixed on such a site for their colossal edifices, as, from its singularly isolated position, it could have served little purpose as a fortress against invaders, and it is perfectly clear that the palace was not being built in the centre of any great population. The temple could hardly be filled with worshippers in a region so unfavourable, on account of the soil and the climate, to the development of a rich and prosperous empire. Although the choice of a spot removed from the centres of political

activity for the erection of palaces and temples for religious purposes is a step indicative of Oriental worshippers, and influences the impression that it was a holy city, like Mecca or Benares, it is doubtful whether any other monument of antiquity presents to the modern world a more difficult enigma than this Sphinx of the Occident, Tiahuanaco. To study its builders deepens the mystery, as it seems incredible that a people who were sufficiently advanced in culture to erect such stupendous works of architecture, and to whom the arts of picture-writing were known, should have left no trace of their existence in the historical records of antiquity. But, after all, these remains, and others to be seen in the plains, deserts, and forests of South America, are but evidences of eras of activity fashioned upon older ones, telling us that there have been long, unknown periods or cycles of civilisation, in relation to which the few thousand years of known or conjectured history are a mere last chapter. And who can tell but that these are the source of the legends of a 'Lost Atlantis,' or a 'Lost Lemuria,' especially as there is every reason for believing that a complete change in the American continent and the Pacific had been wrought at some period, through a cataclysm which left only a few vestiges of anterior civilisation in that part of the world?

Even the word Tiahuanaco is a disputed point, and many interpretations are given. Attempts have been made to connect it with Chinese, Greek, and the language of the Mayas of Yucatan, but it is more likely to have been derived from either the Quichua or the Aymara language. Certain authorities of repute say the name was suggested by some great deluge, but although hieroglyphics cover the granite blocks, one can only look on these ruins with a feeling of helplessness while the key to the writings remains undiscovered. Under the doorway of the ancient temple is carved the figure of Viracocha, the great deity of popular worship for the ancient builders. Here Viracocha is represented as holding in each hand a sceptre, or perhaps a key, symbolic of his possessing the innermost treasures of the secret chambers of wisdom. According to the traditions of the Aymara inhabitants of this region, Viracocha was certainly not a war-god, but a wise and beneficent deity, who, rising from the waters of Lake Titicaca, created sun, moon, and stars, plants, animals, and man, and made his omnipotence felt throughout the world by performing deeds of great wisdom. As the two sceptres differ in form and appearance, they may symbolise a double sovereignty over the religious and the political destinies of the peoples. Surrounding him are half-kneeling figures which have the attitude of rulers rendering homage to their great chief, not in abject obeisance, but each with head erect, bending only one knee, and holding a sceptre. Perhaps they represent the kingdoms of the earth, or political sovereignty, inferior only to the omnipotence that rules both heaven and earth. At the doorway of the church in the *plaza* of Tiahuanaco two idols in sitting posture attract attention, seeming to symbolise the harmony between the old religion and the new, and testifying, with silent eloquence, to the universal character of the Christian faith, in which all beliefs are spiritualised and given a more lofty significance. These chiselled figures in all probability were originally designed to adorn the altar of the ancient pagan temple, and perhaps were intended to have a place near the throne of the great Viracocha. There are also idols standing in the plaza beyond the temple doorway, which were probably likewise intended to occupy important niches in the palace or the temple.

These monumental remains are all that has been left of the works of what must have been a strange and gifted people, struggling with all their strength to enlist the favour and the protection of the deities their imagination had conjured up. They are an extraordinary medley of the efforts of primitive savagery, the great undertakings of an ambitious barbarism, and hints of the dawn of civilisation. The enigmatical signs carved on the stonework mean more than adornment, as it is recognised that primitive people of all races have attached the greatest importance to the written sign, and rarely carved anything which was not intended to serve the purpose of chronology. Competent scientific authorities agree that these monuments are more remote in origin than those of Egypt; and if the view of ethnologists that all human races are of one species and one family be established, we may yet find that the earliest civilisation on the globe had its chief centre in America, and that its people were the ancestors, not the descendants, of Asiatic races. One thing, however, is certain: the continent of South America has been the scene of cycles of changes of humanity throughout very long periods, and the theatre of a strange and extensive activity in bygone ages. Bolivia's heritage of some of the most remarkable ruins of antiquity gives that country an especial claim to universal attention.

PARTING.

ALL day we 've been together, and the night
Now draws her dusky mantle o'er the land;
The sun long since has tipped with rosy light
The distant hills, and standing hand-in-hand,
We say 'Good-bye.' For mem'ries of the days
We 've spent together, and the hours when life
Seemed one great purpose, stretched in endless ways
To one eternity; when, amidst the strife
Of every day, we came together, and
You showed me peace—I thank dear God that He
Has sent you to me for a moment. May
E'er His blessing and His peace be with thee! . . .
Now star-bespangled night has veiled the day,
And dewy darkness hides us as we stand.

AGNES L. HILLMAN.

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THE LAST THREE MONTHS OF THE WAR IN THE AIR.

By Captain D. R. MACLAREN, D.S.O., M.C. and Bar, D.F.C.

PART I.

I.

EARLY in 1918 there occurred what might truly be called a lull before the storm. Every branch of the service felt it, and none more than the Air Force. It was almost as if an armistice had been declared in the air, for German machines were seldom seen, and when encountered invariably avoided combat. The enemy fighting squadrons (*Jagdstäffel*) were composed of Albatross and Pfalz scouts, and now and then a Fokker triplane would be seen.

The British squadrons were superior in equipment, as we had the Sopwith Camel, the Sopwith Dolphin, and the S.E.5, all single-seater fighting scouts, better than the German machines in every way. However, even when we met formations of the enemy with conditions favourable for them, they would not attack unless outnumbering us.

So, for some unaccountable reason, the first months of 1918 passed by with the German Air Force living up to the best traditions of the German Navy. An average report in those days read: 'No enemy aircraft seen. Visibility fair. Anti-aircraft fire normal.'

Lack of action is very hard on airmen, and we used up considerable nervous energy trying to decide what ailed the Hun. At times we heard that he lacked material to manufacture machines, at others that he was conserving resources for his big offensive.

Then, one day, Intelligence reported that the great German offensive would be launched on the 21st of March, and his first attack would be at Quéant. We knew that our lull was over at last, and that we should soon meet the Hun at his strongest in the air, as would our armies on the earth. From that time up to his great attack his machines began to appear in ever-increasing numbers.

When it came, the tremendous onslaught shook our whole line and caused the greatest anxiety everywhere; but the airmen were in their glory, and fought from dawn to dusk. If ever there was a storm after a lull, it was the German offensive of March.

The famous Richthofen suddenly made an appearance, supported by his band of desperados known as 'The Circus.' They earned the title both by the colour and by the variety of their machines. We often met this band of Richthofen's, but although they were good fighters, I never saw them give battle elsewhere than on their own side of the line. If one of their machines was hit, the pilot could descend to his own territory. For us a forced descent meant capture by the enemy. This was so constantly the case at that time that out of forty British machines reported missing in a day, perhaps twenty-five could have gained friendly territory in safety had we not had to engage over enemy ground.

In a fight over the Somme, Baron von Richthofen, who was the greatest of German airmen, was shot down while he was attacking one of our artillery machines, and the loss of this very gallant man seemed a signal for the lessening of the intensive air fighting. This gradually resulted in a comparative respite, which was not broken until August, when the Allied offensive took definite form.

It is the period from then until early in November that I want to write about, because several things made it the most dramatic and the most bitter phase of all for the airmen. There was no longer any sign of sportsmanship on the part of the Hun—he knew that the last throw of the dice had come, and that, unless he could hold us in the air, nothing could avert the menace of final victory by our armies.

A new type of German fighting-machine appeared, the Fokker Biplane Scout. It was much the best machine the Huns had ever had, and as they appeared in great numbers we began to have a lively time of it. They patrolled in formations of from fifteen to thirty machines. On bright days they would fly as high as possible, and on dull days one would meet them on the fringe of the mist. After one or two brushes with them, it could be seen that the German flying corps had regained the offensive spirit, and were fighting with a ferocity that they had never equalled in the past. It was their last bid for supremacy, and, provided they were in large numbers, they fought furiously—but always on their own side of the line.

The first Fokker I had seen had shown him-

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self two months previous to this, and we had enjoyed some good sport at the time. He was the leader of the White-Tail Squadron (although his own machine was entirely black), and one day, while flying alone, I spotted him, evidently on the same quest as myself, out for a small and quiet scrap. At ten thousand feet we met, but when I made towards him he turned across my front. I had not seen a Fokker before, so I turned to have a good look at him, climbing at the same time. He seemed enormous in size, and looked very grim in his dull black with white crosses. The colour of his machine was, I suppose, his expression of German psychology.

When he saw that I was alone he swung away from me, but I put my nose down and started to close up with him. He looked back at me once, and then went straight down; but I followed. When we flattened out of our dive I found I was being fired at from the ground, and also that his speed was superior to mine. I let loose a few rounds from my guns, but, try as I would, I could not get closer to him; so, giving it up, I climbed again. I had not gone far when, to my amazement, he began climbing after me.

Evidently this was a Hun of some kidney!

In a few minutes we were at it again, but when I approached him he would dive towards the ground before a burst could be got in on him; and when I climbed to a few thousand feet, up he came too. After this had happened several times, and each of us had missed the other by inches, I thought I should like to show my appreciation of his sportsmanship by flying alongside and waving. I was on the point of doing this, when the memory of what some of their chaps had done altered my decision; so I went after him again, and this time he flew straight for home and never looked back.

It was the last time I saw a Fokker alone, and, to the best of my knowledge, the last time that a German airman showed that he loved the game and was ready to take on any passing adventurer for the zest of a fight.

II.

My first big encounter with these new people occurred shortly after the battle of Amiens, when our troops held a line running roughly from Bray to Bapaume. Our aerodrome was then at Bertangles, a long distance from the fighting, so that it took twenty minutes to reach our patrol area.

It was a dull morning, with the clouds about four thousand feet from the earth, and the air was very cold. We had passed over Albert and that horribly devastated area east of it, and were making our way towards Bapaume, when I espied several machines in the distance hanging about in the mist. As we drew closer several more appeared, and I made them out to be Fokkers—about twenty in number. Our artillery were putting over a heavy barrage opposite Le Transloy, and the Huns were evidently on the look-out for some poor old British artillery machine that might be observing for the guns.

True enough, there was the old 'Harry Tate' cruising up and down our side, waiting for the Hun to go away, or for some help, so that he could get on with his job.

We were in single flight formation (seven machines), so were outnumbered; but a large formation like theirs is rather clumsy to manœuvre in a mist, and as our machines were smaller, we could keep in close formation without risk of collision.

It was a case of watching for some of the enemy to become isolated, dash in and attack them, and dash out again—tactics, incidentally, which were laid down in that music-hall ditty some ten years ago:

> He walked right in,
> And he turned around,
> And walked right out again, &c.

We climbed into the edge of the mist and waited. Presently a rift in the cloud appeared, and it occurred to me that we might get into this rift, climb a bit, and watch for anything that might cross below us. This was quickly done, and hardly ten seconds had passed before four of the machines emerged from the mist and began to cross the lane.

Then I noticed that they had white tails! This was luck. They belonged to one of the crack *Jagdstäffel*, and we had certain scores to settle with these gentlemen.

I dived steeply at the leader, and when within twenty yards of him started shooting into his 'shop-windows.' I doubt if he ever knew what happened. There was hardly time to get fifty rounds into him ere I had to 'zoom' to avoid ramming, but when I turned to see what had happened he had begun his fall, the smoke from his engine showing he had been unable to shut it off. My right-hand man had succeeded in sending one of the enemy spinning to the earth, but the remainder had escaped by diving east.

It was with a great feeling of elation that we realised that, small as it was, we had scored our first victory in the Allied push, and that we had accomplished the turning of at least one cog in the great Foch machine. But caution was necessary; we had to get past the cloud, and at any moment we might meet more of the enemy. We had just passed through a thin layer of haze when our suspicions received sudden confirmation.

Five Huns were coming right at us!

Our plan of action had to be decided in a matter of seconds. We could not pass over them, as our heads were against the ceiling; if we turned they would give us a broadside at close range which would hit some one surely; and if we dived—well, that wasn't done. They would be right behind us, shooting all the while, and over German territory. Diving was neither good sportsmanship nor good tactics.

Fritz, however, spared us any further brain-

fag by deciding for us. His formation quickly spread. The leader opened fire on me, and I let loose a string of bullets, which seemed to be going right into his radiator. One of his shots struck my centre section with a 'click,' and in a fraction of a second I pulled back the stick and swooped up into the clouds; but as I did so he shot by underneath, on his back.

It was a disagreeable situation. I was in the mist, and hardly knew whether I dared emerge above it or not. My compass kept turning round and round, and suddenly I learned from the speed-indicator that the machine was travelling at one hundred and twenty miles an hour. This wouldn't do—we must be diving. I decided to climb, so, gently easing the stick back, I watched the dial. All at once I was almost hurled out of my belt, and the next thing I knew I was spinning—a most uncomfortable sensation, and a very bad exhibition of flying.

Instinctively I shut off the motor, and as the earth appeared below me, straightened out and looked for the others. They were just in front of me, and I could have yelled with delight—when I received a shock. A little way ahead of them a veritable swarm of Huns appeared. This time it was a case not of ethics but of dire necessity. We dived straight for our lines, the Huns doing the same thing, and sending smoke-tracer bullets singing all about us. Luck was with us, however, and no one was hit.

We got safely over our lines, and had started to rise, when we were overjoyed to see a whole squadron of S.E.5's coming down from the north towards the Fokkers. It looked as if there was going to be a battle-royal, when the enemy turned tail and dived east. It must have been a great disappointment to the British squadron commander, for it would have been a splendid fight; but the Hun never relished a scrap unless he was much superior in numbers.

So, after all this ado, we went home, and I made my report.

III.

If I may digress from the actual fighting for a moment or two (and it is only natural that with the end of the war people at home should be a little weary of tales of combat), I want to write of my comrades during that time, when they were on the ground. For a few days we had rain, and several times we took the car into Abbeville and had dinner, or rambled through the streets of Amiens, viewing the ruins caused by German shells a few months before.

At the time I have in mind our troops were making an effort to cross the Somme at Péronne and Brie, and when the mist was not too low we lent them what aid we could by attacking the enemy troops, flying very low and dropping twenty-pound Cooper bombs among them, as well as peppering them with machine-gun bullets. In every case it was a hot reception they gave us, and a great many of our best pilots had been killed or wounded, leaving a feeling of depression which we were unable to shake off.

We received orders to move to Cappy, however, and when finally settled in our new quarters—although they could hardly be termed luxurious—we became more of a happy family than we had been for some time.

Our C.O. was not one who supported the idea that the flying-man must drink and dissipate to enjoy his spare time; in fact, he heartily discouraged such things. He did encourage sport, though, and we used to play every kind of game in our odd leisure hours. In the evening we had an orchestra that was a godsend, composed of a violin, a mandolin, a flute, and, of course, a piano. I shall never forget the hours that orchestra helped to pass.

They were happy days during that dull weather, for, though we knew that not many of us would be alive after the offensive, every one was full out to do his best for a comrade on the ground, as he was ready to do it in the air. They were the most likeable fellows one could meet—unselfish, hospitable, and in good spirits all the time.

There was not one amongst them corresponding in any way to the dissipated waster H. G. Wells depicts as the flying-man in 'Joan and Peter.'

Our 'little big brother of the Air Force,' who sees into the souls of all airmen, has jumped to some hasty conclusions, or, in his hurry to give the truth to the world, has perhaps taken his idea from one squadron only—one that was probably notorious for its 'binging.' I am happy to state that out of more than one hundred squadrons in France there were not more than half-a-dozen that could be placed in that category.

We had a large number of Canadians in the squadron at the time, and our C.O. showed his appreciation of them in many ways. No nationality or national temperament has all the flying faculty, but he felt (as I do) most sincerely that the Canadian has the flying instinct, combined with the fighting spirit, to a very high degree. Let me admit frankly that I may be biassed in this matter. At any rate, we thought we were the best airmen in the world, and that is not a bad cargo to carry with you when you meet the Hun at fifteen thousand feet.

The aerodrome which we were occupying then had been used by the famous Richthofen, and there were numerous evidences that he had been there. One souvenir which I took was a sign warning pedestrians against aerial firing taking place on the aerodrome. It bore Richthofen's signature.

IV.

To meet the German tactics we now began to fly in squadron formation—that is, three flights of five machines each, generally flying one flight above the other, the lowest flight leading. In this way we were better able to cope with the Hun as regards numbers.

One fine, bright morning we took off as a squadron for the first time on this front, and, in conjunction with an S.E. squadron, started towards Roye to see what we could see. We crossed the line at twelve thousand feet with the S.E.5's well above us, covering every manœuvre. We went a good way over the lines, and were swinging up towards Péronne when a large formation of Fokkers became visible, flying towards us from the east. They were slightly above us, and by the way they flew, it looked very much as if they meant business. Right over the top of us they came in good formation, thinking, of course, that there was no one else in the sky but themselves and us. They turned and swooped down on us, but as they did so the S.E.5's were on them.

I had turned to meet them as they attacked us, and they seemed to be in utter confusion. Some of them began to spin, others were doing extraordinary half-rolls, and over to my right one was in flames. Then, quite suddenly, there was a deal of smoke-tracer about, and looking to its source, I got a shock.

It was my friend of the black Fokker making quick flat turns and firing in every direction.

This time I determined that the air wasn't vast enough for both of us, and I gave him a heavy burst. He did not wait, but, up to his old tricks, put his nose down and made straight east. I had just started off after him, when I noticed a white-tailed Fokker to my right, about my own level, and about one hundred yards away. He did not seem to know what was happening, so I opened out, going under him, then pulled up, giving him a good burst from underneath at very short range. He turned over, made one large curve, and burst into flames.

But my grim enemy had managed to get clear away again. He was an undoubted adept at extricating himself from hot corners; but the Fates had in store that we should meet once more, for the third and last time.

None of us had suffered any damage, and we knew that there would be no more Fokkers on that patrol. When we returned home I found that the S.E.5's had shot down three and we had accounted for two.

We again ran into bad weather, but as our army had just smashed through the Hindenburg line, we amused ourselves by going along the German trenches picking up souvenirs. Several of us succeeded in exploring the famous Hindenburg tunnel, a sap several miles in length, thirty feet below the surface, and capable of billeting thousands of men. What a tremendous feat the army performed when it captured that system of defences! During this quiet spell I had managed to persuade one Hun to land behind our lines. (He had been balloon-hunting with some success.) I learned that he had sustained several wounds, but whether the poor beggar lived or not I cannot say.

Knowing that my official record of machines brought down is fifty-seven, many of my friends have asked me if I ever felt any remorse for the men who went down with them. The first time I saw two Germans being carried away from their machines which we had brought down behind our lines, I did feel it very keenly. But the feeling that was uppermost with us was a great love of our own fellows, and we knew well that every Hun who got away might kill one or more of our comrades later on. We had not asked for the war, and we were there for one purpose—to kill the Hun. An officer of high rank once told me that he would never shoot a man descending in a parachute; it wasn't the sporting thing to do. There is much in all of us that agrees with him, but he forgot that a man descending thus holds vital information which he will give to his artillery. Hundreds of our men's lives might go as a result of his knowledge. Fortunately in the air you do not see your opponent's face. It is like shooting a bird, and the personal aspect does not affect you. It was my experience that our bravest air fighters, those who always fought to a finish, were the most courteous to captured airmen, and the most deeply grieved when one of their own men was killed. Those who were at all squeamish about the Hun were usually comparatively indifferent to the death of a comrade.

v.

And now came a tragedy that cast its gloom over every man in the squadron. It meant promotion for me, but that was a mighty small compensation for the sorrow I felt. The incident I refer to left us all determined to fight to the end whenever we were engaged in a scrap.

Several new pilots had been with us for some time, and had now been judged fit to fly over the lines. Our C.O. accordingly expressed his intention of leading them over on their first trip. I, for my part, took two with me, and when we arrived at the lines I remained east of the main formation in order to act as a bait to any Huns that might be tempted to dive on me.

After a time eight Fokkers, who thought we should be easy prey, came swinging down on us, but as they approached we plunged underneath the C.O.'s formation. The Fokkers saw what was up, and drew away immediately—except one who, believing himself more skilful than his fellows, came straight in among us and attacked my right-hand man. He was so close to me that I could see him leaning forward, looking along his sights and shooting wildly. Before I could get my sights on him he turned. My left-hand man crossed behind me and shot this fellow down. It was a quick bit of work, especially as this pilot had been in France only a few weeks.

Our main formation, however, seemed to be very much agitated, and, as I picked up my two partners, the others came and joined us. They seemed to have no leader, and I could not see

the C.O.'s machine among them. I knew they had not been attacked, as they had been in sight all the time; so, greatly puzzled, I took them back, and we landed. Then I learned the truth.

Our C.O. had been killed.

He had had a collision with one of the new pilots, and both machines had been hopelessly smashed. There wasn't an officer or a man who hadn't loved him as only men can love a brave and gallant gentleman.

(*Continued on page 327.*)

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXI.

PRESENTLY we glided along one side of a square, at the corner of which a gang of workmen were busy mending the pavement. The car slowed down, the driver peering forward to see if the way was clear beyond the knot of labourers, and I saw the outline of a grimy statue in the half-light. I knew where I was. With a hand on the door, I was hesitating whether I should jump out, when, under a lamp-post not half-a-dozen yards away, a welcome and inspiring apparition took shape. Never until that moment had I grasped the true value and significance, the sense of security, embodied in the everyday stolid figure of the London policeman. From helmet to heel, there he stood, for liberty and civilisation, at my service. I could have fallen on his ample neck. I had half-opened the door, when the chauffeur looked round and saw me. To my surprise, he immediately steered to the kerb, where he pulled up beside the constable. In a trice I was outside.

'I want your help, officer,' said I.

He ran a wary eye over me, and, apparently satisfied that I had not been having a 'night out,' asked in a fruity Cockney, 'Wot's the matter, sir?'

'I can't tell you all just now, but I am not going to lose sight of this man,' I replied, pointing to the chauffeur.

The two exchanged glances.

'I think some'ow, sir, there's bin a mistyke,' said the policeman.

'What's the charge?' asked the chauffeur, civilly enough. 'I'm sure I don't know.'

'Mistake! Charge! The charge is serious enough. I have been kidnapped and ill-treated,' I began; 'I'——

'That may be so, sir, but I have only your word for it,' said the chauffeur coolly; and there was not the slightest suggestion of apprehension in his voice or his face. By this time a little knot of people had collected, and although the policeman, by a majestic gesture, indicated that there was nothing which concerned the public, its numbers were increasing.

'I think some'ow, sir, there's bin a mistyke,' again came from the policeman.

'Mistake, my good man! Mistake! Will you'——

'If you don't want me further, I'll trouble you for my fare,' interrupted the imperturbable chauffeur. 'I've been up half the night.'

'Your fare will no doubt be all right. You can apply for it to your employers,' I rejoined, with considerable emphasis on the last word.

'I think some'ow, sir, there's bin a mistyke,' came from the policeman with the inevitability of a Greek chorus.

'Come, sir, I'll drive you home, and you can arrange about the fare then,' said the chauffeur. 'I am pretty sure I can convince you that what the policeman says is right. I think that there has been a mistake. Where do you want to go, sir?' he asked civilly.

The man's *aplomb* staggered me, but I had no intention of being 'bluffed.' For answer I took my seat beside him, at the same time whipping out my revolver.

'Straight to Scotland Yard, if you please.'

The chauffeur stared curiously at me for a moment, and then looked at the policeman.

'At once,' I ordered. 'And if you try any tricks, you'll rue it.'

His eyes travelled from mine to the revolver and back again. 'Very good, sir! The Yard.—Jump in, officer. Perhaps this is the best plan for everybody;' and without another word he sent the car skimming through the early traffic of London. The streets slid swiftly under us, and soon we reached the ever-open gate of the Yard.

'Come with me,' I said peremptorily as I got out.

'Cert'nly, sir,' said the chauffeur, and led the way. Before the policeman or I could say a word, he had beckoned to a clerk. Then he wrote a few words on a scrap of paper, and, to my astonishment, handed it to him. The clerk disappeared with the message. Almost immediately we were shown into another room, where the inspector-in-charge was sitting at a desk. He took a good look at me, and then addressed himself to the chauffeur.

'Good-morning! Who is this?'

''Fraid I don't know. He demanded to be brought here, and as he was my fare and was extr'ord'nly pressing—he had a revolver—I brought him. Seeing that he came out of No. 9 Duff Avenue, I didn't think twice about obliging him.'

The inspector looked at me, and read mystification in my face.

'I'll tell you the whole story,' I said to him; 'it ought to straighten matters out. You appear to know this chauffeur.'

'I know him very well,' said the inspector. 'But I don't know you. I'll hear both sides—yours first.'

He nodded to the two men, who left the room.

'You may take it that the chauffeur won't leave the building. May I ask you how you came to be, as he says you were, at 9 Duff Avenue? Better give me the bones of your story at once. It will save time, and I have an idea that time may be precious in this affair.' He took a note of my name and address, and I then gave him a rapid summary of my adventures from my entering the restaurant in Soho until my arrival at the Yard. He listened, plainly much interested.

'This is extraordinary! There is not a minute to be lost. Without doubting your word, Mr Forbes, may I ask, is there any one who can vouch for your identity?'

I thought of Tony, who had, I knew, friends in the C.I.D.

'Dozens,' I said; 'but the best one I can think of is Mr Anthony Keene-Leslie, whom perhaps you know.'

'I do, of course. His name is one of the best you could have given us.'

'He has a telephone in his bedroom, and I'll risk wakening him.'

Luckily, Tony was at home. Considerably astonished by my early summons, he promised to come to me with all speed. In the interval I gave the details of my adventure to the inspector, and in an incredibly short time my friend arrived, and with him, to my surprise, the chauffeur.

'Hullo, Neil!—Morning, Mr Ker!' he greeted us. 'I flung on some clothes and did a record sprint. What do you mean by dragging me out of bed at this hour of the morning? What's the game? Have your friends been up to some more tricks?'

The inspector rapidly gave him the heads of my story.

'Well! this beats the band!' said Tony when he had finished. 'You have had a lucky escape. Allow me to introduce you to your sometime chauffeur, my friend Mr Richard Sparke of the C.I.D.'

I began to see daylight. Mr Sparke smiled as we shook hands.

'We took each other for "wrong uns," and no wonder! I thought you were one of the Duff Avenue lot, and you thought the same of me. Perhaps the inspector will clear up the situation.'

'Simple as A B C—when you know,' said Inspector Ker. 'We have had No. 9 Duff Avenue, Cluden Road, Northaneastham, under observation for some time, but the trails had crossed once or twice. We weren't dead-sure about the house, and there wasn't strong enough information on which to apply for a search-warrant. Our men reported that the inmates had a motor-car and a garage of their own, and that sometimes the house was visited by men using a hired car. One of these we traced to a respectable firm of garage-owners in Bloomsbury. We got into touch with them, and they arranged to let us know when the next order for a car came. A 'phone message came from them late last night that a car was ordered to be at the house at two o'clock this morning. One of friend Sparke's specialities is the automobile, and what he doesn't know of motoring and of London and its suburban roads and byways can be written on a postage-stamp. So for the evening he was "John Smith," an experienced chauffeur in the employment of the respectable firm I refer to.—Now then, Sparke!'

The versatile Mr Sparke took up the tale.

'When I got there,' said he, 'I was told that the gentleman would be ready in a few minutes, that he wanted me to drive in a hurry to see a patient—the game being that he was a doctor—and that he would direct me further when we neared London. I waited with the car at No. 9 for some ten minutes. Then my fare—Mr Forbes, it appears; but in the dark I didn't see his face—came out. A person whom I took to be a man-servant showed him into the car, shut the door, and told me to hurry. I set off, and in the end my fare comes out of the car with a revolver, gets a policeman on board, orders me to drive here, and here I am.'

'I agree with Mr Keene-Leslie. You have, indeed, made a lucky escape, Mr Forbes,' said the inspector gravely. 'Your information comes in the nick of time for us. What you say about the curious purring noise at the house interests me immensely. I think that the gang won't be at large very long; but they are wily customers, and we may be too late. However, we'll get a warrant, and then we'll "shake up" No. 9. While we have been talking, I may tell you that all the stations have been rung up, and the house is being watched. But we must lose no time.' He took a look at me. 'Feeling all right? You'll be the better for some breakfast after your "jumpy" night. It is early, but I'll 'phone the "Golden Cross," where I am known. You'll get something to eat, and I'll pick you up there in half-an-hour.'

On the way out I met the policeman. His face was cleft—there is no other word—by a smile.

'I think some'ow, sir, there 's bin a mistyke,' he began.

'So do I,' I said, and, borrowing from Tony, I gave him largesse.

Rapid explanations by me to Tony, questions by him, and my answers made the time speed in the quiet little hotel where we breakfasted.

'Our little week-end trip to the Sussex coast won't come off, Neil,' said Keene-Leslie; 'but it seems we are to have, by way of compensation, a morning "not without incident," as the reporters say. You have been lucky—extraordinarily lucky. I am convinced that The Searchers

meant to get the paper out of you at all costs. Starvation and solitary confinement will wear down steel. It will be a tremendous business if we find their half of the paper in the house, but I doubt it. They are much too wary a lot to risk losing their great secret.'

A big car pulled up in half-an-hour to the minute. Sparke was driving, beside him a man in plain clothes; inside were the inspector and the quiet-looking little gentleman with clean-cut features and pale thoughtful face, to whom Tony had introduced me just before we started for Italy. Gentle in voice, with a dreamer's eyes and a scholar's stoop, he would have passed for a detached student of affairs, but his name is a great one in the records of English criminology.

He recognised me at once.

'You have had your chapter of adventure since we met, Mr Forbes, but I hope to close it to-day.'

'Any news, sir?' asked Tony.

'The house has been watched,' said he. 'There is smoke coming from one of the chimneys, but nobody has been seen.'

'Will it be a "hot corner"?'

'A toss up! We have half-a-dozen men near the place, and perhaps our number may rattle 'em when we close in. I am inclined to think that, if they know the house is surrounded, they 'll see the game is up and make the best of it; but—perhaps not! Are you armed?'

Tony nodded.

'And your friend?'

'Yes,' I said. 'I took the liberty of putting "Mr Wakeford's" revolver into my pocket.'

'That's all right, then. I hope we'll be in time.'

(*Continued on page 325.*)

DIAMONDS AND CARBONADO IN BRAZIL.

By Ashmore Russan.

TRAVELLING in Bahia, Brazil, on the Central Railway, which is the railway to the diamond-fields (or, rather, the diamond rivers and streams) of that state, the writer was once much interested in the ostentatiously displayed wealth of a fellow-passenger, a Brazilian, whose hands were burdened with gems—two or more on each finger, or about twenty in all—which he changed occasionally from a skin wallet carried in his breast-pocket. Though roughly cut and without much fire, they were undoubtedly diamonds, and some of them were quite large. Observing the attention he had attracted, the gentleman suddenly extended his much-ornamented digits and exclaimed in excellent English, 'I am sure you must be thinking I am very vain, sir—that I wear these rings for show! Well, sir, I hope you will pardon me for addressing you, but I can assure you that I am not at all vain, although I certainly do wear diamonds for show. My fingers are my shop-windows, and if you are open to buy a good stone, a genuine Brazilian, I shall be very pleased if you will examine my stock.'

He was a diamond-dealer, a *capangueiro*, so called from the little bags (*capangas*), made of cat-skin, which he and his like are never without. What such men do not know about Brazilian diamonds is not worth knowing. The trust they place in possible customers is something to wonder at. Without hesitation, one of them will hand over his bag of gems for examination by a prospective buyer, and immediately turn away his head and carry on a conversation with some adjacent person or persons. It is said that they seldom lose a stone, the explanation of such astonishing immunity being not so much the general honesty—although that is admirable—as the fact that the *capangueiro* knows every stone in his bag, and could scarcely fail to discover a theft on the spot, or at the first examination of his stock.

It is not generally known that diamonds which, after being cut in Brazil, or even in Europe, are found to be flawed or deficient in fire are sometimes sent back to the district from which they come, to be put right, and of course increased in value. Apparently it is almost a lost art, but a recent traveller in the diamond-fields saw the operation performed by an old gentleman of his acquaintance, who made no secret of his methods—indeed, seemed very pleased to show his skill. The process is called 'burning,' and in Brazil it is carried out as follows. A small crucible, about three inches high and one and a half inches in diameter, is placed on an ordinary blacksmith's hearth, and when it is cherry-red in colour the diamonds are dropped into it with a spoon. Charcoal is then heaped around it, and a blast commenced, and continued until a welding heat has been obtained. This, the first stage, occupies about three minutes. The crucible is removed from the fire, its contents are examined and replaced, and the blast is then continued for a minute and a half longer. Finally, the crucible is again taken from the hearth, and after a tablespoonful of potassium nitrate has been thrown into it, it is well shaken. As soon as the vapour has dispersed, the diamonds are scraped out singly and allowed to fall into a basin of water. When cool, they are taken out, dried, counted, and replaced in their original envelopes. The loss in weight is said to be a trifle over 8 per cent.; the increase in value approaches 100 per cent. Often the stones put into the crucible are flawed,

but when they are taken out the flaws have disappeared.

This remarkable, yet apparently simple, operation is carried out at Santa Izabel, where the first diamonds discovered in the State of Bahia were found. The discovery was quite casual. The story goes that a weary traveller went to a brook to quench his thirst and bathe his tired feet. He stumbled into a pocket—a handful of gems in a hole in the rocks. That was many years ago, but men and women are still working in the stream, and occasionally they find a diamond.

In the early days carbonado (or 'carbon,' as it is known in trade) was considered of no value, and when found was generally thrown away. But the employment by miners of diamond-drills (for boring different strata and bringing samples of rock and earth to the surface for examination) changed all that. Carbonado is harder and less apt to fracture than pure diamond; hence its great value nowadays for mounting in the steel heads or crowns of rotary diamond-drills. At the present time gravel which was washed for diamonds nearly a century ago is being rewashed for carbons, which may be described as uncrystallised (or imperfectly crystallised) diamonds, in colour light brown to black, irregular in form, and scarcely distinguishable from ironstone pebbles—except by experts. They are found almost exclusively in Bahia State, and the test generally applied to determine whether a stone is or is not a carbon is to ascertain if it will scratch bottles or crystals. Corundum is the supreme test. If the stone will scratch corundum it is a carbon.

The diamond-bearing gravels are washed in *carumbes*, or *bateas*—wooden pans of different shapes and sizes. Having collected a heap of gravel, the men transport it to the nearest stream. If the gravel is taken from the bed of a stream, they pile it up on the bank. Sometimes water is conveyed to the gravel-heap by means of a flume. Generally the men work in a gang, or *turma*. They stand in a row in the water, each with his pan in front of him. The first man (No. 1) shovels gravel from the heap into No. 2's *batea*, or *carumbe*, as the case may be. No. 2 removes the larger stones, shakes and dips in water the remainder, and empties the contents of his pan into that of No. 3, who takes out the next largest pebbles and passes the residue on to No. 4. This man examines the gravel very carefully, and then passes it on to No. 5, the chief of the *turma*, for final examination. The operations go on like clockwork, each man having a somewhat different action, but all employing the circular, swirling motion, continual shaking, and the occasional dip in the water. The last man takes his time. After any visible diamonds or carbons left in the remaining gravel have been extracted, the fine sands are placed on one side, to be manipulated by the children, even the smallest toddlers assisting.

This final process is called *escrevendo*, or 'writing' for diamonds. Of course, only the smallest specks, the 'mosquitoes,' have been left. The method is as follows. A handful of the fine sand is placed in a very small *batea* with about an eggcupful of water; the pan is then rotated until the sands have gathered in the centre, when it is so tilted towards the operator that the water drains away to the lower edge. The water is now sent swirling round the pan, which is handled in such a way that when the small flood reaches a certain point on its upper edge, it descends with a rush to the lower, cutting off a portion of the sand and laying it open for inspection. When the operation is completed, the sand lies in regular lines or tiny ridges on the tilted bottom of the *batea*, the lines resembling the strokes in a child's copy-book—hence the term *escrevendo*. Naturally the children love the work, which is very interesting, and sometimes profitable.

Needless to say, a great many diamonds disappear in the course of the various manipulations; that is, they never reach the head of the *turma*, or the *padrón*, if the men are working for an employer. In which case, as some one has remarked, 'only the manipulators know where they have gone, and they won't tell.'

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE NEW ARMY OFFICER.

'THE New Army Officer is the finest production of the twentieth century,' said Captain Cheerall at one of his lectures. 'He is as fascinating as, frequently, he is irritating, for he is no lover of conventions. His success has been staggering, particularly to the Germans, and his bravery is the talk of the world. I, of the Old Army, salute the New Crusader; but I am sorry to say a few ancient mandarins don't. We have to destroy this prejudice, or else remove all those who fail to encourage the bright young men who have led our platoons, companies, and regiments to victory.

'The New Officer is an Edison and a Trojan.

'While I am proud of that glorious Old Army which I saw bleeding at Mons and expiring at Ypres, I do feel we must cease to talk of the old and concentrate on the new. The New Army is fighting to-day, and it is most discouraging to the New Army Officer to remind him continually of his temporary rank, his temporary job.

'That word "temporary" ought to be silenced for ever.

'The New Officer has proved that leadership is no monopoly, and that warfare is not so difficult to master. He has exploded the theory that it takes twenty years to make a colonel, and forty to make a general. He has shocked our drill-sergeants and surprised our Napoleons by his ruthless destruction of shams and his nimble seizure of facts. He is the daring, dashing, dauntless Brigadier Gerard.

'He is an optimist, and therefore successful.

'If the New Officer owes a great deal to his predecessor, his predecessor must also acknowledge his debt. The sincerity, the enthusiasm, the intelligence, and the business ability of the new man have been priceless assets in this war. What *would* this Empire have done without the splendid fellow who chucked his wealth and his pleasures into the dust-heap, and came to us for a job? He was irrepressible! If his chest was small, he bribed men to slip him through. If his heart was diseased, it suddenly became cured. If varicose veins were in his legs, he had them cut out. If he was forty or fifty, he became twenty or thirty. And if he hadn't experience, he always said, "I 'll d—— soon learn."

'He was a blood-thirsty Crusader.

'Now, when he joined we were mournful. We looked at him and sighed. "The correct thing," somehow or other, wasn't in his keeping. He was inclined to call the colonel "Alf" and the sergeant-major "Bill." He didn't know! And, oh dear—his word of command! It was so respectable—so tame! He seemed to apologise to the troops for his presence—yea, his very existence. Yet he was a sticker. He was cursed from dawn till sunset. In those early days he was occasionally insulted and abused. There was a war on, and we regarded him as shell-fodder and not as human. Let us apologise now. We were worried. The Old Army was dying. The Huns were knocking at the gates, and we, with our old conservative ideas, regarded him as a forlorn hope and sometimes as "a wash-out."

'How wrong, how terribly unjust, we were!

'But he always said, "Yes, sir." He always smiled. His trust was embarrassing, and his docility staggering. To us, his masters, jailers, and martinets, he yielded a homage which made us feel like gods. His very willingness made us misjudge him and think him a fool. "No guts" was a term frequently on our lips. We, with the vanity of the old and tried, could not see that he was of our blood, our faith, our schooling, our patriotism, and our pride. Of these virtues we imagined we had the monopoly. What insolence! What fools we were!

'But we were worried about the war.

'In those anxious, awful days we had no rifles, no uniforms, no equipment to spare; no brass bands, no flashing swords or coloured fripperies of rank and standing. Yet this amazing youth was undaunted. He shoved dummy guns into the hands of his platoon, made trenches with fire-shovels and trowels, used *live brigadiers* for targets, and gave the command, "At the enemy—at four hundred—fire!" The brigadiers woke up and—smiled. The imagination of the New Officer was helpful. He could talk, for he was educated. And he pictured German armies on the move, German hordes at the double, and to meet them roused his civvy-clad platoon to heights of devilry and daring, then charged with his little bamboo cane—to glory.

'By Gad, he always won!

'Even then we doubted him. We somehow felt he wouldn't "pan out." Most excellent for the Boys' Brigade and the like, but for a war—well, we should see! At last the uniforms came, the rifles too, but somebody forgot the ammunition. He said, "Oh, that's the bally War Office again. Let's carry on with these dummy clips." Standing, lying, kneeling, and sitting, he taught the wonders of rapid fire, and how to make a "group" on the square head of the pimple-dotted Boche. Jules Verne wasn't in it! His men made bull's-eyes on the colonel's tummy, and riddled the nether regions of the twenty-stone quartermaster.

'Then we called him a ruddy swanker.

'For all that, he went on. The fellow was clean mad to "get out." We said, "Yes, when we've put you through the mill." And we did! We froze him on the ranges, soaked him on parade, tore his feet on the route march, and almost broke the valves of his heart charging mountains and doubling for miles in heavy marching order. But he stuck it, and when he came in, stood us a drink, and said, "Do send us to the front, sir!"

'We commenced to think he wasn't bad.

'And then he started to think and to do things, for he felt his feet on firmer ground. Red tape he had no use for. For example, he got fed up ending his letters: "I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant, WILLIAM WINKIE." And he introduced this reform: "Yours truly, W. WINKIE."

'We were shocked, of course. The other had been done since the time of Moses. This was a most atrocious outrage against the all-holy conventions. An explanation was immediately demanded—in writing. He replied: "I'm a business man, and there's a war on."

'The old brigadier expired with apoplexy.

'The New Officer's brevity was startling. Instead of replying, "I beg to acknowledge receipt of your," &c., he simply stated, "Received, noted, and filed."

'But he did a more startling thing. He actually dethroned the pen and brought the typewriter into the company office. He also enlisted his shorthand clerk, and purchased a small card-index system with which he created

a little bureau, labelled: "Accounts," "Equipment," "Correspondence."

'This had never been done by the best people, for we always thought it very bad form to make the army business-like. If our fathers had sold shirts, beer, or bacon, we never mentioned it. And we had always been most careful to hide away the prompt, precise, methodical methods of our wealthy parents. We worshipped "form" and hated facts. But this fellow day after day continued, quietly but effectively, to cut out all the appalling bluff and nonsense of centuries. We didn't like this—at first. Indeed, the ancient adjutant, trained in the methods of Wellington and the Duke of Cambridge, took seriously ill and—retired.

'The C.O., forced to find a new adjutant, turned in despair to the New Officer.

'"I'll take it on, sir," he said, "but I must have an absolutely free hand."

'"Why?"

'"Well, I'm a business man."

'He was so persuasive about his methods that he was permitted to get his foot inside the orderly-room. Then he shoved his whole personality into it. With a sweep of his pen he returned all the elderly red-tape clerks to duty. In came his shorthand clerks, typewriter, card-index, and books on "System." Followed a bonfire of ancient rubbish, and the erection of neat shelves, methodically arranged and labelled: "Training," "Finance," "Correspondence," "Records," "Blunders," "Results."

'The C.O. was astonished at the peace, smoothness, and efficiency. He was also amused when the new adjutant suggested that he (the C.O.) might dictate all his letters to the shorthand clerk. "Saves time, sir, and will let you get out to see what is going on." The Old Man had a shot at this. He discovered that he need spend only half-an-hour on correspondence instead of *three hours*.

'Result: he was always on parade, and *training improved*.

'Secretly we admired all this, but some of us got jealous. We grew petty, and showed it in our memos. But he called us up, and said, "Look here, Tom, Dick, and Harry; I'm not here for my health. I'm here for business. If you don't like my methods you had better move to another battalion."

'And the old C.O. backed him up.

'At last we voiced our true thoughts, and said, "The New Man is an organiser. He can do things. And he does save us a tremendous lot of trouble with the Paymaster, the Command, and the War Office." Having paid this homage, we started to go to him for advice on administration. He gave us heaps.

'But we still wondered how he would "pan out" in the field.

'Then we went out. The New Man was told to entrain the battalion at the station, where a train would be in waiting. When he got there he discovered the R.T.O. had forgotten—the luggage-vans. He asked no questions, but collared two vans on the siding, had them hitched on to the train, loaded up, shoved the troops in, reported "All correct," and we started to move.

'"What the devil do you mean taking those vans?" roared the annoyed R.T.O.

'"You go and learn your business, sonny I'm a railway manager. Good-bye."

'We simply lay back and roared with laughter.

'Crossing the Channel, we of the old school were just a bit worried. We had grown to like the new fellow an awful lot. He was so willing, so decent, so obliging, and so keen. Still, we did think he was not quite the type. His business abilities were admirable. But what about leadership?

'This problem had yet to be solved.

'However, we plugged into the trenches, and he started on his new job. He was "jumpy" a little, and felt at sea. But he was a sticker. Above all, he was cheerful. He kept the men happy. Fought like a devil with the quartermaster about his company's rations, saw to the rum, stole wood for his men's fires, robbed the A.S.C. of coal and coke, made braziers out of biscuit-boxes, and organised concerts under heavy bombardments. He wasn't afraid to grouse, but he never bucked at a job.

'We did feel immensely grateful.

'Next, the great offensive. What a day! The barrage of the enemy was sheer murder; but he leaped over the bags like a fine British gentleman, and kept his eye on the OBJECTIVE. The C.O. was killed, the major was killed, company commanders were wounded, and the New Man found he was alone.

'*His hour had come.*

'Some weak fool shouted, "Retire!" but the New Man clapped a revolver to the demoralised man's ear and said, "Go on!" He went! The weaker were impressed; the brave were thrilled. Old Army sergeants vowed he was "the goods," and loyally backed him up. And on through hell, through death, and a blood-soaked shambles went the New Crusader with his battalion. The objective was reached, but we had only three hundred men instead of a thousand. There were no bombs, little ammunition, no water, no rations, and the men were *absolutely done*. All round were the bursting shells, the spluttering Maxims, the choking gas, and the agonies of war. His flanks were in the air, but he extended his thin line, sent back the runners, dug in, and opened fire.

'On came the Germans.

'But the God of all men was on his side. Providence protects the brave. His fame had trickled down the line, and anxious generals vowed he *would* be supported. Company after company was slaughtered in the attempt. Then

up came the Guards—the flower of British chivalry. The Old Crusaders were determined that the New should not be surrounded, jabbed, and crucified. Through that cruel barrage they tramped as if on parade.

'And while they were advancing, the New Man, though weary, wounded, and blood-stained, was fighting a dauntless battle. Three hundred men had dropped to two hundred. His flanks were burst. He was almost surrounded. The bayonets of Potsdam were glittering at his breast, but he cried, "Fight on—fight on! No d—— surrender to these Huns!"

'"Ay, ay, sir," responded his glorious men.

'Just as the mad finale was reached, when the fate of the New Man and his glorious battalion seemed sealed, a cheer burst on the air, and the Guards broke through. The Old and the New joined hands, then fought the Hun with cold steel till he squealed like a pig and —RAN.

'Four Guardsmen carried the New Man down the line.

'And then the world—and the Old Army—woke up. The chivalry of ages was in the New Cavalier. His battered and bleeding form was carried through a guard of honour to the place where the sick are healed. Women sent him flowers; old generals paid him homage; and, like a true Britisher, he inquired, "What's all the fuss about? It wasn't I—it was the MEN."

'But the King gave him the Victoria Cross.

'The Guards presented arms.

'The Old Army cheered.

'And the World said, "Well done!"

'I salute the New Army Officer,' concluded Captain Cheerall.

The school jumped to its feet and almost went mad with cheering.

Why don't we have more lectures like that?

(Continued on page 346.)

WIRELESS MESSAGES.

II.—UN JOUR DE MARCHÉ.*

By Mrs W. F. IRVINE BELL.

I.

CHEZ nous, my usual place at breakfast looks through the balcony door across the estuary to the inner *bassin*, with its bristling masts and funnels and its background of blue hills, melting mistily into the sky. This morning, however, I moved to the top of the table, so as to enjoy to the full a *coup d'œil* of the winding harbour, its tidal waters now patened with a myriad silver suns, and the whitely gleaming sand-dunes, whose tall green grasses break the line of purple-shadowed sea and foam-crested breakers. Scattered hither and yon, specks of sails, snowy-white or ruddy-brown in the early sunshine, bespeak a daybreak start for the fishing-grounds, whence are already returning several of the smaller boats which do not venture too far afield. So sharp is the 'crook' in the elbow of the harbour that one little craft, in coquettish dress of black and yellow, tacking back and forth between the jetties and the quays, presently vanishes behind a red-tiled roof, her sails alone reappearing, low set as in a Dutch canal, so that she seems to be gliding inland, as it were, among coal-yards and cranes, trucks, teams, and clustered sheds, which flank the inner basin and hide from view the great white lock-gates.

Through our open windows now blows a fresh breeze, which sets fluttering the delicate fronds of my maidenhair ferns—a breeze laden with a unique but strangely exhilarating mixture of smells—of sea-salt and tar; of fish and roasting coffee; of new cider, this moment flowing in rich brown streams from heavy, hand-turned presses on the quay; last and best, a faint, wooing suggestion of *country* smells, borne from far by light currents of air which at 'cheerful dawn' have caressed fields and farms beside the river, whose silver thread, darkened under the arches of an ancient bridge, loses itself in the dull green waters at its mouth.

Round and about the balcony dips, sways, and swirls a flock of gulls, drunk surely with the elixir of the morning air—a 'cup' not to be resisted. Impulsively I push back my chair and step out on the ever-enticing *balcon*, loftily hung above noisy street and crowded *pavé*. What matter, on such a glorious morn as this, if an overdose of chicory flavour the coffee; if the ration of sugar be meagre, the milk *condensé*, the bread a mere travesty of a French baker's art? This narrow gallery running the length of our cosy *appartement* is my high tower whence, unobserved by the man in the street, I can watch the passing show; my box-royal, for an endless entertainment; a private view of wonderful pictures—landscapes and seascapes—surpassing your Academician's craft or kudos. Its long wooden boxes, filled with gay nasturtiums and 'green things growing,' are my garden. And at night! Oh, how convey to 'ither folk' the lure to me of those tranquil hours?—the pageant of 'My Lady Moon,' her silver train trailing on gently moving waters, and her court of attendant stars; or the twinkle-twinkle of red and orange lights bobbing at mast-heads, as the fishing-fleet prepares for a midnight flitting; or the glow-worm gleam of a Japanese lantern swinging on

* The first of this series of 'Wireless Messages' appeared in *Chambers's Journal* for October 1918, with the subtitle 'Les Jetées.'

the handle-bars of some belated cyclist, speeding silently up the deserted highway. Going to bed at *any* hour after dusk is a dreadful business; but if one has a balcony, a window-ledge for a perch, a fur-lined coat (for Dame Night has a chilly breath), and nobody to worry one with sage reminders that 'early to bed, early to rise, makes one healthy, wealthy, and wise' (it doesn't —I've tried both!), then—well, I must confess that often, when the vibrating notes of the *clairon* sounding an *alerte* startle from their beds the sleeping inhabitants of our little *ville*, I myself am still playing the part of astronomer, with wide-open eyes 'dreaming the happy hours away.'

Lovely night! lovely night!
Some have called thee dark and drear.
But to me—but to me
The day 's not half so dear!

II.

Yet now does good King Sol hold sway. His warm fingers pleasantly tickle the back of my neck, and judging from the steady stream of traffic flowing towards the Place du Casino, there should not (in spite of my late aspersions as to the quality of one's breakfast) be any lack of quantity to fill one's self withal. For this is the *jour de marché*, sandwiched between several prescribed *jours maigres*, and as ours is the best market in the district, it affords a grand opportunity for observing all sorts and conditions of mankind, as well as of beast-kind. A quaint combination of both is, this moment, at snail's pace, wending its way thither—a sleek, gray donkey, whose diminutive body, out of all proportion to the enormous ears, is all but lost between the shafts of a low two-wheeled trap of antique build, in which is seated a stout, stolid-faced woman, in the black garb and white coif of a *religieuse*. Beside her a little girl, in blue cloak and close-fitting hood, devotes her attention to preventing from jolting into the street capacious baskets piled about their feet, presumably to be filled with supplies (and the good Sister, methinks, will drive a shrewd bargain!) for the orphaned inmates of the Asile de Saint Joseph.

Trotting briskly past this equipage, as though to demonstrate that not all his race are akin to the tortoise, comes another donkey, pulling a long-bodied truck, upon which are crowded fresh, cool-looking vegetables—green of cabbage and red of carrot boldly asserting themselves beside blushing apples, mellow, downy quinces, and dusky walnuts. Of this swift chariot the Jehu is a small boy, who, clinging to the reins, cleverly balances himself on bare feet, cracks his whip, and incessantly admonishes his willing steed with a prolonged cry of 'E-e-o!' which, like the Savoyard herder's reiterated 'Ah-ah!' to his homing cattle, would not, I fear, be 'understanded' of British beasts. More than one dog-drawn vehicle passes; even a goat or two go by in harness, for horses are scarce and costly, as one may conclude (and here comes in the law of compensation) by their comparatively well-cared-for appearance, despite a grievous shortage of fodder. The dog-teams, too, I gladly note, are apparently not misused, in one case a crippled old man pushing behind, while his four-footed colleague does the pulling. Dogs are for the most part chained below the cart, and pull against the collar; but there is one fine creature of the Great Dane breed, equipped with smart-looking leather harness, whose glad barks and waving tail advertise a pleasant partnership between himself and the bare-headed girl beside him. Later on I am sure to find him curled up or vigilantly erect upon a heap of sacks near a booth whereon will be displayed all sorts of 'garden sass' (to use an old New England phrase)—parsley, beetroots (ready boiled), shallots, and divers herbs, the cunning use of which our Latin neighbours so well understand. Of the larger, heavier type of vehicle, most conspicuous are the high, two-wheeled vans, with canvas top and plentiful varnished woodwork, which, drawn each by a stout-built stallion or a mare, whose foal, maybe, trots beside her, have started in the wee, sma' hours from a distant village whose attractions—a fine old Abbey church, medieval timbered houses, a river abounding in splendid trout, and cheese of the Camembert sort—appeal according to individual taste. It is, of course, solely with the cheese, piled high in round, match-board boxes, that the market-vans have to do—a fact self-evidenced by an unmistakable *whiff* which, trailing in their wake, assails my nostrils, and by force of suggestion whirls my thoughts for an instant many a long league westward to a famous salmon-river, up whose swift current, at wane of the season, lumbermen pole their clumsy scows, leaving behind them, upon the sweet, wild air, the oddly incongruous odour of salted cod! Even here and now I can still 'feel the smell' (as our Northern friends say); can see the sapphire and snow of the racing rapids; can hear the sharp, rhythmical 'clink-clink' of iron-shod poles, and the shout of red-shirted half-breeds as they fling into our camp a welcome bag of mails from the far-distant 'settlement.'

III.

But the strident 'E-e-o!' of the donkey-boy, the crack of his whip, and the loud ringing of the auction bell at the fish-market hard by abruptly recall to *la belle France* my roving spirit; and if that other vision, so unexpectedly evoked by the aroma of a Normandy cheese, brings before my eyes a sudden mist—ah well! —nevertheless must one 'carry on,' and unless I make haste, all the finest of fish, fruit, and flowers, to say nothing of the chance (lamentably rare nowadays) of a plump *poulet à bon marché*, will be gone. So, tearing myself away from the fascination of the balcony, I go to fetch my *petit panier*. This *panier*, by the way, is a thing of joy—not one of your cheap-

Jack, ready-made baskets for sale among brushes and brooms in the huge, plate-glass 'department-stores,' known as *Les Galeries*, but wrought on purpose for me, not too daintily for workaday use, yet of graceful mould, well woven and strongly bound, by the old *vannier*, whose low stone cottage and tiny garden-plot are hidden away in a *cul de sac* of the still unmodernised part of the town. When we paid our first visit there—my man-of-arms and I—the door stood open, affording us a peep at the interior and its furnishings, of which our antique-loving eyes at once took note—solid, rush-bottomed chairs; a tall cabinet, richly carved with weird birds and weirder beasts, black with age, its handles and lock of brass bright with generations of polishing; bowls and bits of china, some doubtless a century old, others decidedly modern, including a jubilee jug of our own Victoria the Good, of blessed, peaceful memory (*how*, we wonder, did it find its way into this old French peasant's home?); last, but not least alluring, a delightful clock, of the genus 'wag-at-the-wa',' its long index-finger jerking steadily round a tarnished face, gaudily decorated with sun, moon, and stars, while a huge brass pendulum swung back and forth on a slender wire.

Seated on a low stool, the light from a deep-set window falling upon his white hair and beard, was the old basket-maker, quickly and dexterously weaving long, limp osiers that bristled among his fingers and littered the floor. His wife, her kindly, wrinkled face framed in close-fitting cap of white embroidered linen, answered our knock, a look of great surprise and pleasure beaming in her watery blue eyes at sight of a young British officer, spick and span and debonair, who saluted the old couple as smartly as he would royalty itself. 'Monsieur' and 'madame' must come in. The rush-bottomed chairs were pushed forward, and, our errand explained, baskets of divers sorts and sizes were produced for our inspection. Of these we selected one pattern to be remodelled to my fancy, the old woman laughingly explaining that the bottoms were all alike and of her making. The order completed, we must tarry perforce for a little chat—*de la guerre*, of course; *de la guerre*. For what else, they ask, is there to speak about in these sad times? Their own family? *'Mon dieu! mais oui, m'sieu!'* they reply, tears brimming over. They have seven sons and grandsons—two fell at Verdun, two are prisoners, two are still *au front*, and one, the youngest, *un si beau garçon*, is 'missing.' *Disparu!* How often, alas! does one hear that word—dreaded perhaps more than any other—on the lips of heart-broken mothers and wives of heroic France!

IV.

'Pas grande chose, madame!' quoth Alphonsine, our youthful *femme-de-ménage* (of name as grandiose as her stature is insignificant), smiling, yet with a critical air regarding my *petit panier* as I take it down from the shelf and sally forth. Useless for me again to explain to her that its holding capacity is quite commensurate with my purse; so I leave her reiterating, *'Mais il faut manger!'* her favourite axiom whenever the subject of war economies comes to the front, the while, with an expression of countenance wherein pride struggles with apology, she contemplates her own overflowing basket. To judge by its contents—best of butter, a dozen eggs, a mammoth cabbage, a huge section of orange-red *citrouille* (pumpkin), and 'sundries'—Alphonsine's fisherman husband has been doing well with his trawl, for it is easy come, easy go, with the fisher-folk, and the silver harvest which their nets gather in quickly flows out again in a golden stream. So to Alphonsine the philosophy of 'madame' is a perpetual puzzle, and she is never really *bien contente* in the blue-tiled kitchen except when, on the rare and joyful occasion of *Monsieur le Capitaine* suddenly arriving for *déjeuner*, a 'calf tender and good' is as speedily fetched and dressed as was that of Father Abraham for his visiting angels! This morning, however, the boat from —— has arrived without the one passenger who really matters, and pursuing my solitary way through the eager, chattering crowd, I find myself envying a Belgian officer and his wife—he all glorious from head to heel, she in smartest array, clinging to his arm, as they pause before the *poissonnerie*, and choosing a splendid lobster, give it in charge of a neat young *bonne* trotting behind them. Lobsters at eight francs a pound! Ahem!

The Belgian's braid and blue are only two of numerous touches of colour which, dotted about, relieve the general sombre tone of the peasant throng. Here is a group of fishermen, the colours of whose jerseys are always a fresh delight and a surprise; for are they conscious, these uncultured sons of the sea, of the lovely tones and harmony of their rough-and-ready clothing; or is it a mere result of circumstance, an 'accident of an accident'? In striking contrast with these neutral tints are the red-tufted *bérets* of some sailors from the French gunboat in the harbour, and the vivid scarlet cap of a towering specimen of John Bull's military police, an outstanding figure at the cross-roads, where half-a-dozen farmers, in loose black blouses or shaggy coats of undressed leather, gesticulate violently and quarrel amiably until they and their equally loquacious wives, burdened with a week's provisions, shall settle down in café or restaurant to discuss something more substantial than the price of cattle or the duration of the war. Farther down the street a gaily striped umbrella of gargantuan size screens from the sun's too persistent rays oddments of ribbons and laces, whose fragility and rainbow hues are a pleasant offset to heaps of dull leather boots and black sabots, disposed for sale a few yards distant. These and sundry other wares—

pottery, old junk (among which sometimes one chances on a real 'find'), cheap toys, even a barrow of the poorest bits of meat—are, however, mere outworks to the *marché* proper, where, within canvas-covered stalls or suspended on ropes, are all sorts of merchandise, from elaborate silk garments—primrose, violet, and blue—to the humblest flannel shirt or woollen petticoat. Beyond the clothing are open booths, which, closely set together, form long, densely crowded aisles. Here stand in a stolid row, baskets at their feet, venders of butter and eggs, of live poultry, and of huge lop-eared rabbits, so tame and gentle (for they are mostly house-reared) that one inevitably recalls Pope's pathetic lines about the lamb which 'licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.' Lily-white ducks, quacking querulously, the shrill crow of an imprisoned cock, the importunate calls of the stall-holders, cross-fire of question and answer between buyer and seller, high-pitched protests and cries of '*Oh là-là!*' over prices demanded and concessions on the part of the demanders, excited parleys between friends who have met (and one meets everybody *au marché!*), all add their quota to the babel and confusion.

'*Chouxfleurs! Chouxfleurs! Vingt sous la pièce!*' '*Poireaux! Voulez-vous des poireaux? Trois sous la botte!*' '*Voilà des pommes de terre! Bon marché—quinze sous la livre!*' '*Fleurs! Des fleurs! Voyez-vous mes jolies fleurs?*'

One's head fairly cracks with the noise, and, no less, with the effort at quick mental arithmetic to reduce to the more familiar franc and centime this irritating reckoning in *sous*. A franc for a cauliflower one *knows* to be robbery; but when one is offered, '*Un pour vingt sous ou deux à trente-cinq*,' it demands lightning calculation rightly to gauge the bargain. Some there are who, instantly 'spotting' a stranger, do the sum for one, and, incidentally, fix the price 'accordin', or make confusion worse confounded by attempting a translation into pennies! One stall there is which is specially popular with the well-to-do, but from which the war-pinched peasant, disappointed, turns away. Upon it, in tempting profusion, boxes of Algerian dates, tangerines glowing in silver foil, creamy yellow bananas, and piles of sugary figs proclaim prosperity and enterprise on the part of two bright-eyed Spanish youths. But dates at four francs a kilo, and tangerines at seventy-five centimes each, are luxuries reserved for 'feast-days,' when I do *not* sit at the head of the table *chez nous*; and, moreover, these soft-spoken merchants from the Sunny South unsparingly beat their donkey! It is, therefore, a cold shoulder that I turn upon their winning smiles and broken English, and from another stall I buy brown satin-skinned chestnuts, which will serve both as vegetable and as dessert. But my basket is by this time ower fu' and none too light. One more purchase—irresistible—before I must hasten home, so I shove my way to a favourite booth where autumn flowers in tantalising number and variety—golden chrysanthemums, purple asters, and a few late roses, 'to smell sweet'—speedily whisk from my depleted purse the remaining coins. Thus, fairly laden, I am moving away, when the welcome sound of low, English voices falls upon my ear, and, turning, I see two cheery-faced girls in nurses' dress, eagerly selecting generous bunches of the choicest flowers, while at a short distance stands a great car with the all too well-known red cross on roof and sides. 'Take these too!' I plead, filling their willing hands with my treasures.

THE RED SEAL.

THIS is a story my father used to tell. He died many years ago—a distinguished Scots judge; and, as the events to be related happened when he was a young man, the story is a pretty old one, but may be none the less worth hearing on that account.

When my father was a boy he loved to take great walks through the dales and over the hills of the county he lived in, and was well acquainted even with the folk that dwelt in the most outlying cottages. He had a great friendship, amongst others, with Sandy M'Nab, an elderly shepherd, skilled in his craft, loyal to his master, and loving to his flocks. Many a walk and talk had the man and the lad together; and it was only at times of stress, in the lambing season and the like, that the boy would be sternly bidden to 'whisht' and 'haud his clavers.' One weakness only had Sandy, a not uncommon one in those parts—he loved the mountain dew; and, what is by no means so common with Scotsmen, Sandy's head was weak, so that two or three glasses of the spirit would, in his own phrase, 'mak' him as fu' as a puggy.' Why I tell you of Sandy's little failing you will see anon.

My father in due time, after school and college, entered the profession of his choice, the Scots Bar. Behold him in wig and gown, a full-fledged 'advocate'—surely a better name that than the English 'barrister.' Not that it matters much, for I've a great respect, hereditary perhaps, for the Bar of both countries, the fine work they do, their learning, and the honourable traditions and practice of the profession. In those days it was the custom for young advocates regularly to attend the Circuit Courts. They don't do it so much now, I'm told, for the

Circuits are far more frequent, and the number of cases at each is correspondingly fewer. There was rarely a fee to be had for defending an accused person—the advocates for the Crown were, of course, in a happier position—but it gave a youngster a chance to get rid of the fear of the sound of his own voice, and possibly to earn kudos from the judge or amongst his fellows.

In one of his early years, then, at the Bar, my father attended a Circuit Court in all the hope and expectancy of youth. To his joy, he was greeted by Mr M'Phun, an elderly local lawyer, a friend of his family, whose prospective patronage was a thing highly desirable. 'Here's a case for you, my boy,' said the lawyer, 'and a fee with it too. Not that it's a big one; but I may as well give it to you as to an older hand, for I doubt it would be beyond any counsel's power to get an acquittal. Sheep-stealing's the charge. I see it comes from your part of the country, by the way. I fear it will end in the black seal.' In those days, you must know, the punishment for sheep-stealing, as for many other crimes, was death; and the practice was for the foreman (or chancellor, as he was called) of the jury to return the verdict in a sealed cover, the wax used being red if the verdict was for acquittal, black if it was adverse to the accused. That was what M'Phun alluded to, as he handed the papers to my father. It wasn't an encouraging outset; but worse was to follow. The indictment—a terrible rigmarole it was in those days—set out the charge against the accused of having, on a given day, stolen a sheep; and that animal, it seemed, had been at the time in the lawful care and custody of one Alexander M'Nab—none other than the Sandy I was telling you of. But, to the consternation of my father, the man accused was one Thomas Brunton, a young fellow well known to him, who had, indeed, been one of his playfellows and companions in boyhood's days. And now poor Tam was charged with a capital offence, and my father was to defend him for his life!

The more my father studied the precognitions, which are the statements of what the witnesses are prepared to testify on oath, the blacker the thing looked for the accused. The chief witness was plainly old M'Nab. He was to identify Tam positively as having been seen 'prowling about' near the flock, where he had no business to be, under suspicious circumstances, and just about the time when the crime must have been committed. This, it seemed, was the only direct evidence against Brunton; but there was a lot of indirect or circumstantial evidence, which made up an ugly bulk, and certainly appeared sufficient to justify M'Phun's prediction that the case would 'end in the black seal.'

My father did what he could; he interviewed the witnesses, and especially did he interview his old friend the shepherd. Sandy, most conscientious of men, adhered inflexibly to his precognition. He saw Tammas Brunton—ay, he did—and how could he be mistaken, knowing the man as he did?—and he was nigh that very sheep, and must have been the one that took it. Motive, too, was not far to seek. Times had been hard, and food scarce; poor Tam's young wife and her weans had been near to starvation; but there was evidence forthcoming that just at the fatal time they had somehow or other had an ample supply of mutton to eat.

The case, my father ascertained, would be reached on the afternoon of the following day; and that his cup of anxiety might be full, the presiding judge would be old Lord Todlearie, who bore the reputation of a hanging judge. As matter of fact, Todlearie was, I believe, not only a learned man and a good lawyer, but in private life a kindly and considerate person; but he was conscientious, and his conscience seemed generally to inspire him with views adverse to the prisoner.

Well, my father spent an anxious night, and on the morrow, the day of the trial, he conceived a desperate sort of plan, and proceeded to put it in execution. He went again about noon that day to the witnesses' room, where those who were to give evidence for the Crown in the various cases were kept herded together, like droves of sheep, under the surveillance of a few minor officials of the court. My father's robes at once obtained entry for him; and soon he was seen in apparently earnest colloquy with Sandy M'Nab in a secluded corner of the room. But what the attendant officials did not observe was that a small, flat, glass flask changed hands from the younger to the older man. It was well for my father's scheme that this little transaction passed unnoticed.

The sheep-stealing case came on about two o'clock in the afternoon. The Crown was represented by a middle-aged advocate of considerable experience and ability, but somewhat irascible temper. My father, with M'Phun seated near him, intimated, in answer to old Todlearie's question, that he appeared for the defence, and heard the judge ask the clerk of court what 'the youngster's' name might be.

One of the first witnesses called was Alexander M'Nab. The Crown played their trump card early. Old Sandy seemed to mount into the box with some caution, and to have a difficulty in repeating after the judge the solemn words of the oath, by which he swore 'by Almighty God, as he should answer to God at the great Day of Judgment, that he would tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.' He answered the questions put to him in rather a dazed way, to the growing irritation of his irascible questioner. He told of the man whom he had seen slinking about on the day in question. The witness was then directed to look at the prisoner in the dock, and asked point-blank, 'Was that the man you saw?' Now, thanks

to his consumption of the contents of that glass flask we wot of, it is probable that Sandy saw not one man but two men in the dock, and that dimly. He gazed dully in the direction indicated, and after a considerable pause made answer, like the conscientious Scot he was, 'I'm no jist sure the noo; I couldna jist say for certain.'

Adroit handling might have saved the situation; but the irritated Crown counsel's handling was not adroit, and the identification of Tammas by the only witness whom the Crown could bring on that point was a failure. My father, of course, left well alone, and had the sense to put no questions to Sandy by way of cross-examination.

The difficulties of the defence were not by any means at an end. There were other points that pressed against the accused: his inducement to steal the sheep; the contemporaneous appearance of mutton in the Brunton *ménage*, not otherwise to be accounted for; and so forth. But, the initial difficulty overcome, and his opponent's temper seriously upset, my father proceeded in good heart, here and there scoring an unexpected point of minor moment in his cross-examination of the witnesses. No evidence was led for the defence, except one or two witnesses to Tam Brunton's good character; it was long before the days—perhaps luckily in this case—when a prisoner could go into the witness-box on his own behalf. Speeches of counsel followed in due course, and the judge's summing up to the jury was fairly neutral. He was good enough to characterise my father's speech as 'a spirited harangue,' and to allude to his cross-examination as showing 'some skill, perhaps rather of a negative than a positive kind.'

The jury left the court to consider their verdict. Old M'Phun told my father in his kindly way that he had done very well with a case that looked hopeless at the outset, and commented on the great good-fortune that had befallen in that the chief witness had failed positively to identify the prisoner. He knew nothing, honest man, about the flask of whisky, and how judiciously my father had calculated the dose which should sufficiently bemuse and muddle old M'Nab's faculties, without reducing him to a condition of palpable inebriety in the witness-box.

Poor Tammas Brunton leaned over from the dock, looking eagerly from his erstwhile playmate, now the defender of his very life, to the elder lawyer by his side, and questioning them as to the chances of the verdict. My father pressed his hand in silent sympathy, and M'Phun counselled him, in kindly but not very reassuring fashion, to 'keep a stout heart and hope for the best. While there's life, there's hope, my lad.'

At length, after a period of waiting which to the young counsel as well as to the prisoner was becoming almost intolerable, the sound of a bell was heard, and the jurymen, headed by their chancellor, trooped back into the court and resumed their places in the jury-box. The chancellor carried in his hand the envelope containing the fateful verdict. The side of it bearing the seal was visible. Before the clerk of court had time to put his formal question, 'Gentlemen of the jury, have you agreed upon your verdict?' old M'Phun, roused for once from the lethargy of his professional habit, had gripped my father's hand and almost shouted in his ear, 'By God, young man, you've done the trick! It's the red seal.' 'Done the trick' indeed! The honest old fellow little guessed how aptly his phrase was worded. And so Tammas Brunton, poor lad! was discharged from the dock, and joyfully returned to the bosom of his family.

Who shall say whether the verdict was, or was not, a righteous one? Anyway, that is the story of the red seal as I have often heard my father tell it. And he always ended in the same way. I can hear now the sound of his hearty voice and the ring of his jolly laugh. 'Of course, I don't say that what I did as a youngster was quite a proper thing to do, and I couldn't have let dear old M'Phun know beforehand what I was after. I don't know for certain to this hour whether or no Tam Brunton took that sheep. But some things I do know: that he never took another; that I had to be a bit careful before my relations with old Sandy M'Nab were restored to what they had been; that both he and Tam were my very good friends down to their deaths; and that a lot of sound and lucrative work at the Bar began to come my way shortly after, and I believe as a consequence of, that memorable verdict with its red seal.'

THE OLD CHURCH AND THE NEW.

In peaceful hollow on a meadow by the shore,
Scatheless of breeze that blows, and shadowed by the trees,
The old church stands, fashioned in days of yore,
By the water-edge, unstirred save by the rolling seas.
And round it, guarded by the white harled wall,
The graves of folk that long since passed away;
They worshipped there, whene'er they heard its call;
Theirs was the faith of yesterday.

The new church stands on the broad highway,
Breasting the traffic of the busy road,
Exposed to the chances of the stormy day,
And yet recalling men to worship God.
No ancient buried past invests its fane,
Nor legend old, nor altar set in rounded bay,
But yet its faith can scarce be called vain—
The faith of time, the charity that reigns to-day.

Let it reign on, and to the faith of old
Add breadth and tolerance, till, like the morning sun,
It turns the cold gray sea to cloth of gold,
And churches, creeds, and sects are catholic in one.

J. M. H.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

THE deep menace to the world, to life and civilisation, even, as some might say, to hope, arising from this dire plague called Bolshevism, becomes scarcely less as a winter of suspended war passes to a spring of peace, when the natural disposition of the human spirit is to speed forward to a new season of more lovely life, like the trees in the pride of their new foliage, like the birds with their new song, like the streams with the soft murmur of a new tranquillity that has followed upon the turbulence of winter floods. But the threat of Bolshevism, creeping ever nearer to the strongholds set against it, appears in some measure to cramp the lives and the thoughts of peoples, to establish a sense of doubt and anxiety never experienced even during the war itself, except by unreasoning pessimists. Bolshevism, in its wild, fantastic dream of capturing the world, the whole world, for the application of its system of socialist freedom and equality and happiness for man, attained through blood, murder, terror, torture, robbery, injustice, and such misery and suffering as none of the peoples of the world who have borne the cross of the most tragic fate has ever known—Bolshevism has seemed to be at its climax. It could surely move no farther forward. And yet. . . . If it should advance, 'twere better not to contemplate the possible results. The horrors in Russia have increased at the same time that efforts to attract other peoples to the Bolshevist way have intensified. Just as, at the crisis of the war, it was necessary for every man and woman, all lovers of the good of life, of truth and sincerity and progress, to hold fast, and above all to think and think again, to judge and to decide with conviction, and not merely be led like sheep by shepherds who knew too little of their shepherdry and in foolish distractions lost their way, so now it is only necessary for the people to come to real knowledge and calm reason, and to think and judge for themselves upon Bolshevism, in theory and in practice, for this thing to be blown to bits by conviction and contempt. The greatest reinforcement that Bolshevism has gained since its beginning has been the carelessness, even the stupidity, of those 'bourgeois' governing classes, as they call them, in dealing, or neglecting to deal, with this devil's movement. Bolshevists, like all Socialists who are across the middle line, always hold the bourgeoisie in great contempt. They regard them—all the modern statesmen and their supporters, more or less—as being rascals who strive only or mainly for their own class purposes, and through whom humanity will never grasp any progressive ideals, never be delivered from such horrors as war.

* * *

These words, 'bourgeois' and 'bourgeoisie,' oddly and often misapplied, little used and known in Britain, but constantly in speech and in print on the continent of Europe, puzzle our people, who have chiefly known them applied in a different sense from that now attached to them. This is one of the thousand minor things appertaining to Bolshevism in which it would be well, for the sake of their lives and their future, that a little education, a little enlightenment, should be afforded to the masses, who so often err through an absolute and profound ignorance of which evil forces take advantage. In Britain we have been accustomed to apply this French term mainly to a vague, ill-defined class of dull, materialistic persons, somewhat low, it might be, in matters of intellect and taste; people with a certain lack of spiritual refinement, of some occasional grossness in their manners, and even in their habits and ways of domestic life. Some of the master-writers have borne their pens pitilessly on the bourgeois class as thus represented. Flaubert flooded it with his satire. But it is an entirely different meaning that is given to the term in France and Russia, among the Socialists, who do not cease to rail at their bourgeoisie; against whom, indeed, they make no charge of want of mind or taste, or lack of intellectual smartness, rather being convinced that of the last mentioned they possess too much. The bourgeoisie with them—and with the Bolsheviks—is a social and political matter, and not one of the spirit. The bourgeois is one who opposes himself to the worker or the man of the people. He is not exactly and exclusively the middle class, though he is something like it—the centre and the upper parts of that class. He is in a way between the nobility and the people; but in days when the nobility, as such, count for far less than they used to do, the

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nobility also come into the bourgeoisie. But so too should many of the proletariat, as they would call themselves. In effect one of the proletariat might, indeed, be more bourgeois than one of the nobility. The worker of the proletariat, the good man who in theory toils and toils while the honest sweat drips from his brow, and who then goes home to a meal inadequate through his too small reward, conceives that the hands of all who are not likewise workers are against him. Those who are mainly against him, as he thinks, are the bourgeoisie, a huge class of Machiavellian rascals who have acquired education, money, influence, and the reins of government, which they have taken over from the old race of autocratic kings and nobles, and are now exploiting the world, the State, the proletariat, and all else to their own pecuniary and material advantage. To him these bourgeois seem to be ranging themselves in a compact body against the struggling, sweat-exhausted workers.

* * *

Most others realise how stupid are these fancies, how utterly wrong, and tending to social calamity; but unfortunately there are on the surface of the things of the bourgeoisie many appearances left unexplained, yet perhaps easily explainable, which support the suggestions made against them. There have been black sheep in the bourgeoisie fold—as in every other—and there are many there still; the bourgeoisie knows of its own weaknesses and failures, but is often afraid to admit them or even to attempt a remedy. Then, on the other hand, the bourgeoisie will not take the trouble to explain the elementary necessities of life and labour to the proletariat as it should; it has a most abnormal capacity for trying to hide the truth on the most important occasions, not, indeed, to cover its own misdeeds (of which there may be none, or at most perhaps a little carelessness), but as the result of an old, stupid habit of secrecy which has become an instinct, and which is one of the main curses of the whole world of life to-day, as it is the curse of every private community from the smallest to the largest. It is a strange human shrinkage from sincerity. When secrecy is utterly abolished sincerity will come uppermost in the world as never previously, and then we may be within hailing distance of the millennium. As, evidently, we are far from that perfect condition now, we must still have secrecy, and therefore, despite the tears of war-suffering, and the determination to abolish secret diplomacy, the Peace Conference itself was established on the basis of a large measure of secrecy. The proletariat held that this was essentially a most typical and flaming bourgeois act. It is clearly unfortunate that in this and other ways the bourgeoisie should so constantly by negligence and inefficiency, rather than by intention, play into the hands of the proletarian agitators, who then mislead their followers. If bureaucracy were not now so triumphant, so costly, and so hideously wasteful; if there were not, as it appears, such an appalling connivance at the tremendous profiteering that went on throughout the war and still continues—the most disgraceful thing of its kind we have ever known, and a serious blot upon the nation's history in its crisis; and if it had not continually seemed that the governing classes, saturated in callousness, played at a mere political game to the neglect of the big interests of life, Bolshevism would have been less of a thing to fear this year. If the statesmen had not settled down to a peace conference in Paris with the complacency of a mothers' meeting, avowing their intention of permitting the proceedings to last until June before signing peace—seven and a half months after the stoppage of war—when every day Russia was plunging from one hell to another worse, as her Bolshevism became bloodier still, and when the danger was increasing hourly of a German collapse through starvation and conversion to Bolshevism, which would ruin everything and perhaps all of us; if, after being assured that this was a war which would end war, we had not now been saddled with conscription again and a mightier army and mightier army costs in full peace than this country had ever known in pre-war times, there would have been fewer weapons in the hands of Bolshevists. Anyhow, we see now what is meant by the bourgeoisie, however wrongly the term may often be applied.

* * *

But it is merely typical of the ignorance upon these questions that is permitted to exist, working much havoc in the minds of people who have suffered greatly and harbour many grievances, that the meaning of Bolshevism has never been explained to those who are rightly warned against it. While the newspapers and the politicians make long statements each day upon the horrors of Bolshevism, and how we should guard against them, there are few persons in the street, or even at the clubs, who can tell you what this Bolshevism really is. The sections of the proletariat think that they themselves know, and unfortunately they do not know. They feel that somehow it is a good thing, a scheme for right and justice, and for the overthrow of tyranny. That was the original ideal behind it all, perhaps, which Lenin and Trotsky began to exploit; but it is not so much that the whole scheme was mistaken as that the leaders hardly meant to pursue the ideal, intending only to wade through blood and human suffering, if necessary, for their own advantage. At the beginning of Bolshevism the politicians and the statesmen said it was nothing. Whatever it was, they murmured, it would soon cure itself and die out; there were many reasons why it should, they fancied. When it continued to exist, and even to advance and strengthen itself, they still ignored it. When it came

to menace us and all civilisation, an established movement spreading all over the world, the statesmen declared they had never thought of that, and all they could say afterwards was, 'Dear me! We must stop it.' But they do not stop it. Unfortunately it is a governmental way to hide, to exaggerate, to minimise, and so to shatter confidence. That is why the governmental word is so seldom trusted now. There are among us many controllers, many departments, an infinity of bureaux; but if there were one real and conscientious Department of Truth for the dissemination of it broadcast and complete, upon every subject of importance, the exercise of a veritable propaganda of truth, leaving the onus of knowledge and true judgment upon the people, the result would be safe and sure. This question of Bolshevism, the greatest question in the world as it is at the present time, would be settled. The truth is necessary. What the Bolshevists themselves would claim as the good features of their idea, their scheme, and their practice should be set forth with all the rest. And such stories as that of base Bolshevist marriage laws and the 'nationalisation of women' ought not to be circulated, for when they are proved untrue it is Bolshevism that gains.

* * *

It should be shown how, while there are, of course, many other captains in the movement—fanatics, dreamers, rascals, what not—it is led mainly by two most remarkable persons in Lenin and Trotsky—remarkable indeed because they must be men of intense personality and determination to embark upon such schemes and carry them on thus far, so that it is futile to describe these leaders merely as fools and murderers. We know something of the evil that they do; but it would be interesting and instructive to the people to know how and by what means they do it, and who exactly these people are. Viewed as dispassionately as we can view them, they are surely most interesting persons; romance has gathered about them strangely. They are high among the most dominating personalities in the world to-day. A month ago we considered the case of Lenin, and how in his exile from Russia in Switzerland he organised the Bolshevist movement originally, and put his first Bolshevist paper, the *Spark*, in circulation. Lenin's has generally been the master-mind. As he was the originator, setting up Bolshevism (a simple adaptation of the Russian word meaning the majority), with its maximum, or Maximalist, programme, in defiance of the more moderate pretensions of the other Socialist section, the Mensheviks (a word which in the same way indicates the minority), so he became and remains the ruthless dictator with an enormous imagination and a determination which is revolting in its unscrupulousness. But Trotsky, a different being, quieter, stealthier, perhaps even craftier, has been near him always as one of the dual directorate. Some have said that Trotsky is a more picturesque personality than Napoleon was—no doubt an exaggeration, but one conveying a suggestion. In every difficulty he has the same policy, which is audacity. It would be hard to imagine any one more ruthless, disregardful of the sufferings of others, more violently determined than Lenin; but some who know say that such is Trotsky.

* * *

One who met Trotsky many times in Petrograd said that some admiration could not be withheld from this strange figure, who had the courage of his opinions and went straight to his objective. At the shameful peace-making with the Germans at Brest-Litovsk, Trotsky exerted his audacity and cunning to a marvellous degree, though they did not succeed. Treating with the German generals, it is said that he managed for a time most adroitly to turn the argument away from the stern world of fact, with Russia helpless and suing for peace, to the ground of principle, on which all men might start as equals and a victory be won with words! Desperate amid such tactics, in which he was no match for this mean-looking, most unmilitary fellow who refused to accept the fact of defeat in arms and would talk of something else on a higher plane, General Hoffmann, for the Germans, rose up in military wrath, with his hand on the hilt of his sword and a clicking of his heels, to remind Trotsky and his colleagues that Germany was victorious and Russia had been vanquished. Although he is only just a middle-aged man, Trotsky has a quarter of a century of high political adventure to his history. His real name is Leon Braunstein; the final 'Trotsky' was tacked on to the too German-looking appellation at a time when it was convenient. He is the son of a chemist, an apothecary. Like so many who turn to political adventure, he was, to begin with, a journalist, member of a profession which offers most promising opportunities of self-expression, exertion of influence, and manufacture of turmoil. In his earliest youth he wrote articles in a Russian newspaper which gained for him some reputation and caused him to be imprisoned for a few months. At twenty he was sent for the first time to Siberia, but escaped and managed to reach Austria. In Vienna he became one of the most active organisers of Socialist clubs. When the 1905 revolution occurred, he returned to his country, was president of the Soldiers' and Workmen's delegates, and his part in that abortive affair led to his being sent to Siberia again. He discovered, to his great satisfaction, that he bore a considerable resemblance to his jailer, and turned the circumstance to his advantage. The jailer's name was Trotsky, and it is enough to say that one fine day the other jailers found their colleague jailed and their Braunstein gone.

It assisted him in his journey to call himself Trotsky, and so he has done ever since, in kindly remembrance, let us imagine, of the man whom, for his escape, he personated. He made his way to Japan, staying there for a time, and then moving back to Switzerland. Afterwards he went to Berlin, and there produced a new Socialist paper. At the beginning of the war he was expelled from Berlin, and proceeded to Paris, where he started another newspaper of a revolutionary character, the *Nosche Slovo*. In due course, as we remember, Russian troops were brought round to the French western front. Trotsky's paper, the *Nosche Slovo*, was circulated among those Russian soldiers, and bred serious discontent in them. The writing in it was intensely pacifist; it heaped imprecations upon the war and those who conducted it. So the French Minister of War asked for his expulsion from French territory, and Trotsky now went to Spain.

* * *

The Spaniards found him a curious study. He puzzled them, and they watched him closely, which was natural, considering the circumstances under which he passed the Pyrenees. I have a communication from a friend in Spain, a Spaniard, who came into contact with some who were associated with Trotsky there, and learned much of him and his ways at this period. He appeared first at San Sebastian, and went afterwards to Bilbao, Vigo, and Barcelona. The police did not lose sight of him. Eventually he went to Madrid. To those who watched him he did not appear to be what you might call a vulgar anarchist. There was a certain distinction in his manners; he had a nice way of speaking; he was always extremely polite, with a touch of irony in his words; and some who conversed with him said they were charmed with his culture. Yet he seemed strange in ways. They saw him seated in the corner of cafés, writing, and again writing—for ever writing. He was making notes on Spanish life and manners for articles in yet another newspaper which he proposed to found, this time in America. It was discovered afterwards that the comments printed in America were not complimentary to the Spaniards. Trotsky said that Spain was a land of toreadors and priests, that the people were decadent in all things, that they ate badly, and, worst of all, that their women were coarse. Generally his air was sombre and thoughtful, but sometimes he was discovered in ecstasies of enthusiasm before Spanish monuments. The Spanish authorities felt uneasy about him, and for their better content they put him in prison. They found then that he had few possessions—just a little valise with a spare suit and some clean shirts, a few papers and some money, which he said was to be devoted to starting the new paper when he reached New York, whither he would go. He was soon released, and with his wife, Anatolia—a beautiful woman they said she was—and his two sons, Leon, aged eleven, and Sergius, aged nine, who suddenly appeared as if from nowhere, he sailed for New York. The Spaniards lost interest in him then; that was in November 1916. Twelve months later they heard of this strange man who had been writing the notes in the cafés as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the new Soviet Government in Russia!

* * *

Soon after his arrival in New York, and his establishment in a modest dwelling in a remote suburb, he began to write leading articles in a Russian Socialist newspaper published there, the *Novy Mir*, receiving twenty dollars a week for doing so. Also, he wrote articles for other newspapers there, particularly a German Socialist daily called the *Volkszeitung*, which paid him from ten to fifteen dollars. It was ascertained further that he received a matter of some three hundred dollars for twenty-eight lectures that he gave under Socialist auspices during the municipal elections. Life was going fairly smoothly for him then, too smoothly for this adventurer, who was waiting with confidence for something to happen in Russia. It happened. There came the Russian Revolution, and Trotsky prepared to leave the United States. He had made many friends, particularly Ludwig Lore, editor-in-chief of the *Volkszeitung*, but the Americans were not able to prove that he received any German money. Yet of funds he had plenty when the time for parting came, and the night before he left there was some sort of a social entertainment prepared in his honour at the Harlem River Casino, at which a collection on his behalf yielded two hundred and twenty-six dollars. He gathered about him a dozen Russian Socialists with whom he had become familiar, and booked passages for all of them eastwards for home and revolution. Thus he engaged fifteen second-class berths and one first-class, and paid one thousand three hundred and ninety-four dollars for them. The first-class berth was not for himself; this future man, so soon to be assisting Russia to destruction, so soon to become a terror to the world, was travelling second-class. His ship, the *Kristianiafiord*, had to sail by way of Halifax, and there the British authorities intervened because of his violent pacifist propaganda, and interned him. It was looking bad for Trotsky then; but Kerensky, leading Russia, petitioned for his release, declaring that Trotsky was necessary to him in his enterprise. Alas! Kerensky. Trotsky was one of the first to cast you down. Going on to Russia, he touched England. A rattling kind of life, this; the adventure craze has been well satisfied. One year slinking along the *calles* of Madrid, huddling away in corners of cafés and scribbling his criticisms about those slow-moving people near him whom he so much despised, then for a brief spell adding to his experiences

by imprisonment in a Spanish jail and pacifist propagandism in the States, and next, ere a year was out, a chief controller of 'Holy Russia' in her new and bloodiest régime, creating a gigantic upheaval, seizing the nation's money and goods, dealing out death most lavishly, casting the Czar and his family and the Grand Dukes into prisons more comfortless than any he had occupied, being cause, direct or indirect, of their subsequent murder, sending Bolshevist agents all over the world to preach the new and terrifying gospel of salvation through blood and ruin, making civilisation shudder, this little politely-spoken man, who was moved along, a fugitive, from capital to capital, has indeed made his own place in history. It is this adventurer who is making the peoples restless. It might do malcontents some good to know more of him. Strange it seems how one after the other these forerunners of anarchy passed through English hands. We noticed before that when Bolshevism was struggling to its birth, and, fearful of meeting elsewhere, Russians came to London for a conference, Lenin was with them. Trotsky we could have kept, and would have done so, perhaps, but for misguided Kerensky. And Karl Marx, the German, first preacher of Maximalism, whose theories Lenin and Trotsky studied and in their own manner improved upon, lies buried in a plain grave in Highgate Cemetery.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXI.—*continued.*

IT was about a quarter past four and a clear morning, with no traffic in the streets beyond a few early market-carts, when Sparke let out the car and we raced north-eastward through the quiet city. In half-an-hour or so we drew up at the corner of a road in a district of villas and prim gardens, outwardly a most unlikely retreat for 'wanted' men. We got out, and a man, who seemed to appear suddenly from nowhere, after exchanging a word or two with the inspector, took charge of the car. We walked up a highly-respectable-looking road, lined with houses standing in their own grounds, of the type which one associates with prosperous retired city men.

The last house on the left was more pretentious than its neighbours, in style of building and in surroundings. It stood in a half-moon of ground filled with well-grown trees, fifty yards or so from the road, and enclosed by a high wall. An iron gateway with a big brass figure 9 marked the entrance to the grounds. As we neared this gateway a drowsy-looking milkman was seen coming in our direction, and as he passed he said in a low voice to the inspector, 'Nothing further, sir,' and went on his way.

'So far, so good,' said the inspector. 'No one has been spotted. Some of our men are at the back, and here are the others.' He nodded towards three plain-clothes men converging on us, and I noticed a policeman in the distance at the end of the road. 'The place looks quite quiet from the outside, but it may be a live shell to tackle. Look out, and keep beside me.'

A peep through the gate showed a gravelled avenue, circling a clump of rhododendrons, the shuttered windows of a large house, and five steps leading to the front-door. Sparke went at once to the gate and tried it. It was locked; but one of the men promptly produced a light bunch of keys, and in a few seconds we were in the grounds. Here the party split into two.

Sparke and I approached the house quickly and quietly by the path on the right. A tiny feather of smoke came from one chimney, but there was no other sign of life. Two of the men placed themselves by the windows on each side of the door, and Sparke pressed the button of the bell. The shrill note died away, but there was no reply. Three times this was repeated. Not a sound came from the house. At a word from the inspector one of the men went round to the back, where two others were posted, and returned with the information that no reply had been given to the ringing of the bell there.

'Come along, then! We have no time to waste. Have a try,' said he to the man with the keys, who bent to the lock. After a long minute he stood up and whispered, 'All right.'

'Stand back and look out,' the inspector said.

With revolvers ready, we took places on either side, clear of the door. The inspector turned the handle gently, and then suddenly flung the door wide and jumped back. I listened (my heart, I confess, was beating uncomfortably), but neither voice nor footstep sounded. With a nod to us to follow, the inspector entered, followed by the rest of us, and we found ourselves in the hall. With a shiver I recognised the alcove, the telephone, and the marble statuette in the corner.

'Flown, I'm afraid! See!' said the inspector, looking round the hall.

On the carpet was an old packing-box and a litter of papers, pieces of string, straw, and some articles of men's clothing thrown down anyhow. A chair which had been knocked over lay as it had fallen. The whole scene told us plainly of an extremity of haste.

While we were looking one of the men came from the back with the news that the garage was empty.

The inspector shook his head. 'They have cleared, I think; but they can't be far away.

We'll have a look at the room where you "knocked out" the leader,' said he, and I led the way along the corridor. At the door of the room we halted and listened intently, but the same ominous silence met us.

'Nobody inside, I should say, for the key is here,' said Sparke, as he unlocked and threw open the door. We peered cautiously in. The room was empty. The light was switched on, revealing it to be in the same state as when I had last seen it, except for a dark stain on the floor where I had left my captor lying unconscious; of Wakeford himself there was no other trace. The shutters were still barred and padlocked. Back we went to the hall, and having divided into two parties, searched all the rooms on the ground-floor, but found nobody. Upstairs we went. The rooms there were scantily furnished and uncarpeted, except one of the bedrooms, which looked comfortable and attractive. It was probably Benedetto's. Again we drew blank. All the upstairs rooms and the attics were empty.

A tap came to the door while we were searching one of the attics, and one of our men came in. 'Nobody in the rooms or the cellars in the basement,' said he; 'but we are puzzled about the smoke from the chimney. We can't find a fire anywhere.'

Downstairs, we explored the kitchen and the accommodation rooms, pantries, soulleries, and so forth; but, like the other rooms we had visited, they were empty, and no fire was burning in them.

'Better take the bearings once more of the chimney where the smoke is coming from,' said the inspector.

We retraced our steps and went out to the grounds. The tiny curl of smoke came from one of the chimneys at the back. It was clear that a fire was burning somewhere inside the sinister house. We returned, and for half-an-hour searched every nook and corner thoroughly, with no result.

In the basement I had lagged behind the others in a flagged passage, and was looking about me, completely puzzled, when I thought I heard a slight sound. It seemed to me to be near at hand, and I cannot describe it better than by saying that I fancied it to be the faint mewing of a cat. I stood quite still and listened. A minute passed, and I had almost concluded that my nerves had played me a trick, when the sound reached me again, but where it came from—below, above me, in front, or behind—I had not the vaguest idea. A shout summoned the others, and I told them what I had heard.

The passage in which we were standing was stone-walled and strongly built, with no door breaking its masonry. The inspector examined the stonework, tapped it all over with an iron-shod walking-stick, and tested the plaster in the interstices. The wall was genuine, solid work. No chink or crevice appeared in the hard cement.

There remained the floor. The two Scotland Yard men peered over the stone flags, scrutinising each one carefully. Suddenly the inspector went down on his knees at the end of the passage, and putting his ear close to the flagstone, listened intently. Then he stood up, and having motioned us to keep where we were, he walked slowly down the corridor, tapping each flagstone with the stick as he went. The last one rang hollow. A triumphant 'Ah!' came from him, and his face relaxed in a grim smile. He again struck the flagstone, and afterwards the stone next to it. The difference was marked. One gave a dull, solid thud, the other a ring that hummed and died away, almost metallic in its effect. As we stood listening to its sound trailing into silence, the cry which I had heard reached me again, this time in a high note, broken off abruptly. There was now no doubt. It came from below, and it was the voice of some creature in extremity. Sparke and the inspector bent over the hollow flagstone. Sparke brushed the stone with a handkerchief, and then ran his electric torch round the edges. A tiny circular depression, full of dust, and not much bigger than a threepenny-piece, was revealed. He whipped out and applied a knife, whereupon the stone moved a little. The handy man with the keys produced a chisel, and in a couple of minutes the flagstone opened up as easily as a trap-door.

'Now,' said the inspector, 'we'll see what we shall see!'

He flashed the electric torch into the opening, disclosing the steps of a rough wooden ladder leading down into the gloom. Then he lowered himself into the dark hole, and we followed. As I reached the last rung of the ladder the voice sounded once more, close at hand, and in pitiful entreaty. We found ourselves in a cramped, narrow passage about six feet long, having a door on the left. This proved to be locked, but it was a flimsy affair, and two vigorous kicks sent it nearly off its hinges. The room which we entered was pitch-dark, except for the dying embers of the tell-tale fire. Sparke flashed the electric torch, and in the gloom I saw a figure lying on a couch at the opposite side of the room. The inspector stepped forward and bent over him, the man staring up without saying a word. I shrank from the sight. I have never seen such horrible shaking fear in a human face. He was young, but woefully wasted, and of a ghastly pallor—the mere shadow of a man—and his big dark eyes, full of terror, burned in their hollows with an unnatural and shocking brightness.

'Whoever he is, the poor devil is pretty far gone,' said the inspector, and at the words the man half-rose on one elbow, and fell back in a dead faint.

(*Continued on page 343.*)

THE LAST THREE MONTHS OF THE WAR IN THE AIR.

PART II.

VI.

MORE, perhaps, in the case of the air than of any other branch of the service, an article of this nature must be of isolated value, except in so far as the experiences of one squadron may be taken as typical of the entire Air Force during the last three months' fighting. Moreover, if an airman writes of his experiences he is forced to indulge in many personal references, which are apt to give the effect of bombast; but air fighting is an intensely personal thing, and it is not possible to apportion to others the credit they richly deserve.

For instance, the fast-travelling Allied offensive suddenly became of less interest to me than the immediate task of running a squadron, for I succeeded the C.O. who was killed. The day after his death we received orders to move to Athies at dawn, which pleased us all, as it would help us to forget some of the sad events of the previous weeks, and in fresh surroundings I should have a chance of putting into practice some ideas I had always cherished.

Our new aerodrome had also formerly been used by the Huns, and the officers' quarters had been built by them as well. The quarters were warm and comfortable, and although somewhat garishly calcimined within, were preferable to tents.

A week or so passed, during which time I was kept busy learning how to run a squadron and changing things according to my plans. The weather seldom made flying possible, but I had several targets put up against a bank, and a Vickers machine mounted on a tripod, so that the pilots could get as much practice as possible. I also kept them well supplied with pistol ammunition, and they spent most of their time competing with each other for stakes.

I think it is generally conceded that good shooting in aerial warfare plays a much greater part than freak flying. At least, I have always been convinced of this fact. A pilot, by extraordinary freak flying, may be able to place himself in an excellent position to shoot down an enemy, but if he cannot hit him when he does get there, what is his advantage? He may be able to get away when he is in a tight position, but it is much safer to bring the other chap down instead.

The Canadians seemed to take a very keen interest in the shooting, and not only became most proficient, but showed themselves very ingenious in some of their schemes for the improvement of sighting. One man, I remember, made a large kite which he flew at one thousand feet, a good-sized flag being attached thereto, with a black cross painted on it. When he got this thing to the required height, he would go up in his machine and fire at the flag until all his ammunition was gone. Then he would land, wind in his kite, and examine the flag. He was an extraordinarily good shot, and I have seen a flag torn to ribbons after he had been shooting at it. Of course, the country around us was not thickly settled, so no one cared much where the bullets eventually landed. We were more or less in rest, doing very few patrols; but when we were considered to be in shape once more, we began to hunt the Hun in the last phase of the war.

VII.

It was a dull day when we recommenced work, and as we approached the lines we found Bohain and many villages to eastward on fire. Why the Huns set fire to these pretty little places I have never been able to figure out, unless from pure vandalism. As we were directly over Bohain a huge mine exploded, sending up showers of burning embers, earth, and dust; and as we followed the railway line towards Busigny, another large mine went up. It all made a very picturesque scene, and I dropped lower to get a better view of it, when I noticed a German balloon below, unusually close to the line. We went down at him, one behind the other. When he filled my sights I let fire, and a white parachute appeared below. As the last of us passed there was a small flame, then a huge blaze, and a lot of black smoke. One more 'Drachen' destroyed!

Meanwhile their 'Archies' were paying us the most complimentary attention. They had a nasty bark (they always did when one was trying to get back to one's own territory), and were throwing little balls of phosphorus, eight in a row. However, we returned without mishap.

One afternoon, after several days of bad weather, we were detailed to do a low bombing show on the road east of Le Cateau. Reports had been received that this road was congested with retreating German troops, and it was up to us to destroy them. By that time the Allied offensive was developing so furiously that the Hun was staggering like a man in the ring who knows that if he cannot get a rest he must go under to his opponent's anvil blows. The British policy of 'sweep the Hun from the air' we had now to apply to *terra firma*. We were to do our best to complete the disorganisation of the Boches as they retreated.

On a scout machine is fitted a small bomb-rack, at the bottom of the fuselage, between the struts of the undercarriage, and for jobs of

this character this rack carries four twenty-pound Cooper bombs, or 'man-killers,' which can be released by pulling a flexible wire when the machine is over the target. Being very fast and easy to manœuvre, scout machines, carrying such bombs, can drop down on troops in a road, let fall their eggs, open fire with their guns, and cause a great deal of damage in a few minutes.

One can spot troops on the move, drop down close to the ground a mile or so away from them, then fly over fields fringed with trees, and come right on top of them before they even know you are in the vicinity.

This afternoon we spotted the enemy on the road quickly enough—there were hundreds of them. Getting well east of them, we dropped down below the tops of the trees and came towards them, skimming the surface of the fields. When we were almost on them I rose up over the trees and flew along the road, the others stringing out behind me in single file. It is hardly possible to miss a target at that height, and as we dropped our bombs we turned and swept the road with machine-gun fire. As our guns fired at the rate of eleven hundred and fifty rounds a minute, it can be easily realised what confusion resulted among the Germans. They stampeded in all directions, but we could see every move, and followed them wherever they went. It was a weird sight: a wagon lying dismantled in one spot, with its horses killed—a lorry, without its occupants, standing stolidly in the road—a group of men huddling in a ditch—men and horses wildly running everywhere.

It is impossible to state how many were killed. What my squadron was doing, others were doing all along the line; and I am convinced that these raids on the roads were a tremendous factor in bringing the Prussian bully to his knees.

When, however, a few Germans managed to keep their heads, especially if there were machine-guns with them, it was a very dangerous pursuit, and many a good chap went West in these last stage raids.

VIII.

The next day I met the black Hun again.

The clouds were very high, and there was little wind, so, climbing to sixteen thousand feet, we approached the lines opposite St Quentin. In this light it is easier to spot enemy aircraft than on clear days, and we soon perceived several Fokkers, slightly below us, who were attacking a British two-seater. This was a De Havilland Liberty 9, and he was putting up a splendid fight. The Huns seemed afraid to approach him too closely, probably hoping to force him to the ground on their side of the line.

They did not see us until we began to fire, and then they tried to climb towards the east. When I got close to the leader I saw that his machine was all black.

It was my psychological German of the dark Fokker.

This time I had him. He was still shooting at the two-seater when he filled my sights, and I let loose a burst into him. Down he went, turning and twisting from side to side, so that it seemed certain he was hit. Following him down to make sure he was not tricking me again, I saw him crash close to the bank of the river Oise, his black planes and fuselage a grim wreck of matchwood.

In the meantime one of our 'Camels' had fought cleverly, and a Fokker burst into flames, going down to its end. The rest of them got away, and we drew off in close formation to avoid a straggler being caught.

Again there was bad weather; and when, after a few days of restive idleness, we took to the air again, there were very few Huns to encounter. We managed to make an armour-plated two-seater land on our side of the line, and witnessed the sight of the German observer jumping from his cockpit and trying to set fire to his machine without giving his pilot, who was wounded, a chance to get out. However, the fire died out very quickly.

IX.

Shortly after this we had one more real battle in the air, and it proved to be my last.

Fifteen of us left the aerodrome one fine afternoon, flying east of Le Nouvion, when eight Fokkers came at us from out of the sun. After a brisk scrap, I managed to send the leader down in flames, when the rest of the Fokkers dived. As they did so, one of my chaps, by a smart bit of work, shot down a bright-yellow Fokker. It was fine manœuvring and quick thinking.

Although tempted to follow them, I was afraid it was part of a plan, and that something was above us. Looking round to determine our plan of action, I saw about twenty Fokkers circling about, preparing to attack us. We were caught. There was nothing for it but to use every subterfuge we knew, and trust to luck for some opening.

Picking up our formation, we turned and dived westwards towards our lines. Our middle flight was well above and west of me, so that the Huns would have to attack the lower flight first. Without any hesitation, three of them swooped down on my rear man, but as they came close I made a stall turn and flew towards them. One of them turned across my front, and I put a burst into him, but apparently without doing any vital damage, for he dived east, evidently unhurt. One of my fellows had succeeded in getting on a Fokker's tail, and as I watched them the Hun turned over quickly and went down, spinning. The remaining Hun of the

three began to shoot from behind, his bullets striking my top plane; but one of my rear men gave him a burst, and he disappeared, although his machine was still under control.

Meanwhile the remainder of the enemy formation, in coming down to aid the first three, had been splendidly attacked by our two top flights, and one of their number had gone down in flames.

Suddenly the whole enemy formation turned to the east, and flew on; but as we turned south they flew parallel with us for a while. We tried the north next, with the same result. Coming up towards Le Cateau, they followed us a short distance, and then dived for the east.

And that was the last time I saw the Hun in the air.

General Macdonnell, of the First Canadian Division, used to say that it is the pin-pricks in life that hurt. I believe him for one, because a few days later I was ingloriously disabled by an accident to my leg while wrestling in the mess.

It was mighty hard luck, and I missed the last few days of the war as a result. On the day I was to go away the Hun shelled the aerodrome early in the morning, but was good enough to desist during breakfast.

It was a very hard tug to leave the squadron, and I felt wretched as I climbed into the car after breakfast. There were a few last words to be said to the flight commanders, a few last good-byes, and then the old, wonderful wish, 'Good-bye and good luck.' As the car drew away, the fellows—the best in the world—gave me a cheer, and the Hun speeded the parting guest by dropping a few odd shells on the aerodrome.

Whether all this is interesting or not I cannot say; but if through these isolated and fragmentary accounts some idea can be gathered of how the British airmen fought during the last three months, perhaps the effort is not entirely valueless.

The two things that stand out most clearly in my memory of that time are the chase of the black Fokker, and the farewell from the men it had been my privilege to lead.

Neither of these things shall I ever forget.

THE END.

'THE FASHIONER OF THE GODS.'

By S. H. Reason.

I.

'WHY, Ram Singh, is it thou in reality?' said I; and there was a mist before my eyes and a lump in my throat as I beheld his well-loved, classic, bronze features. Then: '*Ohè*, ever wert thou one to stand on ceremony!' I added with an embarrassed laugh, as he salaamed respectfully. Yet I thought I caught the flush of pleasure through the bronze.

After we had embraced in the manner of those other dear days, we coldly shook hands occidental-wise. Ram Singh spat on the ground contemptuously at sight of the gray-clad sentinel outside our prison camp; and, he leading, we stepped gingerly through the quagmire of mud and filth into his dug-out. The other occupants arose, salaaming in silence, save the Gurkha, who saluted smartly, clicking his heels as he did so. In the gloom I made out the forms of a Punjabi of the —th Infantry, another bearded Sikh of the regiment of Ram Singh, a coal-black Madrasi, and—I gasped in sheer amazement, for at the far end of the room was a genuflecting figure in some incongruous yellow robe of sorts, the cut of which seemed strangely familiar; while every now and then came in deeply musical bass the 'Om, Mane, Padne, Hum,' invocation to Buddha, the Lord of Life and Death—to a small, squat, replica of Buddha, gazing eternally through the ages with that rapt look of meditation and the peaceful composure of the happy dead, even as all other Buddhas do in all other Buddhist shrines where his votaries worship.

I was about to withdraw temporarily at sight of the worshipper, when my guide stopped me. I turned round. 'Come, Huzoor; he has finished.' His eyes were shining. 'Come and see the handiwork of thy servant;' and Ram Singh led me to a niche in the wall of the dug-out. 'Dost see?' he said slyly, as he drew them out one by one. And, lo! there was a horribly real, wooden replica of Shiva, 'the destroyer,' whose many swords in his many hands were scarlet-tinted; an incarnated wooden Krishna of god-like mien and statuesque pose; a carved figure of Confucius, even to the pigtail; Vishnu, with a voluptuous smile on her evilly beautiful face, and a partly kneeling, partly prostrate, group of worshipping lovers, among whom I recognised some khaki-clad British Tommies; a few more remarkably good Buddhas; and a funeral pyre. The last mentioned was a particularly good specimen of carving. In the foreground surged part of a turbulent river in which a half-burnt corpse was depicted as being carried round in the vortex of an eddy. The pyre and its occupant were terribly realistic: tinted flames; the partly charred and half-subsided corpse; the few poorly clad, grieving relatives. All looked so real that one expected to hear their cries in miniature, to perceive the crackle and sizzle of the flames, to smell the sickening, soul-paralysing stench of burning dead.

I had heart to say nothing of the glaring incongruities in the khaki-clad lovers of Vishnu, or the pigtail of Confucius, or of the liberties he had taken in the details of Indian mythology, for I was away back in the cycle of years. There were the hundred and one alluring, intoxicating scents of the East in my nostrils. There was a gay, mad riot of colour in my mind's eye, in which tropic suns, many-coloured multitudes, vast rivers, and snow-clad peaks all mixed themselves wildly together in heterogeneous medley. There was the musical tinkle-tinkle in many keys of a thousand and one wind-kissed Buddhist monastery fairy bells in my ears.

'O proselyte,' said I, coming suddenly back to earth as the harshly discordant blare of a Prussian bugle broke in on our hearing, and shaking my finger in admonition, 'and what of the wrath of Krishna? Or, stay, was it not Vishnu?'

The Sikh's tone was grieved. 'Nay, thou jestest, O sahib. But thou hast not seen the *other* gods.' And so saying, he lit a lamp, a thing of ordinary string floating in a tin of sardine-oil.

His accents became almost a reverent chant. 'There be many half-gods, sahib, as thou truly knowest who hast sojourned in Hind, and hast travelled the dusty byways in search of Truth. There be they who swear by Krishna'—he glanced at the other Sikh. 'There be the followers of Kala of bloody memory. Buddha and Mahomet were also truly great men, and in the eyes of some, gods.'

Now, all this was in the vernacular, and between-whiles he was searching in the niche that had contained the carven gods, a perplexed look gradually growing on his keen-cut features.

Then suddenly to the Madrasi: 'O thou black pig of no caste, whose mothers, back to the fourth generation, were daughters of she-asses, and whose father was a camel, what hast thou done unto *The Gods?*'

The Madrasi was trembling with some hidden emotion. 'O Ram Singh, we feared to tell thee because of thy wrath, but—but'——

The Sikh's eyes blazed sudden fires of fury. With a bound he was at the other side of the dug-out. 'But what, pig? Speak before I choke thee! Dost hear? Speak!'

Said the Madrasi presently, 'The fat pig of a *Feldwebel*, he with the shaven head that thou knowest of, even he came here this morning and threw the great King and Ranee and the great Lord Keetcheener down into the dust and trampled on them. Is it not so, O my brothers?' And he turned to the others for confirmation, with the Sikh's hand still making him wince. And they answered shamefacedly, 'It is even as the Madrasi hath spoken, O Ram Singh.'

The Sikh spun the Madrasi round so that he sank, a huddled, ignominious heap, to the ground. Then he turned to the others. 'Dogs! pigs all of you!' he shouted; 'have ye taken the salt and the pay of the British Raj for this, that the first fat, thrice-accursed German swine who insults your King and Ranee and your Lord Keetcheener should be allowed to go free?'

'Nay, it is not so,' said the Gurkha, limping truculently forward. 'I and thy brother Sikh, who, as thou knowest, are both wounded, were working at the time.'

The sallow Punjabi, his arm in a sling, interrupted at this stage. 'Listen, O Huzoor and Ram Singh, and judge if we were to blame. The *Feldwebel* of the shaven head, on whom be a thousand curses, came searching again in here with four of his soldiers. He it was who threw the work of thy hands, thy Lord Keetcheener and the great King and Ranee, into the dust, and scattered the pieces outside; the others'—indicating the half-gods—'he passed by. We be wounded, as thou seest, O Huzoor; also were there many armed men on the outside, or assuredly should we have had a say in the matter. Peradventure, had the Lord Mahomet been there, he would have averted the evil eye.' This daringly, for he was the only Mohammedan present. Then, gathering courage: 'And what more wouldst thou have had us do?'

'Thou shalt see, dog of a Punjabi!' replied the Sikh tersely. His voice rose in mad anger. 'They've starved thee; they've beaten thee; they've tortured thee! *Aié*, thy blood is like unto the wells from which the camels drink, and which they befoul. Thou hast asked what more we would have had thee do. Again I say, I will show thee, and shortly; and if I keep not my word, may Krishna, Shiva, Buddha, and every other god do the same unto me that, I assure thee, I will do unto that fat German pig and thee. I have spoken.'

II.

A week later, by a stroke of good luck, and after evading several bayonet-prods and kicks, I managed to visit Ram Singh again. He salaamed as I entered, mud-stained, dishevelled, a week's growth on my chin. The dug-out was empty save for us two.

'O Forbes sahib, the hour draws nigh. See, two of the other gods are already finished.' He pointed exultantly at two new three-feet-high images of the King and the Queen. The likeness was really remarkable—that of the King, arrayed as for the Durbar, grasping his orb and sceptre; the Queen with a wondrous smile lighting up her features.

'Splendid, O Singh!' I exclaimed. Then I started as I noticed the work he had in hand; for it was the third god, 'Keetcheener.' There was a wreath of laurels around his head, and at his feet sat a tiny Buddha, a Confucius, a Krishna, a voluptuous-eyed Vishnu, a Kala, a Shiva, 'the destroyer,' and many other deities of mythology, obscure to my untrained eye and

intellect. 'Why, this is art, of a verity!' said I, and could say no more, for I was spell-bound as I watched his rapidly moving hand and the deft whittle of his knife.

Yet my heart was heavy as I gazed on the beloved, stern features of the *Third God*. For that very morning we had heard of his lamented and ill-timed death, to the accompaniment of many kicks and curses and bayonet-prods, with evil jests to the effect that the doom of the accursed *Engländer* was sealed, now that he was no more.

But we who knew him and loved him—including Ram Singh, one-time horse-thief, Buddhist priest, soldier of the grandest Empire the world has ever seen, and now Fashioner of Gods—knew also that his name and fame would live long after the memory of most of the other gods had faded into the dust of countless ages.

So I had only smiled at their evil jests *en route*, though sadly and unbelievingly withal, as befitted a soldier of the British Empire.

Then I braced myself to the ordeal and spoke: 'Hast heard the news, O Ram Singh—that he is now no more?' pointing to the central figure of the *Third God*.

He looked up suddenly, catching the direction of my glance. His face slowly turned ashen under the bronze. 'Nay, surely this is an evil subject to jest on.' He peered fearfully up at me. Then I told him all.

He moaned and groaned as he listened, giving vent to the '*Aiè, Aiè,*' so peculiarly expressive of the sorrow of the East, and rocking himself from side to side in a paroxysm of grief. And finally, at the close of my recital, he abased himself on the ground before the carved figure of the *Third God*.

All at once he rose, tall, erect, commanding, his eyes flashing fire, his face upturned towards heaven. His voice rose to a scream. '*Ohè*, Great God Keetcheener! *Ohè*, my dear Lord, do not fear; thy death shall not go unpunished. To-night—yea, this very night—shall there be others with thee in thy wanderings. *Ohè*, do not grieve, dear Lord and Master.' His voice gradually sank to a sobbing whisper.

Then he remembered he was a creature of the Orient, grew calmer, and sat down, recommencing almost immediately his labour of love. Occasionally he looked up at me. And it occurred to me he was formulating some scheme or other.

'Thou art wounded in the foot and the thigh, O sahib, and so art unable to go on a long march.'

I agreed sorrowfully.

I rose to go, and this time the Sikh embraced me. 'Look thou on the barbed-wire posts nearest here when the first winds of dawn begin to whisper.' He chuckled. 'Go thou now, Forbes sahib, and the gods be with thee till we meet again! And forget not—rise early.'

III.

I rose early. It was almost dark, but a faint ruby glow shone in the east, betokening dawn. I looked at the barbed-wire posts, and saw four ungainly blotches that looked uncommonly like —I rubbed my eyes—I looked again. Yes, there was no mistaking the configuration of those unsightly knobs, and the ground at the foot of the poles seemed darker.

The head of the *Feldwebel* was one of the blotches. The head of the fiend who had commanded the camp was another. The other two were the heads of the Punjabi and the Madrasi respectively—the heads of the men who did not avenge the insult to the *Three Gods*. A sentry came running up, cursing horribly. A round went off. A second sentry came—a third. Pandemonium reigned.

The authorities tried hard to find the culprits, and failed, for Ram Singh and his compatriot had fled, taking their three gods with them. The authorities also discovered a note pinned to the decapitated bodies of the Punjabi and the Madrasi. Incidentally this note found its way to Berlin, to be interpreted by a broken-hearted old man who had learned certain languages of the East in anticipation of that glorious day when Deutschland should control the destinies of the major portion of the Orient. It ran: '*O German Pig who hast the translation of this, Read:—These two are sent to accompany the One and Only War Lord in his wanderings, him whom ye so treacherously slew at sea. They go voluntarily as his bodyguard, having asked this of us, his servants, as a last favour.*

'*Ram Singh, havildar, —th Pioneers.*
'*Ram Dass, naik, do.*'

In this manner did the 'Fashioner of the Gods' pass out of my life for a space.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A HOT BATH FROM THE COPPER.

IN some small houses, although a bath is fitted, there is no boiler at the back of the kitchen-range, acting in conjunction with a hot-water cistern and the necessary piping, for heating the water. As a matter of fact, this arrangement is costly to install, and is sometimes inefficient in operation. Proof of the latter contention is afforded by the fact that some householders heat the water for the bath in the copper, in preference to lighting a fire in the kitchen-range, the former operation taking half-an-hour or thereabouts, whereas to get a hot bath by means

of the kitchen fire from complete cold occupies a considerable time. A copper is a very efficient appliance for heating water, and advantage has been taken of this fact to devise a simple bath-heating system in which the water is heated in the copper and forced up to the bath, even if it is situated on the floor above, by the pressure of the water service. The main portion of the apparatus consists of an ordinary copper with the usual furnace and flue, and a closed hot-water cistern mounted on the wall above it. From the cistern two pipes lead down into the copper and dip an inch or two below the water-level. One of these pipes opens at its upper end into the bottom of the cistern, but the other passes right up to the top of the cistern. We will assume for the moment that both cistern and copper are full of water, the copper having been filled in the ordinary way by the turning of a tap. One might suppose that the water would drain out of the cistern, but this it cannot do without leaving a vacuum, as no air can get in. When a fire is lighted under the copper the water inside rapidly becomes heated, and rises up the pipe leading to the top of the cistern, while a downward flow begins in the other pipe, and a brisk circulation is set up. In a very short time the water in both cistern and copper becomes hot, and is ready for forcing up into the bath. This is done by a simple arrangement of cocks, which allows the down pipe to be connected with the water service, while the up pipe (the one going to the top of the cistern) is connected to the bath-tap. On the tap being opened, hot water flows into the bath, and cold water comes in from the water service to take its place. Compared with the work needed to install a boiler in a kitchen-range and to fix the necessary piping, the arrangement is very easily carried out, while there is no danger of an explosion in frosty weather. The ordinary functions of the copper are in no way interfered with, the pipes coming in close to one side, and only involving notches in the lid to accommodate them. The apparatus, which is known as the 'Non-Pressure Hot-Water Supply System,' has been invented and patented by Mr George Bailey.

HUGE CHANNEL FERRY SCHEME.

The cross-Channel train-ferry steamers used during the war and described in these notes for last month are small craft compared with the colossal ferry-boats suggested by Sir John Pilter, Honorary President of the British Chamber of Commerce in Paris, and M. de Cordemoy. Estimating that an average daily traffic between France and England of four thousand tons may be expected, they say that a train-ferry steamer capable of dealing with this tonnage, assuming two crossings each way per day, would have a length of six hundred feet, a breadth of eighty-five feet, and a gross tonnage of twenty-five thousand tons, and would require a depth of water of twenty-nine and a half feet to float it. The goods-trucks and the passenger-coaches would be accommodated on two decks, one above the other, and would be hauled on board by winches and cables. To enable the ferry-boat to take up a position so that its rails shall exactly meet those on the hinged bridges on the shore, stockades of piles are to be built at the terminal ports converging towards the landing-stages, and these will fit the stern of the boat. This device, it may be noted, has long been in use for the ferries across New York harbour. Passenger-trains would be timed to arrive ten minutes before the departure of the boat, this period being deemed sufficient for embarkation. The goods-trains would, of course, be already on board. The voyage of ninety minutes or so being over, the passenger-train would be run on shore and despatched on its way in the course of twenty minutes, leaving the goods traffic to be dealt with more leisurely. 'While the outer port at Dover could receive a boat with a draught of twenty-nine and a half feet at any state of the tide,' says *The Times*, 'the French coast has no port offering the same facilities.' A suitable site for a deep-water port is to be found, however, just south of Cape Gris Nez, at a point only twenty-three miles distant from the English coast. It is estimated that the necessary accommodation could be constructed on this site in four years at a cost of three million pounds. In the meantime the originators of the scheme suggest the possibility of running the ferry to suit the tides.

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST LOG RAFT.

Those who have read that inimitable boys' book, *Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain, will remember the huge log rafts encountered by the hero and the nigger Jim during their voyage down the Mississippi. Those floating masses of timber would, however, look insignificant by the side of the colossal log ship recently towed from Haparanda, at the north of the Gulf of Bothnia, to Copenhagen, a distance of close upon a thousand miles. This vessel (it can hardly be called a raft) was built with a V-shaped bow, and measured three hundred and eighty-seven feet in length and fifty-five in width, while the depth was twenty-six and a half feet, of which ten feet projected above the water. It was held together by numerous big steel-wire ropes, and took six months to build. The crew of seven men were accommodated in a deckhouse aft.

A NEW FORM OF STRETCHER.

The transfer of a severely injured person from a stretcher to a hospital bed is often accompanied by pain and shock which may have serious consequences, and it is surprising that only recently has a stretcher been devised which can be laid

on the bed and pulled out from under the patient without seriously disturbing him. The stretcher referred to is divided down the middle, and each edge of the canvas is provided with broad loops of the same material. When the two halves of the stretcher are brought together the two sets of loops fit into each other, thus forming a tunnel, as it were, from one end to the other. A thin steel rod is pushed in at each end of the tunnel until the two rods meet and hold each other in check, when they are secured in position by means of canvas straps passing over their outer ends. To enable the stretcher to be placed in position on the bed, the handles, which in their normal position would not allow of this, are made to fold up. The stretcher containing the patient having been deposited on the bed, the steel rods are drawn out, and the canvas is pulled from under him at each side. According to the *Scientific American*, this stretcher was invented by Mr M. V. Hubbard, an ambulance-driver in the fire department of San José, California.

MEDITERRANEAN TO PERSIAN GULF BY CANAL.

The project originated by a Belgian engineer, M. Gustave Defosse, to construct a ship-canal nearly a thousand miles in length between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf dwarfs into insignificance all the canals chemes contemplated in this country, important though these are. Reference to the map, however, shows that the idea is not so far-fetched as might be thought at first, owing to the nearness of the upper Euphrates to the Mediterranean seaboard. This project was set on foot long before the war, surveys being made between 1901 and 1912, and the recent turn of events in favour of the Allies has brought it within the realm of practical politics. According to a description given in *The Times Engineering Supplement*, the canal is to have a width of three hundred and twenty-eight feet at the surface and two hundred and thirty feet at the bottom, while the depth will be thirty-two feet nine inches. Starting at the mouth of the Orontes at Suediah (the Seleucia of the Acts of the Apostles), the canal is to follow that river to Lake Abiad, whence a channel would be cut to Aleppo, and from that city to Khalat Balis, on the Euphrates, a total distance of one hundred and forty-nine miles from Suediah. At this point the surface of the Euphrates is ninety-eight and a half feet above sea-level, which gives a rise of less than eight inches to the mile; while to Fao, the Persian Gulf terminal of the canal, a distance of eight hundred and twenty miles, the fall would be under one and a half inches to the mile. Under these conditions locks are not considered necessary, but M. Defosse proposes to keep up the water-level by regulating dams of special design which will not interfere with navigation. One of these dams is to be placed between Suediah and Khalat Balis, and four are to be built between Khalat Balis and Fao. Both the Orontes and the Euphrates will, of course, be straightened and deepened. The upper parts of the two rivers and some of their larger tributaries are to be dammed to provide reserve water for the canal and for irrigation, while water-power for generating electricity is to be developed where practicable. A dam, for instance, across the Euphrates at Khalat Balis is estimated to provide forty thousand horse-power, a further thirty thousand being derivable from the Orontes and two other rivers. In addition to employing the electric-power for irrigation works and for lighting, it is proposed to use it for hauling vessels along the canal. Bagdad being on the Tigris and nearly thirty miles from the Euphrates, it is proposed to construct a branch canal to the Lake of El-Khor, which would be made into the port for the city, water communication being also provided with the Tigris. The scheme includes quays at the terminals for the largest ships, and similar accommodation along the canal to Antioch, and at other places. In fact, M. Defosse expects the section from Basra to Fao to become one huge port. Jetties two and a half miles long are to protect the entrance, and the river is to be deepened to forty feet up to Fao. The cost of the canal and other works is estimated at sixty-four million pounds, and M. Defosse calculates that the work could be completed in seven years. A yearly revenue of eight million pounds is expected, without reckoning on any returns from irrigation.

NON-INFLAMMABLE GAS FOR AIRSHIPS.

An important development brought about by the war was the production of helium at a cost which permitted of its use in balloons and airships, for which purpose it has the important advantage over hydrogen, the gas commonly used, of being non-inflammable. Even for commercial flying in peace-time an airship filled with hydrogen would be subject to considerable risks from fire, while during war it would now be practically at the mercy of the first enemy aeroplane that came along. Before the armistice was signed plans had been prepared for a fleet of airships to be filled with helium, and this gas was already being used in American kite balloons. The only drawback to helium, apart from its cost, is its reduced lifting-power as compared with hydrogen, but the difference is only about 7½ per cent., and this disadvantage is far more than counterbalanced by its non-inflammability. At one time helium cost more than three hundred pounds per cubic foot, but in the near future the Americans expect to produce it at a cost comparatively small. Helium is found in the natural gases of the south-western portion of the United States to the extent of at least 1 per cent. 'When America declared

war upon Germany,' says a writer in the *Scientific American*, 'the British Air Board called the attention of the American Government to the fact that one of the important contributions that country could make toward winning the war would be the industrial production of helium.' An experimental station was at once put in hand by the American Bureau of Mines and the Aircraft Board, while two companies engaged in the production of liquid air were induced to lay down plant for producing helium. These three plants have been in operation for some time, and huge works are now being built at a cost of over four hundred thousand pounds by the Navy Department for providing helium for naval airships. There is not the least doubt that the production of helium on a commercial scale will give a great impetus to the development of the airship, as the elimination of the fire risk will allow of the machinery and the propeller-shaft being mounted on the centre line, and this will prove a great advantage. A central propeller at the tail of the vessel tends only to drive the vessel forward, whereas propellers in cars below the body have a tendency to tip up the nose of the ship, and as this effect has to be corrected by the rudders, a considerable loss of speed is incurred.

A BRIQUETTE-MAKER FOR THE HOME.

Most of us are familiar with fuel in the form of briquettes made from coal-dust and slack, with the addition of tar or some similar binding material. Briquettes are usually manufactured by machinery, the mixture being pressed into moulds. A simple hand device, known as the 'Wildfire' Briquette-Maker, has now been placed on the market, which enables any householder to make his or her own briquettes from the dust and small coal left over in the cellar, or from slack bought for the purpose at a comparatively low price. The tools comprise (1) a four-sided mould open at the top and the bottom, and rather larger at the bottom than at the top; (2) a movable bottom which fits loosely in the mould; and (3) a rammer, consisting of a square weight fitting easily into the mould and provided with a wooden handle. The coal is first riddled in a sieve with half-inch holes, the stuff which passes through being used for the briquettes, the larger coal being burnt in the ordinary way. A mixture is now made of two parts of pitch to one of Portland cement, the former being crushed until it will pass through a sieve with one-eighth-inch holes. This preparation is then thoroughly mixed with the coal in the proportion of one part of the mixture to six of coal. An easy way of measuring the quantities is to use an ordinary household bucket, which holds two and a half gallons, six full buckets of small coal weighing approximately one hundredweight. For this quantity one bucket of the mixture is required, or twelve pounds of pitch and six pounds of cement. Add water, a little at a time, through the rose of a watering-can, and again thoroughly mix, taking care that the water reaches every particle of dust. The stuff should be damp only, but on no account sloppy. If the coal is damp to start with, it may not require any added water. To make the briquettes, put the movable bottom of the mould on a level floor with the flat side uppermost, and place the mould over it. Then, using a garden trowel, fill the box loosely to within two or three inches of the top, and form the briquette with a few good short strokes with the rammer. To extract the briquette, lift the mould containing it off the movable bottom and place it on the floor, when a gentle pressure with the rammer will cause the briquette to fall, and the mould can be lifted off. Briquettes varying in thickness from one to four inches can be made according to the quantity of the mixture put into the mould. They should be allowed twelve hours to set, after which they can be stacked, being ready for use in forty-eight hours. Briquettes can also be made with tar as a binder, and cinders or coke-dust can be utilised with a proportion of coal. When estimating the cost users should remember that pitch and tar have high heat values, so that the extra twelve pounds to the hundredweight are practically equal to so much additional coal. The makers of the apparatus claim that one hundredweight of slack can be made into seventy briquettes (three to the cubic foot) in ninety minutes.

A MINE-SWEEPER FOR EVERY SHIP.

A device that saved us from much greater privations during the war than we actually suffered was the 'paravane,' which was used to protect Allied ships from enemy mines. Paravanes are somewhat similar in shape to torpedoes, and, like them, they are made to travel under water. Two paravanes were towed from the bow of every ship, one on each side. The towing-cables were attached to the stem of the vessel as deep down under water as possible. Fins were fitted to paravanes, which, in conjunction with the way the towing-cables were made fast, caused them to take up a position well away to the side of the ship and about twenty feet under water. Any one who has towed a boat along a river or a canal from a tow-path will know that by fixing the tow-rope at a certain point on the bow, the boat can be made to take up a position nearly abreast of the person towing. Paravanes are towed on this principle, their fins having a similar effect to that of the boat's keel. Mines are anchored to the bottom of the sea by wire cables, and they float about five to fifteen feet below the surface according to the state of the tide. When a ship comes along fitted with paravanes and one of the towing-cables catches the mooring-wire of a mine, the wire scrapes along the cable

until it reaches the paravane, where it is severed by a powerful cutting device, and the mine bobs up to the surface to be sunk by gunfire. In the later paravanes the cutting device consisted of big shears, which were opened and shut automatically by a wire cable which was hauled in and let go continuously by a winch on the deck of the ship. Of course, it was always possible that a mine would be struck by the stem of the vessel, but in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it was caught by the paravanes. Even if it did strike the stem and explode, the damage was not nearly so serious as if it had hit the side farther aft, and vessels of which only the bow was blown in generally managed to reach a place of safety. The ships both of the navy and of the merchant service were fitted with paravanes, which accounts for the small amount of damage wrought by German mines, considering the large number that were laid.

Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE CLOSING OF OUR HOSPITAL.

By 'STAFF NURSE,' Author of *Scottie and Some Others.*

They have learned great faith and little fear, and a high heart in distress,
And how to suffer each sodden year of heaped-up weariness. KIPLING.

SEPTEMBER 1914! A vision rises before us of many nurses, camouflaged in dust-caps and overalls and surrounded on all sides by packing-cases, working with the break-neck enthusiasm associated with these early days of war. The clink-clank of hammers on iron is heard as beds are fixed up for the patients, who, we already feel in our hearts, will deserve from us our very best.

There are no fixed hours of work yet—just from dawn to dark, to get things ship-shape and ourselves in readiness for our first batch of wounded. Then comes the midnight call on the telephone—a code message—and matron and dispenser puzzle the message out in the small hours; and, lo! before our awe has had time to give place to ardour, our wounded are with us—for better or for worse.

. . . . . .

November 1918! A new vision arises—a happier one, perhaps; and yet there is always sadness when one closes a book in which one has read much gallant history, and our hospital is to be closed this week.

Four years and more since we hammered our beds into place; and now, as we come to pack them up and put them away, they are no longer merely beds—they have been homes, some for a very long time, some for a sadly short time, yet all homes, and welcomed eagerly as such by our men back from the battle. In each ward as we work round we have visions—grave visions and gay visions—for we have found in the hearts of our patients a gospel of cheerful endurance, their royal road to laughter through tears.

In Ward 1, hopping around on his crutches, goes Paddy O'Rafferty, the boy whose imagination led him astray from the paths of truth, but never to any man's hurt. Paddy's heart was just full of irresponsible nonsense, which could be caught up and tossed aside when necessity bade Paddy fight. If his tongue frequently wandered, Paddy would always tell you his heart was in the 'right place,' and in an undertone he would add, 'in my boots often.'

In Ward 2 we have a different vision, a sterner and a finer one, perhaps, for here we see 'Scottie,' resolute and restless, counting his days wasted that were spent with us, and living only to be 'out and at them again.' Many men have gone back as a duty cheerfully; many have said they went back gladly, so as to cheer their people here; but Scottie lived the longing and breathed it in every breath he drew, almost to his own undoing. Scottie—yes, a character in a thousand he was, with a niceness of feeling and judgment that kings have often lacked. In his ward was a lad, one, like many others, who years before had quarrelled with his home folks and gone completely out of their lives. In a newspaper his sister saw his name in our list of wounded, and wrote telling the boy his mother had died, but that she and her father still lived in the old home, and would welcome him with open arms. Scottie was told all about it, and Scottie wrote for his comrade, saying he would come to the old home as soon as possible. At last the day came when the boy was able to travel north, but with the day came a sad telegram: 'Father died suddenly last night.' To Scottie once more the cry of despair went out as, hard-eyed, the poor boy sat holding the message before him, while Scottie, with a strong arm round his shoulders, gave him the comfort of a brave heart, and, with a thoughtfulness which endeared him to us all, drew screens round the bed, that the boy might be alone with his grief. Just a strong, quiet man was our Scottie, and an outsider might never have noticed him; but to every man in the ward Scottie was guide, philosopher, and friend. I believe he would have sold his soul to help a pal, and the price Scottie set on his soul was no mean one.

Memories in Ward 3 are fewer, because Ward 3 is a small ward; but one bed stands out, for into it, early in the war, was carried a very ill and very pale little lad. There seemed to be only two things left him to say, and they were 'Yes' and always 'Thank you.' A warrior, and a faithful one, at sixteen, yet still a boy in strength, he seemed just so tired and glad to rest. He had enlisted from a very poor home in August 1914—of how poor a home his wasted frame was evidence. Not hard to enlist from such a home, you might think; but towards the end the boy talked always of his home as though it had been an earthly Paradise, and when he left us to join the ranks of the greatest army of all, he fell asleep with his hand held fast in the thin, toil-worn hand of the mother of that home.

Ward 4 had many memories, but out of them all perhaps stands forth 'The Bullet King,' sardonically so called from his joy in displaying to visitors the bullets which had played hide-and-seek to some purpose in his anatomy. Before the war he had been a navvy, and so his knowledge of what was *de rigueur* in the army was limited, and he knew not that 'never in the life' must a soldier boast of his bullets. Wounded badly in the back, he had to lie on his face, and in this position (perhaps fortunately) was oblivious of the blighting sarcasms hurled at his head by more silent sufferers.

In Ward 5, a ward radiant with sunshine on green lawns, many cheery warriors have made their home, but I honestly think the cheeriest of all was a Jock in his early twenties with his sight affected. While with us he could see and take his share in the enjoyment of our beautiful surroundings; but in a month he would be blind—totally blind—and he laughed it off. 'I 've seen a lot, I have,' he would say, 'and I have a good memory, but I 've sent for my best girl, or I might forget what she is like when she 's my wife!'

In Ward 6 we all remember our dear theological student, a scholar who forsook all and joined the R.A.M.C. Not strong at any time, he was unfortunately plunged straight into an enteric epidemic. For weeks he worked day and night ungrudgingly, and with the minimum of sleep. But nature struck, and the student fell ill—seriously ill—never again, poor boy! completely to recover his mental balance. He was so gentle and so good that one wished more care had been taken to get him sleep during his hard labours, for it was heart-rending to see him all through the night sitting bolt-upright to keep sleep away, always reiterating, 'A soldier on duty must not sleep.'

Ward 7 we shall always associate with the 'Three Graces,' so called from their propensity for getting into disgrace. Scottish, English, and Welsh respectively, they carried gaily the characteristics of their countries, and where one excelled in inspiration, the other two were pre-eminent in fervour and determination; and so their innocent plots were always successfully carried through, resulting usually in an increased popularity.

In Ward 8 there was my right-hand man, badly wounded in the face, and so a long time with us. He is a very pleasant memory—Lance-Corporal C——; and as batman to the theatre Sister he surely excelled all others, and invented duties for himself that no other batman would have recognised. Many scores of times I had to bless him for timely help in a rush of duties, and my gallant hussar was certainly the most intelligent probationer to whom I ever showed the ropes.

But here is Ward 9, 'Right o' the Line,' and it brings such a throng of blessed memories that I am almost overwhelmed. Gallant gunners, champion prize-fighters, gay Guardsmen and costers, here 's to you all—my own men—and may I meet you again sometime, somewhere.

Ward 10 and the 'Napoo Room,' and we 're round them all! In Ward 10 an amusing man once solemnly handed me my gold watch, which I had carelessly left lying about, with the solemn reminder, 'We are not all gentlemen here, Sister!' The 'Napoo Room' was, of course, the operating theatre, but I am thankful to say no one ever napooed in my theatre. The soldiers' only objection to our appearance there was the ghostly white effect of our overalls, and so with the aid of permanganate of potash we dyed ourselves a pale khaki, which they found less reminiscent of angels' wings! But now, alas, the 'Napoo Room' is napoo! Its doors are shut, and we all descend to the front-door, the scene of so many departures of recovered and grateful Tommies. There we see the vision of our tall, dignified matron, beloved by all, personally seeing off her soldiers, and handing out the 'fag indispensable.'

Our visions are ended. Corridors are empty, and wards bare after their years of healing. Surely, when very soon the voices of little children once more echo within these walls, their days will be hallowed by the memories of the good and the great and the gallant men who have been succoured there.

And as the doors close on the nurses who have been privileged to serve these fine men, they have but one feeling, that, like the people of old who walked in darkness, they have seen a great light.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SEVENTH SERIES

CHRISTINE LONAVET.

A STORY OF THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.

By ANDREW W. ARNOLD, Author of *The Attack on the Farm*, *The Colonel's Murillo*, *Pepita*, &c.

PART I.

I.

THEY must have been very nice old ladies, those demoiselles Adèle and Marie Dariac, who owned the pretty Villa Rosa at St Jean de la Ruelle, on the high-road from Artenay to Orléans, which we Mobiles of the 3rd Division, under General Barry of the 15th Corps, were ordered to hold at any cost against the advancing Prussians on the 10th October. Everything within the house was in such perfect order, including the wine-cellar, as we afterwards found out—and the Prussians, too, for the matter of that—when we had time to investigate. Upstairs in the dainty bedrooms were pretty, if effeminate, pictures of real and imaginary saints, ivory prayer-books, &c.; but, for all that, every bed was quickly cleared of its mattress, and the green outside shutters were closed, and broken where it suited us to get our *chassepots* through.

'I am told, Sergeant Pradelle, that you are a good shot,' said Lieutenant Bosly to me. He was but a *blanc-bec*, this young fellow, and had joined us only three days before at Tours.

'Yes, *mon lieutenant*,' I replied. 'I think I may say so. I won a silver horn at an international *Concours de Tir* at Bâle after I had done my service.'

'Well, you choose your own place, and tell me the range, and I'll tell the men, as you really know more about it than I do.'

At that moment Captain Courmont came in, and being satisfied, hurried off, saying he would see to the men in the garden behind the walls on the road. Under General Motterouge we French had been as badly surprised that morning at Artenay as ever we were at Wissembourg or Beaumont. In the fields in front and along the road, singly and in groups, wounded and unwounded men were hastening panic-stricken to Orléans, but as yet we saw no signs of the enemy. We had not long to wait, however, for soon, in a black mass, they came over the crest of the hill on our left. I reckoned they were quite eight hundred metres from us. Many of the poor lads that composed these newly formed battalions of ours had not gone through any musketry course, but from beneath us, and also from some other villas on our right, they opened fire at once.

'*Allez*, sergeant, what are you waiting for? What is the use of our having a better gun if we don't use it?' cried the lieutenant.

'It's a perfect waste of ammunition at that range, *mon lieutenant*,' I replied.

But just then Captain Courmont entered and swore at my commander, so we began at once. As I had felt sure, our fire did not make the slightest difference. It was soon evident that these particular Germans—they were Bavarians—had no intention of attacking us. Orléans was their objective, and they made for the suburb that faced them. With his glasses fixed to his eyes, the lieutenant was standing beside me.

'You see that officer on a brown horse?' I said. 'I reckon he is five hundred metres off. You watch.'

At the third shot I hit him.

'Bravo!' he cried. 'Now, *mes enfants*, alter your sights to five hundred, and fire slow.'

Inexperienced though they were, the effect of their fire was now more apparent, and, delighted at this, Bosly went down to those below us, telling me he would be back in a minute.

He had hardly gone when a battery away to the left opened on us. At first the shells went whistling overhead; then they fell between us and their own men. But, alas! they quickly got the range, as we soon had reason to know, for a shell came hurtling through the roof, and burst with a deafening noise in the next room.

'Save yourselves!' shouted the lieutenant from the bottom of the stairs. 'They are coming up in the rear.'

In a moment there was a rush for the stairs, and as we went down them I saw at the back, beyond a field, and on the other side of the railway that runs from Orléans to Patay, a

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regiment making towards the station. The sight of it induced those who had got down first to turn into the road, and I was following, when a shell burst right in the middle of them. Luckily I was protected by the corner of the house, and, along with the lieutenant, a fellow named Lannart, another called Malet, and one or two others, I got to the end of the garden. Whichever way we turned, it appeared to us we were doomed, and getting behind a summer-house, we waited breathlessly. It was growing dark, and darkness seemed the only thing that could save us. It was then, for the first time, that I found out about the wine-cellar.

'Try some of this,' said Lannart, taking a bottle of cognac from his pocket. 'What's more, I found a new case of English biscuits.' Apart from myself, every one seemed provided with either wine or brandy.

I had always liked Lannart. Like myself, he came from Champagne. I had known him from a boy, and we had done our service together in a regiment at Strasbourg. Great was our joy when, quite unexpectedly, we found ourselves together in the same regiment at Bordeaux, for we had both been abroad when the war broke out. He was a merry, good-hearted fellow, and a perfect little Hercules, but from a military point of view was greatly handicapped through being very short-sighted.

Malet was of an entirely different type, being very tall and rather knock-kneed, with a fine black beard, rosy cheeks, and regular features; very affable and agreeable, but *au fond* a perfect idiot. His father had a great drapery-store in Bordeaux, and among the young ladies employed there Malet *fils* was considered a regular Adonis. He had never done his service, and had evaded being called up as long as he could. Every one, of course, knew of the Magasin Malet, for the walls of the city were placarded with the merits of Malet's goods, so naturally at first he was always being chaffed. Requests showered in upon him for better boots and socks, and even for articles not usually sold to soldiers, in exchange for the wretched cotton socks and brown-paper boots served out to us.

II.

It was difficult for me to analyse my thoughts as some eight of us crouched there behind that summer-house. It was the first time I had been under fire, and I was filled at the outset with a sense of burning shame. Better, I thought, to go out at any price than to remain hidden there. But this idea gave way to a realisation of the absurdity of the whole situation. We had had nothing to eat for hours—we were told we should have something at Orléans; thus, on empty stomachs brandy was far more potent. Already two men were lying like logs on the ground, half-hidden by some blackberry-bushes. The shells that kept bursting, mostly overhead, but sometimes even in the garden, were nothing to them. Then the shelling ceased, and we heard footsteps advancing at the double along the road.

'The rats are not in this hole,' I heard a voice exclaim. '*Vorwärts!*'

The tramping seemed never to end, but the firing ahead of them showed at least that some were making a better resistance than we had done. Then we heard the clatter of cavalry—and what is more, they halted.

'Dismount! Stand by your horses!'

The colour left the rosy cheeks of Malet; a look of dismay came into the vacant face of the lieutenant. Luckily the trumpet sounded, and the cavalrymen departed as quickly as they had come. However, twilight was fast closing in. In an hour, I reckoned, we could get out of the trap we were in; but then a battery of artillery came tearing along, with a jingle and a jangle as they passed down the road. There was, as I noted, a field to the left of the house, but on one side there was a thick belt of trees, close to the end of the garden.

'Sergeant,' said Lieutenant Bosly in rather a thick voice, 'I will go and reconnoitre a little.'

'*Oui, mon lieutenant,*' I answered, as he climbed somewhat unsteadily over the wall.

He had not been gone long when again we heard infantry approaching. They halted, and a sergeant, a corporal, and twenty-four men were told off to pass the night in the very villa itself.

'Now, you fellows,' I whispered, 'be ready. I have had enough of this skulking. If there is still light for them to see us, we will blaze into them and bolt.'

It got darker and darker, but the Bavarians (as we afterwards found them to be) were too busy at first indoors to come out. Suddenly Lannart nudged me.

'This way, Uhlmann,' cried one; 'there's a summer-house, they say, down here. Give me the lantern.'

'Why can't we burn their chairs and tables?'

'Because the *hauptmann* said we were not to; that's why.'

'Fix your bayonets,' I whispered sharply. 'Nothing but *l'arme blanche*, mind now, if they come.—Lannart, you keep close to me.'

Nearer and nearer came the footsteps. Ready to plunge our bright weapons into them, we stood breathlessly as we heard the Bavarians approach.

'Here we are! *Ach, das ist gut.* Why, there's a table that's nice and dry. Smash up those seats. What with all the wine and a good fire, we'll have a nice evening.'

Stamping about inside the summer-house

within a metre of us we heard the brutes demolishing the seats.

'*Donnerwetter!*' suddenly exclaimed one; 'the handle of this axe is broken.'

'Well, we have got enough, anyway,' said the other. 'So come on;' and away they went.

'Now, you fellows,' I said, 'I am off, and those who can must follow me.'

Two, I believe, were left behind; some others may have got over the wall; but I only know for certain that Lannart and Malet were close to me.

'Not too fast,' I said, for I knew we were not far from the railway, and I remembered there was a cutting. Soon we came to it, and once across, we got into some fields, where I had seen the Germans from the house. Ere long we reached what we took to be the end of the great forest of Orléans, that stretches from Patay to Beaune-la-Rolande. A cold sleety rain was now falling fast, and the wind was getting up, but at any rate we were free. After a time, however, as we wandered on and on, we began to realise we were not much better off than we had been before. But at last we came to a road, and, drenched to the skin, we determined to follow it, as we knew we must sooner or later come to some dwelling—which we did. This was a deserted cottage. The wretched owners had left no food behind, but we had enough wine, cognac, and biscuits for the night, and some tobacco; and as we dried our clothes before a blazing fire little we cared for the howling storm without, for we were warm and snug.

III.

We had meant to start betimes, but the sun must have risen long ere we awoke. Setting off again, we got into the woods as soon as we could for fear of meeting any Germans.

The rain and sleet had vanished, but it was still cloudy. The sun, alas! was no guide, and I longed for a compass. After a time we found a cottage, but there was no one in it save an old bedridden man and a little child; and it was not till the afternoon that we learned from a native we had been going north—the worst direction we could have taken. We were close to Gémigny, which was occupied by Bavarians. He told us to be very careful, as they had patrols of dragoons everywhere. On leaving I decided to make straight for Bacoon, and then try to reach the forest of Marchenoir, which was about seven leagues from us. Soon the country became more open, the sky cleared, and, invigorated by some milk we got at another cottage, our spirits rose.

We had left a wood behind us, and were making for another, when I suddenly saw a couple of cock-pheasants fighting—a common enough sight in the spring, but never before in all my life had I seen anything of the kind in October. No gamecocks ever fought more gamely. True, one was evidently getting the worst of it, but for all that it ran and half-flew, and then turned again and with claws in the air went at the other. So intent were the two birds on killing each other that they paid no attention to us; in fact, they had come so near, as we stood watching, that they were not more than fifty metres from us.

'It would be a grand thing, sergeant,' said Lannart, 'if we could shoot them; we should then have some supper to-night.'

'It's impossible with a single bullet,' I answered; 'but, *parbleu!* there's nothing to lose, and I will try.'

It was a rash, silly thing to do, but I yielded to the temptation, and everything that followed was the result of that shot. The pair were dancing round one another, and as a matter of fact I don't think I hit the one I aimed at; but, to the delight of all, I did actually hit and kill one of the birds. Eagerly we rushed forward, when all at once we found there was a regular bog in the middle of the field, fed from a tiny stream in the centre. However, we went squelching through it, intent on our quest. We had secured the bird, when suddenly we saw coming out of the back of the wood we had left some cavalry, whom, from their sky-blue uniforms and mutton-chop brass helmets, we knew to be Bavarian dragoons, without a doubt attracted by the report of my chassepot.

In a moment I saw that, laden as we were with our knapsacks, it was very unlikely we could reach the wood in front of us. I reckoned they were but two hundred and fifty metres from us, and there were only about a dozen of them; so, puffed up with vanity at the way I had hit the pheasant, I determined to make a stand. 'You keep by me, Lannart,' I sang out.

'Trust me for that,' he answered; and Malet, to his credit, remained.

'You two are not to fire; you pass me your guns.'

As soon as they saw us the dragoons had set up a shout; and now, changing from double file to fours, they galloped straight for us. With the first shot I hit the fine chestnut horse of their leader full in the chest. The poor beast came down, throwing its rider far over its head. My second shot wounded a horse in the second rank, which got the bit in its mouth and went off at a tangent, upsetting some others. I fancy I missed with the third, but the fourth shot was the best of all, for I saw a man throw up his arms. This had a quieting effect on the rest of them, and they swerved round a trifle and relaxed their pace.

'Now we will run for it a little,' I said. 'I want to draw them on into that bog, and then we can pick them off.'

Perhaps ashamed of retreating before three, they got over their hesitation and came for us once more. They were not more than one hun-

dred metres away now as I stood waiting for them, ready to fire. It had been no easy task for us to get over the morass, and no sooner were their great heavy horses in it than the Germans were in difficulties.

'Come on, you *schweinhunde!*' I shouted in delight; and Malet and Lannart, carried away by excitement, blazed away at the Germans, whose only thought now was to get back. But, unfortunately, one who had lost his horse did what they all ought to have done in the first place—knelt down and fired at me. At such a range he could hardly miss, though their needle-carbine was a poor weapon. I felt the sting in my leg, beneath the calf, but for all that I pressed cartridge after cartridge into my good rifle until the remnant gained the wood on foot. Then I sank to the ground, my boot full of blood.

In their delight Lannart and Malet were dancing about, almost embracing each other, till they saw me, and then the good fellows were quite taken aback. Quickly they did what they could. I had some lint, and with a handkerchief they tied up the wound.

'Now get on my back,' said Lannart, 'and quickly, too. There may be others coming.'

From the wood the Germans tried a few shots at us. Lannart waved his hands and made a ceremonious bow in their direction, and then hoisted me on his broad back. But I was strong and heavily built, and even he could not carry me very far, so with my arms round their necks they supported me to the wood in front.

IV.

We had hardly got into the wood when a small, dapper, old gentleman with a very white moustache, wearing the riband of the Legion of Honour, came up with a game-bag on his back.

'Bravo indeed, *mon enfant!* I was watching those two pheasants fighting, and I saw that shot of yours. *Ma foi!* that was a wonderful shot. I saw the whole affair.'

'Then, sir,' I replied, 'you must give these two credit also.'

'Of course,' he said, 'they did their duty, sergeant. I have sent my grandson to catch that horse that bolted and threw its rider. Mind you, that's your horse.'

'Mine!'

'Yes, of course it is. Ah, here he comes! Now we will put you on it. If it were not that my wife is ill, I should take you up to the château; as it is, I will take you to one who rents some of my land—Monsieur Lonavet. —Jean,' he added to the lad, 'make a short cut to La Ferme des Tourelles and tell monsieur we are coming. If he is out, tell Mademoiselle Christine.'

I mounted the horse from the right side, and we all set off, the gentleman—he was General Count de Valacourt—talking volubly of what he had seen all the time.

The farm, with its four little towers, one at each corner, from which it took its name, was soon in sight, and entering under a finely carved archway, we found ourselves in a quadrangle. It was a quaint, huge building, and in the Middle Ages had probably had a moat round it.

'Well, M. Lonavet,' said the count to a tall, thin, handsome man between fifty and sixty, who came forward, followed by a shaggy sheep-dog, 'I have brought you a patriot whom I should have been proud to have myself as a guest in the ordinary way;' and he went on to eulogise me so much that I felt quite uncomfortable, especially as we were joined at that moment by one of the most beautiful girls I had ever seen in my life. 'Ah, mademoiselle,' he continued in a chaffing tone, 'here's a lad for you. He's worthy of your bright eyes. Holy Virgin! you should have seen him bring those devils down! It was the best day's work I have seen done for a long time.'

'Yes, monsieur,' said her father in a dubious voice; 'but it may be a very expensive one for both of us. The Germans will say they are *francs-tireurs*, and levy ten thousand francs or more on the district.'

'How can they say that, with their uniform?'

'Are those savages in the habit of sticking at lies? But have no fear—I will do my duty towards him, and through him to my country.'

'Yes; and I will send you down wine and grapes,' said the open-handed old noble. 'I will come myself to-morrow, and we shall get Dr Bonnat as soon as we can.'

It was not long before Christine, helped by her sister Julie, who was nearly as pretty as she was, got hot water, bandages, &c. As they took the boot off, the bullet rolled on to the floor. 'There!' laughed the girl, looking up, for she was on her knees, and I was admiring the thick black tresses, and the finely formed white neck; 'you had better keep that; it will bring you luck.'

'It has brought me that already by bringing me here.'

'Anyway, you deserve it,' said Julie

(*Continued on page 363.*)

IN NORTH GREENLAND.

UPERNIVIK, the most northerly of the Danish colonies on the west coast of Greenland, is situated somewhat farther north than the most northern point of Norway. Beyond it lies Melville Bay, the coasts of which are sheeted over with the 'inland ice' which here discharges into the sea. To the north of this huge sheet of ice-filled water the land forms a peninsula, the coasts of which are pierced by two great fjords, Wolstenholme Sound and Inglefield Gulf. This peninsula, which is in about the same latitude as Spitsbergen, and covers an area nearly as large as that of Denmark, is the home of the polar Eskimos, and swarms with Arctic life. Auks, gulls, terns, and eider ducks breed on the rocks and the low islands; the sea is full of walrus, beluga, seals, and narwhals; and the polar bear is a frequent visitor. In prehistoric times the coasts of north-west Greenland, Grant's Land, and Ellesmere Land were peopled by tribes of Eskimo; traces of their habitations are to be found in many places at the present day. Of this ancient people there now remains only a small community of some two hundred individuals at Cape York, the most northern place of human residence on the earth. Cut off on all sides from the outer world, they lost not only connection therewith, but all direct knowledge thereof. The coasts of Wolstenholme Sound, of Inglefield Gulf, and of Ellesmere Land, the cliffs in the northern part of Melville Bay, and the icebergs of the Arctic Sea constituted their horizon; and what lay beyond interested them but little. Within this circumscribed area the polar Eskimos lived a life similar to that of the Stone Age. When John Ross discovered them in 1818, he found in use among these 'Arctic Highlanders' rough knives of meteoric iron with bone handles. The iron, it appeared later, they obtained from an aerolite in the neighbourhood of Cape York. In 1894 Peary found this aerolite with the assistance of one Eskimo, and two years later conveyed it to America.

In 1860 the tribe received an unexpected addition to their number in the form of fourteen strange Eskimos from the Baffin Bay region, who taught them, amongst other things, the use of the bow and arrow, how to hunt reindeer and catch salmon, and kayak-making.

During the period 1891–1909 Peary made seven expeditions to these regions, and an entire change was effected in the life of the polar Eskimos, inasmuch as they continued to receive plentiful supplies of modern weapons and of fishing-gear. For them at last the Stone Age had come to an end. But at the same time they lost, in a measure, their former unlimited freedom, as in the course of a few years they became dependent on European and American products. The Danish traveller Knud Rasmussen, who, with Mylius-Erichsen, passed the winter of 1903–4 among them, saw the danger which threatened their existence; and after paying another visit to these parts in 1907–8, and forming the mission station Nordstjernen at Cape York in 1909, he founded the station of Thule on Wolstenholme Sound. The object of the latter—which was managed by Peter Freuchen, for many years Knud Rasmussen's travelling companion—was to supply the Eskimos with weapons and provisions, and to assist or initiate scientific exploration.

In 1912 the first Thule expedition, which consisted of Rasmussen, Freuchen, and two Eskimos, was despatched for the purpose of investigating and charting the region round the so-called Peary Channel. It was carried out with wonderful speed and energy, and exceptionally valuable scientific results were obtained. Amongst these was the discovery of traces of former Eskimo dwellings on Independence Fjord, a huge inlet, and not a channel, as was previously supposed, which runs westwards between Peary Land and Mylius-Erichsen's Land. This discovery, which affects one of the most interesting questions connected with Arctic exploration, that of the Eskimo migrations, rendered desirable an examination of the great north-west Greenland fjords, and was the main cause of the second Thule expedition, news regarding the carrying out of which in 1917 was first brought to Copenhagen in May 1918—communication between north Greenland and the outer world being impossible during the winter months.

It was originally intended that this expedition should be despatched in 1916, but on his way from Denmark in the spring of that year Knud Rasmussen met with so many delays that he did not reach Thule until the 16th of June. With his usual energy, however, he determined to make the attempt. Between fifteen and twenty sleighs and over two hundred dogs were got together, and everything was ready for a start, when a heavy gale and snowstorm set in. This weather lasted for nearly a fortnight, and the season being then too far advanced, the journey had to be given up for that year.

The summer, however, was utilised in another fashion, and amongst the results obtained was a topographic map of the three-hundred-mile-long coast of Melville Bay, between Holms Island and Cape York. A complete investigation, too, was made of the remains of the old Eskimo habitations—some fifty in number—in that region; but so greatly was this work interfered with by snow and ice that the excavations had to be carried out with the help of warm water!

Before the winter of 1916–17 set in with full severity a large number of similar ruins between Cape York and Etah (a considerable distance to the north of Thule) were also visited, and an exhaustive report upon them and their adjuncts has been brought home.

In 1917 the main expedition to the great fjords of north-west Greenland was at length undertaken. The following is a summarised account thereof as furnished by the leader, Knud Rasmussen, on his return to Copenhagen last May, together with the geologist Lange Koch and the polar Eskimo, Ajago. The expedition was conducted in Eskimo fashion; that is to say, the members and their four-footed companions were dependent to a great extent for food on the wild animals shot on the way.

A start was effected on 6th April 1917 with six sleighs and seventy-two dogs, and it was soon discovered that the areas previously supposed to be land were in reality portions of the inland ice. The musk oxen, therefore, which had been reckoned upon did not exist. In about a month Sherard Osborn Fjord was reached; and in May, June, and July the charting of the great inlets was carried out. The work was attended by much suffering and privation, the men being frequently for many hours together up to their knees in ice-cold water, while all the time famine was following closely upon their heels. The farthest point reached was to the north of De Long Fjord. Only at a few places were musk oxen fallen in with, and those shot, when stripped of their thick coats, were found to be so thin that they proved quite insufficient for the requirements of the party. A large number of the dogs had, therefore, to be sacrificed.

Up to the middle of June progress was rendered very difficult by the deep snow, and ere long there remained only thirteen dogs—all in a very exhausted condition. These also would have had to be killed, but some seal were fortunately found, and the situation was saved for the time being.

Not until the first week in July did the snow begin to melt, and then the thaw set in with such completeness that travelling became more difficult than ever. In order to keep the collections of specimens, botanical and otherwise, above the water, scaffoldings of ski had to be made on the top of the sleighs. At one place there were a great many seal, but, to the bitter disappointment of the party, all those shot sank to the bottom at once. On 1st July the first fatality occurred. When out shooting hares, the Eskimo, Hendrik Olsen, disappeared, and his body was never recovered, in spite of diligent search. Dr Wulff, the Swedish botanist, and Koch were the last who spoke with him, and he was then very tired and sleepy. One of the theories as to the cause of his death—which, of course, had a most depressing effect upon his comrades—was that wolves, of which there were a good many in the neighbourhood, had attacked him when asleep, and devoured him.

After some twelve days in camp, during which the weather was extremely bad, and no animals or birds of any kind were shot, the return journey of about two hundred and seventy miles from St George's Fjord across the inland ice was commenced on 5th August. On the 21st the last scraps of food were eaten, and of the dogs there remained only five. It rained incessantly, all the streams were in flood, and the nights were very cold. On the 24th snow-free land was reached at Cape Agassiz, roughly one hundred and forty miles to the north of Etah, all being then in a state of extreme exhaustion, and hardly able to stand upright. That day the last dog was eaten; and as Dr Wulff's state had become extremely serious, it was determined that Rasmussen and Ajago should proceed with all speed to Etah and fetch assistance, whilst the others made their way by easy stages to a large lake known to the Eskimos, shooting whatever they came across. 'On the 25th,' said Rasmussen, 'we started, and when we had covered nearly one hundred miles we fell in with a reindeer-hunter, who helped us; on the 30th we reached Etah, and immediately despatched six sleighs with an abundant supply of provisions. Unfortunately they reached our comrades too late to save Dr Wulff. We got to Etah literally with our last remnants of strength; for the preceding seventy hours we had been incessantly at work.

'Soon after we left them our companions had some success in hunting, and travelled slowly forward at the rate of five or six kilometres a day; but the hardships of the journey had told severely on Dr Wulff, and he became weaker and weaker. On the inland ice he had shown himself to be a good walker, but constant wading in the ice-cold water had affected him very badly; moreover, he could not retain any food. Several times he expressed a wish to give up the struggle, but Koch and the Eskimos did their best to encourage him and keep him going.' Then, on the 29th of August, a foggy day, after an unsuccessful hunt, came the end, which was an eminently sad one. The poor fellow urged his companions to leave him to die in peace, in order to save their own lives and the results of the expedition; and, melancholy to relate, this had to be done—there was no alternative. Exhausted, starving, and with their clothes in rags, the others struggled on, and on 4th September they met the relief sleighs from Etah.

Two parties were sent to search for Dr Wulff. One of these, for some reason which does not appear, had to return. The other found the place where he had been left, but failed to discover any trace of the body. His last letter to Rasmussen explains the position. It was to

the following effect: 'The constant hunger and fatigues of the summer, and the almost complete want of food of the last days, have now reduced my physical powers to such a degree that I am quite unable to follow Koch and the Eskimos any farther. As their being saved depends upon their reaching as quickly as possible a better hunting region, I should only be a hindrance to them. With perfect tranquillity of mind, therefore, I say farewell, and thank you for good comradeship on the expedition. I hope that you will save yourself and the results.' Dr Wulff also dictated a letter to his father and daughter, as also a statement with regard to the botanical observations made by him during the latter part of the journey.

Such is the story of the last Danish Arctic expedition; and although the hardships and the privations endured pretty nearly throughout it by the little party caused the death under tragic circumstances of two of its members, its main objects have been successfully carried out. The coast of north-west Greenland between 81° and 83° N. lat., including the great inlets St George's Fjord, Sherard Osborne Fjord, Nordenskiöld Inlet, and De Long Fjord, has been investigated and charted; and it has been proved that in their migration from the west to the east coast the Eskimos did not travel round the north of Greenland. No tent rings, fireplaces, or other traces of their presence were found there. Other considerable scientific results were also obtained, and valuable geological and botanical collections have been brought home.

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

CHAPTER XXII.

A FLASK was produced, and some brandy poured down the unconscious man's throat. He took so long to recover that I thought he was dead, but at last he opened his eyes and followed the movements of the men who were examining the room. There was little furnishing beyond the couch, a chair, and a deal table, on which were a dirty plate and a couple of empty *fiascos*. One corner of the room was curtained off. The inspector went behind the curtain, and in a minute or two flung it back and pointed exultantly at something.

'A good morning's work, after all! This explains the queer purring noise you heard during the night. It was from the dynamo of this neat little electrotyping-machine. This room has turned out Heaven knows how many "little pictures," most skilfully forged notes of two of the principal Italian banks. We have had more trouble over these fellows than any "crooks" I remember for years. We'll see what this chap has to say, but I wish we had arrived an hour sooner. I've missed the chance of my life.' He sighed. '*What* a haul we might have had!'

Criminal or no, the man on the couch roused my pity. There was tragedy and hopelessness in his young eyes, and his face, despite its emaciation, showed remarkably clever lines. He began to tremble when the inspector went back to him.

'You will come to no harm,' said the officer reassuringly, and despatched one of the men for the nearest doctor.

The man shook his head. '*Nossignore*,' he whispered with difficulty. '*Troppo tardi!* Too late! A priest, *per l'amore di Dio*, but no doctor! Send for a priest. Quickly, I beg you.'

'But you will get better, never fear.' It was a kind lie, for the marks of death were on the poor wretch. 'You were afraid when we came in.'

'*Madonna! Si!* But save me from Guidotti. . . . *È un diavolo.* . . . You will protect me? You are English?'

The words were gasped out between dry sobs, and his thin hand caught mine convulsively.

'We are the police.'

A look of intense relief appeared on his face. 'I will tell you all—everything. I keep nothing back. I swear it by the Blessed Virgin. You wish to know about . . . *il quadretti?*' He nodded towards the printing plant in the corner of the room.

'Yes, yes,' said the inspector, sitting down beside him. '"The little pictures." I understand.'

'If I tell you everything—if I live a little longer—will you take me away from here—away from these men?'

Readily promised protection, he began his unhappy story. His broken English need not be reproduced. His voice was weak and his story was frequently interrupted by fits of coughing, but its main points were clear.

His name was Luigi Conti. He had been an engraver in Naples. His work was esteemed there, and he had received very good pay, and was happy until, as it chanced, he became interested in a development of Lessano's process for copper etching. At this he toiled day and night, scarcely giving himself time for meals.

His eyes failed him. The doctor ordered him to rest. He was in despair, but what could he do? *Per Cristo!* he had a wife and two little children. To be poor was bad, but to lose one's eyes—he could not face that. It was a long time before he was allowed to work for two hours a day. By that time his pockets were empty, and his employers, who had previously exploited his skill, refused to give him employment. Full of revenge, he went to the Camorra.

'You know the Camorra? It is all-powerful, and often does justice to the poor. The law and the police fear it, but I know now that the great ones to whom I went did not concern themselves about my employers. They were of the Camorra, it is true; but those who bribed me were *I Frugatori*—"The Searchers." It was I whom they wanted. They knew my skill in engraving, for I had told them my story, and they gave me money and the promise of more.'

Between his fits of breathlessness he unfolded his little tragedy: how the meshes gradually closed on him, and how in the end, after the promise of as much money for a month's work as he could make all his life at his craft, he joined 'The Searchers,' and helped them to make 'the little pictures.' The work would be light, a few hours a day, and it would not injure his eyes, so they assured him.

'I came—*maledizione!*—to London with them about six months ago. By night I was taken to this house, and I have not been out more than half-a-dozen times since. I did the finer work on the little pictures, and Domenico Fiatro, a printer, did the rest. *Buon cuore* . . . Domenico . . . a good heart . . . *ma* . . . a mechanic merely. At first I took a pride in the work—a pleasure in my skill—but soon I became very ill, and for a time could not rise. I made many thousands of the bank-notes, and they made much money out of them. Yet they made me work to the last moment.'

'Who are "they"? Describe them.'

'Guidotti and Benedetto are the leaders.'

'What are they like?'

'Benedetto was once a priest, but was unfrocked—*un prete spretato;* a great broad man, clean-shaven, and with a deep voice . . . *profondissimo!*'

My friend of the Naples train, beyond a doubt. I listened eagerly for his next words.

'Guidotti is the leader. Benedetto is afraid of him. He is tall and slight—*è molto gran' signore*—and has a pointed black beard, but sometimes he is clean-shaven. Then there are Berni and Nazzano, two men who could drive the car; and there was also Antonio Salvi. Poor Antonio! Guidotti is half an Englishman, but has lived in Italy a great deal. You know our saying—"*Un Inglese italianizzato è il diavolo incarnato!*" ("An Englishman Italianised is the Devil Incarnate!")? Then there was the Englishman Royce, he of the red hair. He was kind to me. Royce broke away from them, and soon afterwards Salvi also disappeared. Guidotti and Benedetto have been trying to hunt Royce down ever since, for he has something belonging to them, although I do not know what it is. They very nearly caught him in Edinburgh. It was well for him that they did not. They would have'—he shuddered, and told us of a nameless medieval torture—'they would have killed him by inches. At the time when they nearly captured Royce, they killed poor Antonio. He was found stabbed to death somewhere in Edinburgh.'

Tony and I exchanged looks. The red-haired impostor 'M'Nair,' the man whom I took into my rooms on the night of the fog, was none other than Royce, of 'The Searchers.' The murdered Italian whom I had seen in the police mortuary in Edinburgh had been his accomplice.

'If they come back here they will kill me too,' said Conti.

'The house is empty, and we shall leave the police in charge. Do you know where Benedetto and the others hide in London?' asked the inspector.

'*Corpo di Cristo!* I do not know, and I never did know, where 'The Searchers' hide. I have never been in any house in England except this. Early this morning Guidotti and Benedetto came down in a great hurry and looked at me. They stood in the passage and talked, and I heard Guidotti curse, and say that it would be better to finish me, as I was nearly dead already; but Benedetto would not agree. He is not cruel at heart, old Benedetto. In the end they came in and stamped out the fire, and told me that they were going away; that if I kept quiet I should not be discovered; and that they would come back for me. But I knew that I had not long to live, and that they had left me here to die. I managed to rise and put some faggots on the fire. But for that I should have died like a rat in a hole.'

'You spoke of "The Searchers."'

'*Si! Si!* "The Searchers" are very old—hundreds of years old. Long ago they began to search for something. For a long time they gave it up, but their oath is still to search for something lost; and although they joined the Camorra, they still keep the name of "The Searchers," and have their own rules, and a terrible punishment for any *traditore.*'

Conti was growing rapidly worse. Soon he was past speech, and the doctor arrived just in time to see the poor wretch die.

Two of the men were put in charge, and we motored back to London, confident that the gang would soon be tracked down. Keene-Leslie and I kept in constant touch with the police. Twice

Scotland Yard thought it was on a hot scent, but in the end had to admit defeat. The gang had gone to ground.

I waited for ten days in London, and then returned to Edinburgh and the quiet of my quarters in Jura Street. But the roar of London sounded in my ears for days; more than once I dreamed of No. 9 Duff Avenue; and my eyes often scanned the crowds for the lithe figure of the leader of 'The Searchers,' and Benedetto, his competent lieutenant.

(*Continued on page 359.*)

INHERITED HABIT A FACTOR IN PLANT-LIFE.

THOUGH the awakening of earth to the call of spring has been a theme upon which artists and poets of all ages have loved to dwell, science has failed to penetrate the mystery which governs the return of activity to vegetable and animal life. True, it has told us that the quickening of vegetation at this season is due to the increasing violet in the actinic light of the sun; that it is these unseen rays which cause the sap to throb, the bud to unfold, the seed to move in the wintry earth. But is that always sufficient to account for the infinite diversity which we observe in these things? If it were indeed the motive force which we call the spring, one might suppose that the deciduous trees, the crusty old oaks and beeches, which have been planted along the Mediterranean would forget their Northern natures and begin to break into leaf when the first breath of spring touched the olives and flushed the almond with pink. But they remain, and have for generations remained, stolidly indifferent to so early an awakening. Things of habit, old-fashioned conservatives every one, they believe that 'the swallow knows her time of coming,' and deem it prudent to wait. And, to reverse the picture, what of those same almond-trees in this country? They have been grown here for over three hundred years, yet they still cling to their old custom and blossom at a season genial enough in their own land, but here so early that the fertility of the bloom is almost invariably destroyed by frost. Their relative, the apricot, will do the same thing. The reason why dessert pears, also natives of southern Europe, are so often unprofitable with us is that they still persist in blossoming at that time of year in which their ancestors blossomed. They, too, have not yet learned the lesson, and it is probable they never will. Creatures of habit, they obdurately remain faithful to their native traditions.

It is not spring sunshine which bids the Christmas rose open its white corolla to the gray skies of December. No threat of frost can retard the snowdrop; nor can we force it with artificial heat, or other contrivance, to depart from its natal season. It does not ask the sun; our real spring it hardly knows. But, in obedience to some mysterious influence within it, the little bulb awakens from its torpor when all the world is gray, and falls asleep with a complacent indifference to those violet rays just when they are beginning to become most potent. Our native holly sheds its leaves in spring, flowers in summer, and ripens its seed in winter. The ivy blossoms in November, and its harvest-time is March or April. Many another evergreen is equally unorthodox in habits, taking no notice whatsoever of the more conventional time-table.

Even more curious is the behaviour of certain aquatic things. Many water-lilies, for example, disappear to their muddy depths before the temperature of the water has fallen to winter level. Yet if you lift one of these roots in the very early year, long before there is a sign of spring in the country-side, you will find that it is already making fresh growth. Can it be that they have heard the far-off call of the season, and are preparing for their upward journey? This hardly seems a satisfactory explanation, for there are species which, even when growing in the uniformly heated water of a greenhouse, invariably die down in autumn and come up again in spring, whilst other plants in the same house will do precisely the reverse.

Hence it would seem that the alchemy of the returning sun is not enough to explain the manifestations of life as revealed by periods of rest and activity. If spring-time is, in its most general significance, the hour of nativity, the cradle of youth, it is also the season of life's lowest ebb. Heat, which is considered to be the generative influence in so many of the natural phenomena we see about us, has little to do with the awakening of vegetation in the earlier months, for the earth is usually colder just before the vernal equinox than at any other season. Indeed, it would appear that to many forms of life, some examples of which have been mentioned, a low temperature is essential not only to successful embryonic development, but to growth and to existence itself.

In the far North the vernal awakening is spontaneous and universal. The great miracle is unfolded before one's eyes, and, to the sound of groaning ice and rushing rivers, the dead white land in a few days becomes a garden of tender verdure. With no less suddenness does vegetation come to the burning face of certain deserts which border the tropics. That death-like silence which broods over the bondage of the snows is not more silent than that voiceless suffering which haunts the sad dominions of the sun.

But let the rain descend from that 'hot heaven' which sheds its 'iron pain on the empty land,' and in a few hours the tawny wilderness will be glad with the green tidings of life and promise. The response is immediate and unanimous. There is no room for doubt. Incredulity, if there be any, is swept into the joyous pageant which looks not back as it moves on into high summer.

But with us, in our latitudes, it is different. We lie between the Polar North and the Torrid Zone, and, like a half-way house, seem to have gathered about us a flora which might be comparable to a band of pilgrims on the road of Nature. Some of these wayfarers have stayed with us, adapted themselves to our conditions, and become naturalised. Others, remembering the habits of their ancestors, doggedly refuse to have anything to do with our seasons. Their ears, as we have seen, are deaf to the heralds of our springs. To a few the summers in which we rejoice are a winter of torpor. Thus many mosses and lichens, relics of a prehistoric age, shrink from the sun rather than rejoice in his strength. Our spring has no message for them, unless it be one of warning. Things of habit, they still seem to cherish a memory of their ancient, icy world. They shrink from our summer's warmth, come to activity in autumn, and are gladdened by the cold grip of winter. Hence it is that they are never so prosperous, never so happy, as when they are facing their motherland, the Frozen North.

In the crypts of the mountains and on the face of the plain are preserved memories of ages which have vanished. On the ice-worn rocks the banished winter left imprinted a map of his retreat before the arrows of the sun; and we can read in these things a wonderful tale of the evolution of life on this planet. Then can we not also read in the manifold revelations of plant habit to-day some broken sentences of that same story, and, by piecing these together, cast a little light upon the mysteries which the seasons bring? Cannot the secret of the snowdrop's faith, the meaning of the water-lily's ways, and the lichen's ancient story be interpreted by a closer application of geology and climatical history to the problems of life as they appear to us in these days?

JOHN BROWN.

CONFESSIONS OF A NEW ARMY CADET.

By R. W. CAMPBELL, Author of *Private Spud Tamson; Dorothy, V.A.D.; Snooker Tam;* &c.

CHAPTER XVII.—STEADY OLD ADELA.

'LEAVE, boys; leave!' shouted Beefy one night, rushing in with battalion orders in his hand.

'When is it?' Ginger asked.

'Next week.'

'How long do we get, Beefy?' I inquired.

'Four days, my boys—four priceless days of priceless fun. Cheero!' he concluded, throwing his cap in the air.

This was excellent news. Leave is our greatest joy in the army. At once we commenced to plan out days of fun and nights of glory. All were rather secret about their arrangements. They were scheming out time-tables in which not one lady but many were involved. Nobby, however, confided to me that he was going off to see rather a pretty widow. She was good fun and had lots of brass. (Nobby was after the brass.) Beefy whispered that he had a wonderful woman in Cambridge, and another in Bath. He was going to see *both*. Tosher, thoroughly practical, decided to investigate the claims of Scottish girls, and see whether a Scottish wife would be a sound investment for his dollars and his affections. Even Billy, the padre, was after a girl—a V.A.D. commandant, slightly over the popular age, but 'a fine woman—a fine woman,' as Billy confidentially remarked. Ginger announced that he was going to have a quiet holiday at the Sweetville Hotel. I said nothing, but thought of—the barmaid.

My own arrangements were not decided. Like that of every soldier, my visiting list was rather heavy, and in my address-book were many names of pre-war charmers and war charmers. To see them all was quite impossible. Four days did not allow of that. Like a sub-editor, I had to 'cut down,' and eventually arrived at a very brief, yet interesting, programme. Having learnt something about organisation at the school, I knew how essential it was that there should be no hitch. So I sent off the following telegrams:

'Mrs Brown, Rustic Manor, Berks.—Getting short leave, but want to go to London to see tailors. Hope you don't mind.—JOHN.'

'Miss Charming, Cheer-'em-up Revue, Tiddlewinks Theatre, London.—Getting leave. See you Thursday. Will arrange joy-ride and supper at Ciro's. Wire if all right.—JOHN.'

'Miss Plunger, Rowdeene, Brighton.—Getting leave. What about a taxi-ride to Town and seeing the shows? Let me know.—JOHN.'

'Madame Petite, Bright Villa, Hampstead.—Calling Saturday. Hope Jeanne is at home.—JOHN.'

'Miss Sprightly, Manor House, Sleepville.—Getting leave. Come up to Town on Sunday. Bring closed car. Cheero!—JOHN.'

'Adela Gordon, The Grange, Sweetville.—Getting leave, but want go home to see mater, also tailor, on important business.—JOHN.'

The Replies.

'John Brown.—It's all right, dear boy. Love.—MOTHER.'

'John Brown.—Sorry, old boy, can't be done. Am running a staff-captain just now.—CHARMING.'

'John Brown.—Have joined the W.A.A.C.'s. Must be in bed by nine. Almost engaged to flying-man. Sorry.—PLUNGER.'

'John Brown.—Regret not at home Saturday. Jeanne now in a convent.—PETITE.'

'John Brown.—Quite impossible. Recently married army chaplain.—NO LONGER SPRIGHTLY.'

'John Brown.—Terribly disappointed. Longing to see you. Never mind the tailor. Do try and come. Love.—ADELA.'

These replies came in one by one, and each was like a BOMB. Truly, the war had upset things, and khaki provided a terrific opposition. I was mad, I may tell you. Like the others, I had invested in a first-class sleeping-berth on the London express, and had arranged for a royal luncheon with the boys *en route*. Now the whole scheme had fizzled out. Of course, I could have gone to see the dear old mater, but as I had told her such a 'whopper,' that would have been rather embarrassing. Wasn't it rotten bad luck? Molly Charming running a staff-captain; Phyllis Plunger in the W.A.A.C.'s.; Jeanne, of wonderful memory, in a convent; and Gladys Sprightly actually linked to an army chaplain. I *did* feel offended. Of course, there was Adela—steady old Adela. She was only five miles away, and she was dying to see me. But I didn't want to go, for the very plain reason that she wanted me to come. Whether you agree or not, that is the attitude of the average man. When the Blue Bird of Happiness is in his hand, he does not want it. His eyes look away and afar. Man always desires to chase the unknown, to court the uncertain, and fritter away his time and his manhood pursuing the bubbles and the maddening mirage.

'You look glum, John,' remarked Beefy that night.

'Yes. My scheme has fizzled out.'

'You're a silly ass.'

'Why?'

'Hang it all! you wire women, asking to see them. That isn't the plan. You don't understand the dear girls.'

'Well, old Bluebeard, what would you do?'

'I simply wire: "Coming to see you. Meet me at So-and-so—certain." That's all! They turn up all right. *It's an order.* Women love to be ordered about. When you start to say "please," they think you're a bally old fool. I'm getting fed up trying to educate you,' concluded Beefy, going off.

On this subject Beefy *was* an authority.

However, I decided to go and see Adela. When all the boys had left I jumped on my bike, and in a short time was sitting in the lovely old garden. It was a charming day. High in the heavens the sun shone gloriously. The earth was a panorama of pastoral beauty, and above The Grange garden birds and bees went blithely on their way. Everything was restful. Everything seemed clean. And I thought it a much better atmosphere than the fug of a London lounge or the sooty surroundings of Oxford Street. And yet there was a longing for the lights that glitter and the women who *understand*. I was only a boy, and just human. My virtues and vices were not entirely formed. One day I could with ease have become a parson. Next, I wanted—'to risk it.' Heredity tells. I had the blood of parsons, soldiers, and dreamers in my veins. In my soul God and the Devil were always struggling for victory. I was the mere tool of moods and passions which had been handed on.

We are all like that.

Then I looked at Adela. She was reclining in an Oriental hammock reading a book, and between-times picking up a chocolate. She looked calm and restful, without nerves, and with a suggestion of decision in her pose. Adela was not so fetching as a ballet-girl, or so charming as one of those creatures of Mayfair. London women are very hard to beat in the little things which captivate and enthral. Their experience is gained in a cosmopolitan world. They talk with the intellectuals and dance with the fools. And they can charm both.

Adela was of the soil, the fresh, clean-smelling earth, which breeds health and strength, and few illusions. She had no tricks, no little bag with a puff for her nose, no dainty fads or frills to enhance her complexion or form. Plain skirt, plain blouse, neat stockings, and well-cut shoes. And yet she was well dressed. The girl of taste is not a bag of glad rags. But the real charm of Adela lay in her magnificent physique, and in her personality.

Adela was different.

No man can define a woman's personality. It is as baffling as it is alluring. And what I wondered about was this: Adela knew me, yet I didn't know Adela. A man is an open book even to a schoolgirl. She can find him out in ten minutes, but you will never find a girl out in a thousand years. A man hates this. It is rather an insult to his intellect, but it is a woman's secret and her strength. She knows it, and she uses it, sometimes in a very cruel way, as history proves. Still, it is a gift of

nature with which Providence has endowed the sex which for centuries has been in chain

Adela was young. Yet she was 'old.'

'Johnnie,' she said, putting down her book and looking at me, 'why didn't you go to the tailor?'

I had been waiting for that question, so promptly pulled the telegrams out of my pocket, and said, 'That's why,' as I put them in her hand. It was a brutal thing to do, but it was a fair thing. The dons had always insisted on my speaking the truth. Not a bad rule, but quite a rotten scheme with the average girl.

Insincerity has always been popular.

Her brows contracted as she read each reply, and I noted her breast heaving with suspense. She read them over about a dozen times, then, folding them up, handed them back with the remark, 'I thought so!'

'Why did you?'

'You are all the same.'

'But aren't girls good at the game?'

'Yes—some are. Others are different—at least, a few are.'

'You are posing, Adela.'

'No, Johnnie! I like you, but I can do without you. I haven't much admiration for that sort of thing.'

'If I hadn't shown them to you, you wouldn't have known.'

'Oh yes, I should. I know you. You are quite a nice boy, but, like all nice boys, you've been spoiled. Girls have thrown themselves at you, and you think you may go on like that to the end of the chapter. Nevertheless, I'm rather interested in you.'

'But, Adela, if, as you say, you expected this, why were you so pressing in your invitation? Why did you want to be "one of the crowd"?'

'The maternal instinct.'

'But you are competing with them.'

'Not at all, old boy; I'm doing salvage-work. I'm giving you a breath of fresh air in this beautiful garden, then afternoon tea; next, a game of golf; in the evening a stroll over the Downs, with just a kiss or two, without messing you up with rouge or powder. If, after that, you feel you want the dolls of Bond Street, you must go; for then I'll know you're a decadent, hopelessly neurotic, and bound to end up—a fool.'

'Where did you learn all this, Adela?' I said, getting interested.

'It's an instinct, and, of course, I use my eyes. We girls have been to school, you know.'

'The war has made you think, I suppose?'

'The war, Johnnie, is messing things up. Women are making themselves cheap. They mean well. They want the boys to have a good time, but both are getting burnt in the process. You have learnt too much in France.'

'But we knew these things before the war, Adela.'

'The war, Johnnie, has made them fashionable—that's the difference. Shell-fire makes you boys neurotic. Your nerves want soothing. But you all go the wrong way about it. It's fresh air and porridge you need, not giggling Jennies, who degrade your manhood.'

'But, hang it all, Adela! if we're beating a brute like the Boche, we can't be hopelessly decadent. You read things in the papers. You've got too much time to think. If you saw the soul of the army, you'd know we are at least "not bad."'

'Perhaps. But why don't you all stick to your games?'

'We try, but you women upset the balance. All the trouble in this world is due either to wine or to women. You're sent to try us, and sometimes you smash us. Despite that, Adela, you are all very charming. And, to be short, if you hadn't been decent, I shouldn't have come to-day. Let's have tea.'

'Right, you old darling,' she whispered into my ear as she tumbled out of the hammock. Then she set out a dainty table, the maid brought the tea, and, under the arms of some old, waving chestnut-trees, we munched a refreshing snack. We didn't talk much. I was enjoying the scenery, and the presence of Adela; while Her Royal Highness was no doubt wondering what extraordinary creatures we fellows are.

'Now, Johnnie, I think we'll cut the golf, and go over the Downs instead.'

'Any old thing for a quiet life,' I said, rising.

She got her stick, called her favourite dogs, and away we went across the sweet-smelling fields, where the bees hummed in the clover, and the larks sang high overhead. The air was stimulating, the surrounding country beautiful, while the presence of Adela added the final touch to a rustic dream. It was sporting. It was healthy. It was clean. The spirit of romance was there, and the poetic side of my nature was roused to its heights. I certainly did feel that the green vales of the Old Land and the *real* girls of the Old Land were indeed our best possessions. Somehow the whole thing appeared to me as a sort of moral lesson, as well as a silent sermon on patriotism.

I became more proud of my country.

I felt *decent* with Adela.

And so we ambled along, drinking in the joys of nature, and chatting of many things. It wasn't the smart talk of Mayfair, in which I was an expert. It was just straight, frank, none-of-your-nonsense kind of converse, in which we looked at things with our eyes, and not through rose-coloured glasses. And you can talk about many things, once barred, without loss of self-respect. After all, education has spread. And if education can bring a man and a woman together on an equal plane, our country must benefit. A man wants a girl

for a chum, a confidante, a lifelong companion, and not as a serf, a housekeeper, and just—A COOK.

Yes, that was a memorable day in my life, and it was near the turning-point. The school, with all its deficiencies, was making its mark; while Adela was working hard, although I didn't notice it at the time. From the dear old commandant, too, I had gained the spirit of tolerance and the milk of human kindness. Captain Cheerall had also stirred me to probe and analyse the human soul; while my comrades had given me the joys of friendship and the value of understanding.

John Brown was beginning to be—A MAN.

After the walk we had dinner with the family. The mother was a delightful old lady, full of good-nature and shrewd common-sense. The father was equally pleasant; but Winnie, the sister, was down in the depths. She was thinking of Beefy—dear, kind-hearted, devil-may-care old Beefy.

Women always love the daring Don Juans.

'Let me help you,' said Adela, as I took my coat from the stand about half-past ten.

'Thanks, old girl.'

She lifted it on, then took my arm down the drive. When we got to the gate, she remarked, Johnnie, I want you to do something.'

'What, Adela?'

'Give me those telegrams.

'With pleasure,' I said, handing them over. 'But what are you going to do with them?'

'Burn them,' she answered, striking a match and lighting them there and then. As the last telegram flickered out she kissed me good-night and said, 'Do try and be a sensible boy, John Brown.'

Next day I bought the engagement-ring.

(*Continued on page 378.*)

THE LAND OF CURIOUS SMELLS.

IT has been said with a considerable amount of truth that what is fragrance to one person is often abomination to another. Human tastes differ in regard to food. What is esteemed by the whole population in one country is often thought disagreeable or repulsive in another. It is largely a question of habit and bringing up. Occasionally we find individual exceptions to a general rule. Probably none of our readers has ever met with any person who did not appreciate the smell of a rose. Yet it is recorded that Cardinal Oliviero Caraffa, who died at Rome in 1511 at the good old age of eighty-one, had an invincible repugnance to the smell of a rose, and would not remain in any room where one was kept. Just as there are certain odours which the majority of people enjoy, so there are certain smells which most people dislike.

Of bad smells some are produced naturally, whilst others can be brought about artificially. It is not of fetid and dangerous concocted smells (such as German chemists fiendishly introduced into modern warfare) that we propose to treat in this article, but of purely natural stenches. Burma, a land in which smells abound, grows a large number of trees and plants unknown in the rest of the Indian Empire (although some parts of India have a very similar climate), which in many cases yield fruit objectionable in taste and smell to Europeans, yet highly appreciated by Burmans.

First and foremost is the durian, which is largely cultivated in Sumatra, Java, Celebes, the Philippines, the Malay Peninsula, Burma, and Siam. Alfred Russell Wallace says it is worth a trip to the East merely to eat the durian, and in the 'sixties such a trip was not the easy matter it has since become, for then there was no overland route, and to go East one had to voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. Wallace describes the durian as tasting like an almond-flavoured custard, intermingled with wafts of cream-cheese, onion-sauce, sherry, and other incongruities. The smell of the durian when not fresh has been compared to that of rotten onions or putrid animal matter. If one is brought into a room the whole house will smell of it for many hours afterwards, and anybody who has partaken of it can be recognised at once as having done so if he goes to another house. The tree is a very handsome one, attaining a height of seventy to eighty feet, and by some is said to bear a resemblance to the elm. The fruit is spherical, about the size of a coco-nut, and has a hard external shell with strong tubercles terminating in sharp points. Durians will not grow north of Tenasserim in Burma, and even there do not thrive well if planted at any great distance from the sea. The durian is, however, only one of numerous curiously smelling productions of Burma which will not grow in India. There is, besides, the *danien* fruit, a species of nut, of which the Burmese are immoderately fond, and to which they attribute marked digestive and medicinal qualities. To Europeans it smells even more offensively, and longer, than the durian. A person who has eaten *danien* at dinner can be distinguished from others wherever he goes for at least forty-eight hours afterwards; and the stalls in the markets where it is sold can be smelt at a distance of at least fifty feet. To be as popular as it is this peculiar fruit must surely possess some of the digestive properties claimed for it. Why it should not grow in India we

have never heard explained. Then there is the *ywéyo*, another Burma-grown fruit with an objectionable smell, which is highly valued as medicine for most women's complaints. We have heard that it grows in Java, though not in India. It is as a rule used only for medicinal purposes, and not, like the other two, as a habitual and agreeable food.

Garlic and onions are more popular in Spain and Italy than in more northern countries. There they form the relishes of common, everyday life. Burmans would seem to require more powerful condiments, and though they use both onions and garlic as food, they also partake of asafœtida, which possesses an odour somewhat similar to garlic, but stronger, more fetid, and generally more disagreeable to European noses. It would seem as if there were a sort of human instinct guiding national tastes blindly to plants and substances capable of yielding to the body similar chemical compounds. Garlic-smelling compounds are extensively diffused throughout the vegetable kingdom of the whole world, supplying in a greater or less degree the peculiar taste for those compounds of sulphur and allyl which universally prevails amongst mankind.

Offensive smells from decaying matter or the decomposition of animal and vegetable substances exist in all countries—in some worse than in others. Burma has the 'odorous' distinction of growing plants which stink naturally to a greater extent than most other localities can boast, and may, therefore, be truly described as a land of curious smells.

A BAPTISM OF FIRE.

TO say that the events of New Year's Day, 1905, have been burned into the memories of myself and my children is no mere figure of speech. The bush-fires in New South Wales which marked the beginning of the year 1905 will certainly never be forgotten by those who were unfortunate enough to experience their effects.

Wishing to avoid, so far as possible, the great heat which usually prevails in Sydney about Christmas, we had rented a summer residence near Bowral, a health-resort about eighty miles from the city, on the Southern Line.

The house we had taken was some distance from the village, and stood alone, upon an eminence overlooking the picturesque valley of the Wingecaribee, which, when I first saw it in the early spring, was, though narrow, a beautiful stream winding away between forest walls of eucalypti. Consequently I was somewhat disappointed, on taking possession of Mark Lodge, to find that, as is usual with Australian rivers in summer, it had shrunk to a mere sandy bed containing a rather widely separated succession of water-holes.

Mark Lodge was a roomy, old-fashioned place, built long ago by some Sydney magnate, but now advertised as 'To be let furnished for the season.' It was of wood, with wide, shady verandas, and was surrounded by a large, unkempt garden, the lower end merging into an orchard, in which, to the great delight of the children, were to be found a few plums, pears, &c. The abundant spring rains coming after the late terrible drought had produced a considerable amount of herbage, which was in a very dry condition. In front of the house was what the owner called a lawn. But a lawn in Australia is very different from the close, smooth, emerald turf of England; it is much more like a stubble-field. This lawn and the orchard were knee-deep in withered grass. All around us stretched the forest, clothing the surrounding hills with various kinds of eucalypti, giant white-stemmed gums—their last year's bark still hanging in long, dry strips from trunk and branches—green bosky apple-trees, and blue peppermints.

The foliage of the gums differs greatly from that of the trees of Europe, being hard and leathery, and during hot weather highly inflammable.

We settled in our new abode just before Christmas. The weather was delightfully cool, and the children, though a little afraid of snakes, roamed gaily through the bush, the only drawback being the sharp-pointed grass-seeds, which, attaching themselves to our stockings and clothes, were a great source of discomfort.

My husband, who had arranged to spend part of the holidays with a bachelor friend who was managing a station in Riverina, left us on 27th December—a Tuesday. Our household then consisted of myself, four children (the youngest a baby under two years old), a housemaid, and our dear old Chinaman cook, Ah Sin.

Ah Sin had come to us sixteen years before, when our home was on a Queensland station, and was a most attached and faithful servant. Like most of the Chinese, he was very fond of children, and in the exigencies of domestic service in Australia had often acted as nurse. Once only had he left us for a twelve months' trip to China, his place during his absence being occupied by a friend and countryman of his own, whom he had carefully trained in the performance of his duties for three weeks beforehand. Jemmy did well, but we all regretted Ah Sin; and when, contrary to our expectations (for we had serious misgivings as to ever seeing him again), Ah Sin returned, loaded with Chinese

'pleasants'—silk, fans, queer ivory images, and tea of exquisite flavour—we rejoiced greatly.

The early part of Christmas week passed pleasantly enough, but Friday was extremely hot. On Saturday the thermometer in the hall, at 8 A.M., marked ninety-four degrees, and rose steadily, till at four in the afternoon it recorded one hundred and five degrees. The morning paper, which was brought to us from Bowral by a lad on horseback, contained an announcement by the Government meteorologist of a great heat-wave which was passing over New South Wales, while bush-fires were reported in various parts of the state. Night brought little or no relief—the heated air never seemed to cool; and by noon on Sunday, New Year's Day, the temperature inside the house had risen to one hundred and ten degrees. The atmosphere was thick and stifling; while a coppery haze, through which the sun shone like a great fiery ball, shut out the hills and the intervening landscape. The wind blew in hot blasts as if from a furnace, bringing with it a suffocating odour of burning bush. Loud cracks came from the furniture; the flies, usually so troublesome, dropped dead from the ceiling; magpies, soldier-birds, and quail, tame and gasping, took refuge in the veranda, and even in the hall, from the excessive heat outside. Panting and exhausted, the girls and I lay upon the drawing-room floor, the little ones meantime splashing about in the bath, though the water, drawn from an iron tank, was unpleasantly warm. In the hall, suspended between the two doors, was a large canvas water-bag, whose contents, owing to the rapid evaporation, were deliciously cool, and in some degree alleviated our sufferings.

Ah Sin had prepared lunch as usual, but, except for a little tinned fruit, no one was inclined to eat anything.

The wind by this time had risen to a gale, and borne upon its wings came a strange, roaring sound, mingled with the bellowing of cattle. Presently the Chinaman called us to see a hare, the fur partly burned from its back, which had run into the kitchen. 'Flier welly nea now, lady—too muchee glass. Wet bag good—plenty bucket. Come see.' Following him into the back-veranda, I found that he had collected and filled a number of kerosene-tins and pails, while soaking in a tub were several bags. On returning through the hall I stood for a moment at the front-door, and saw below us, at the distance of about a mile, a huge wall of fire coming roaring on, the flames leaping higher than the tallest gum-trees—literally flying along in the air. As it swept along the hillside, first one great eucalyptus, then another, caught and blazed; while fiery pieces of burning bark, leaves, and branches, borne ahead by the gale, ignited the long grass far in front of the main fire. In a few minutes the conflagration was close to the house. The heat, the noise, and the smoke were most awful. A piece of burning bark carried from a blazing tree about two hundred yards off set alight the grass in the yard. We all ran with wet bags to try to beat it out, when we saw smoke issuing from the top of the veranda, followed by a flickering tongue of flame. Then suddenly a kind of fiery whirlwind sprang up round the place, obliging us to fly for our lives. I snatched up my baby, protecting him as well as I could with the wet bag I held. Ah Sin carried Freddy (four), who, like baby, was naked from the bath, seized a bucket, and calling to us to follow, started down the hillside for a water-hole in the creek. The grass on all sides of us was alight, but the wind having momentarily lulled, we got ahead of the fire. Urged by Ah Sin, we took a short cut through a paddock, though in order to do so we had to get over a barbed-wire fence, while a similar barrier intervened between us and the creek. The wind now blew in hurricane gusts behind us, driving forward huge volumes of smoke. Blinded and half-suffocated, we hurried on, scrambled over the last fence as best we could, and, torn and bleeding, rushed down the bank and over the hot mud into the water. The wind veered for a moment, blowing the smoke on one side, and showed us our now blazing home, and, to my intense horror, my little daughter Mary, a child of nine, hanging, caught by her frock, in the wire fence, close to a blazing eucalyptus. Never shall I forget the agony of that moment. I thrust baby into the arms of our maid and strove to get back to Mary, but my feet stuck in the surface-baked mud, and I fell heavily forward. As I rose again I saw the frock give way and the child rush down the bank. The water-hole in which we were, though large, was not very deep, and the water was really hot. The place was surrounded by eucalypti, some in leaf, others merely dry ring-barked skeletons. The heat was so intense that the very air seemed fire. Fortunately both Alice and I had retained our bags, and with them we sheltered ourselves a little, while Ah Sin threw buckets of water over us. Crouching down in the shallow water with the two little ones in front of him, the devoted Ah Sin screened them with his body from the furnace blasts and fiery showers. His shirt had been burnt from his back, and I saw the blistered flesh.

Near us quantities of fish, after churning and splashing in the water, died from the heat and floated belly upwards. On every side, through the maddening roar of the fire, we could hear the bleating of sheep and the bellowing of cattle; while two hares, a rabbit, and several snakes took refuge in the water beside us. Night drew on, but there seemed no diminution in the fierce heat. The whirlwind gusts appeared to have spent themselves, but on all sides blazed the fire. As the night wore on the scene became one of terrible grandeur. Under

the influence of the high wind, the scattered fires on the hillsides joined their forces into great crescents of flame, with columns of moving lurid smoke-clouds, through which at intervals shot rocket showers of sparks, like a great display of fireworks, as some forest giant, burnt through at the base, came crashing down. In huge tiger leaps, from tree-top to tree-top, sprang the flames, their crackling sounding almost like demon laughter. The undulating country all round looked like a sea of fire, and little Freddy, clinging beside me, said in an awe-struck tone, 'Mummy, has God set *all* the earth alight?'

The red glare of the fire falling upon the pool showed me the ghastly faces of the children and the faithful Chinaman as they crouched in the shallow water. Ah Sin held baby in his arms, and kept bathing his head. The child was very quiet, only occasionally uttering a little, weak cry.

By this time the grass fire had passed us. We got out of the water and sat down upon the sand in the bed of the creek, on each side of which the scrub and the eucalypti were still burning; while the blackened grass merely smouldered, now and then bursting into flame as a fiercer blast played upon it.

Blackened and blinded by smoke, exhausted by heat and want of food, our skin smarting from the burns inflicted by the falling showers of fire, when morning came we were in a pitiable condition. Ah Sin was evidently badly burnt; his kindly yellow face was swollen and unrecognisable, yet he continued to hold and tend baby. The road was not far off, but to reach it we should have to pass over the smouldering paddock we had crossed in our mad rush for the creek, and all the children, with the exception of Mary, were barefoot. Trees were falling and crackling all round; the road was a mere bush-track, and would be more dangerous than the river-bed. A little lower down on the opposite side some scorched willows which had partially escaped the fire overhung another water-hole, to which we made our way, to find it already occupied by some half-burned sheep, whose cries of pain, half-moan, half-bleat, were an aggravation to our misery. The weary day wore on. Though the fire was in great measure spent, the heat was almost insufferable, and the air was heavy with smoke and the pungent scent of the burning eucalypti. I thought of trying to making our way along the river-bed to Bowral, and we had actually started, when the sudden fall of a large burnt tree, which rolled down the bank close beside us, drove us back to the shelter of the willows. Here we lay, faint and gasping, until about noon, when we were discovered by a posse of men, who, armed with wet bags, had been fighting the fire all night round some of the neighbouring farms. Mark Lodge, they told us, had been entirely consumed, and it was feared we had all perished. Willing hands carried the poor children and assisted us to reach a house in the neighbourhood, which, though right in the track of the flames, had been spared through a capricious change of the wind. Here we received the kindest care and attention, and in a few days we were able to go back to our city home. Ah Sin, after a few days in hospital, returned to us, and we all felt that to his devotion we owed our escape from a terrible death.

THE THREEPENNY-BIT.

WE'VE a funny name—*Penny!* When I was quite wee
Daddy says we were 'He, She, and It!'
And the three of us make—now you never will guess!—
Why, a real, live Threepenny-bit!
And my pet-name is *Tuppenny!* Isn't it queer?
But it shows what a lot I am worth!
Daddy oftentimes says, when he kisses me hard,
I'm the sweetest wee thing on this earth.
But he says just the same when he kisses mum hard!
We spend lots of time kissing, each day—
Daddy says it's '*some* job' making up for lost time,
After being such ages away!
He was pris'ner in Germany more than four years,
But at last they have let him go free.
Oh, it's lovely to have him safe home once again;
We're as happy as happy can be!
He's the same darling dad, yet he's not *just* the same,
He's so thin, and his face is all lines.
Once I heard him tell mum it was 'hell upon earth'
In those terrible Germany mines!
Then he walks with a limp—you would think he was lame!
It looks worse when he's trying to run;
But I asked him what made him go hobbling like that,
And he said it was 'only for fun'!
And the cuff of one sleeve is tucked into the coat,
And the sleeve's just as flat as can be.
I suppose that his arm must he hiding inside—
Only *where?* That's the puzzle to me!
When I asked him to tell me what made it so thin,
He said, 'Oh, it got shrunk in the wash!'
Then I looked at him hard, and I wanted to say
(But it's rude, mummy says), 'That's all bosh!'
Woollen 'combies,' I know, often shrink in the wash,
But I don't believe arms ever shrink.
Mine get longer, in spite of two washings each day!
Was he having me on, do you think?
Ev'ry night, in the old days, he frolicked with me,
Just before I went off to my bed.
It was grand when he held me so high in his arms
That I touched the white roof with my head!
But he says that that game is a thing of the past,
Though I'm still but a mere feather-weight;
So I sit on his knee, and we cuddle, instead,
And I stay up, oh, ever so late!
Still, his having just only *one* arm that is strong
Is a pity for mummy and me,
For he used to hug both at the very same time,
And he can't do that now, don't you see!
But my darling mum smiles, tho' her eyes shine with tears,
And she says that 'things might have been worse,'
And that 'nothing else very much matters, so long
As the Threepenny-bit's whole in the purse!'

J. K. TURTON.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE WAY HOME.

By PATRICK MACGILL, Author of *The Great Push*, &c.

PART I.

I.

THE shed, dilapidated and falling to pieces, stood in a field near the little village of A——. Holes gaped in its walls near the ground and higher up, under the drooping eaves. Through these openings the cold winds of winter were blowing, filling the apartment with an icy chill. The roof bore a covering of snow, and all round the gloomy habitation the feet of many men had trampled the wet, soggy ground until it spread out a bleak and dismal waste, ugly and forbidding. What uses the shed was put to in times of peace it was impossible to say, but at present it served as a compound for British prisoners, the ill-clad and ill-fed men who worked for their captors behind the hostile lines.

It was now night, with heavy clouds riding across the moon and showers of snow falling on the cold country-side. Outside the shed a sentry, his rifle on his shoulder, his coat buttoned up to the chin, was walking back and forward, his boots crunching the snow. Inside the big, gloomy interior of the building thirty men were lying on a damp floor, littered with rotting straw, their shivering bodies crumpled up in queer distorted attitudes, their overcoats covering them, their mufflers—such as had mufflers—tied round their heads.

All were dressed in sodden clothes, which they had worn at work, and which, without change, they had worn, sleeping and waking, for many days.

From time to time a man moved restlessly in his sleep, muttering incoherent words and opening his eyes. For a moment he would stare vacantly at the dark roof of the building, then moan as if oppressed with pain, and fall asleep again.

Inside the shed, when the moon shone for a moment, dark shadows could be seen lurking in every corner and playing on the smooth, blank walls of the sleeping place. An empty box stood on the earthen floor. A rat, slinking along on velvet pads, nosed the box in passing, then vanished into a corner and became part of the darkness. Next could be heard rats nibbling and gnawing on all sides, afterwards squealing and scurrying, then gnawing and nibbling again.

Suddenly the man nearest the door turned round on his back, muttered something unintelligible, stretched his arms out over his head, yawned, and shivered. The cold air that swept in under the flimsy door blew against his body, chilling him to the bone. He stretched out his arms a second time, yawned again, and looked at his mate, then with a noiseless movement reached out his hand and touched him on the shoulder.

The man shrank, as if avoiding a blow, then opened his eyes and looked round. 'Wot's up, Micky?' he asked softly.

'Whisht, Bill!' said the man addressed as Micky, in a solemn whisper.

He groaned as one does who turns in a restless sleep, and drew close to the newly wakened soldier. Bill also drew nearer, for prison life has its own secret procedure, and presently a pair of hairy lips were resting on a listening ear.

'Mind that tub-gutted rip that had charge iv us the day at work, Bill?' Micky inquired.

'Should think I do! The bloke as 'it me with the butt o' 'is 'ipe?'

'That's him,' Micky drawled in a whisper. 'Want to have a bit iv yer own back, Bill?'

'Not 'arf! And I will 'ave it out o' 'im 'fore long. Ye'll see me draw it across 'im one day'——

'Aisy, aisy now!' whispered the Irishman. 'It's him that's on sentry-go outside the door in the darkness.'

'Hope the cold 'll freeze the eyes out o' 'im, the'——

'Aisy, Bill; aisy. I'm thinkin' that we can make a dash for it and get clean away back to our own lines. It's only eight miles. If we get up and out o' the door—let me have one grip iv his throttle. And the clouds are gettin' thick over the moon, this very minit. Are ye game, Bill?'

'Game for anything that'll take us away from 'ere,' said Bill, sitting up and wiping the mulch from his face and hair. The Irishman also got up and proceeded to work himself gradually into the folds of his overcoat. The

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rest of the occupants of the shed were asleep, and snoring heavily. Outside could be heard the crunch of the sentry's boots in the snow as he plodded vigorously back and forward in the effort to keep himself warm.

II.

Bill, with his coat on, was standing upright.

'Ready?' Micky inquired in a whisper, tightening a muffler round his throat.

'Right-o!' came the whispered reply.

There was a moment's hesitation. The two men listened. Nothing could be heard but the snores of the sleepers and the sweep of the wind outside. The conspirators walked straight and cautiously towards the door, Micky leading.

It was the Irishman who lifted the hasp of the door, pulled it back softly, and looked out at the back of the sentry, who was now standing still, stiff as a post, his hands in the pockets of his coat, and the snow falling round him in soft white flakes, like confetti on a wedding-party. Micky, with a low snarl, reached out both his hands and gripped the German by the throat. With a superhuman movement he began to shake the man's head and big, solid body, growling like a dog as he did so. He experienced a savage delight in seeing the rifle fall to the snow, the sleeves of the man's coat swinging aimlessly in the air as if they contained no arms, and his legs bending under him. The sentry's cap fell off, and dropped to the ground. Micky, intoxicated with his own prowess and the demoralisation of the foe, was filled with a burning feeling of revenge and reprisals. The brute that kicked the men under his charge, that used the bayonet to prick the defenceless prisoners! With a feeling of wild, savage joy he sank his fingers into the man's throat, strangling him, and even keeping the same savage hold on his victim when he fell limp to the ground. It was a case in which half-measures were of no use. One screech and the whole camp would be roused; and if that happened, and if the two soldiers were caught escaping, the kultured horror of Germany would take them in hand. The sentry had to be choked to death, and with that end in view the Irishman still hung on to him, tightening the grip on his neck. When released at last, the German dropped in the snow without a moan, and lay stiff as a log where he had fallen.

'We'll hook it now like hell,' Micky whispered to his mate. 'Across the fields and past the church—the one we passed comin' back from our work the day.'

III.

The two sped stealthily away, stepping softly on the snow. Away in front, spreading out towards the firing-line, the white land on which the snow was falling lay silent and forbidding. On their left a lone spinney bulked large, and was filled with strange noises, neighing, and the tramping of hoofs. Here were the horse-lines of a Boche battalion, and stretching back from the spinney were several big corrugated iron sheds in which the provender for the horses was stored. The course which the two men took ran by these, and just as they were passing one of the outermost sheds Micky seized the arm of his mate and came to a halt.

'The moon 'll be out in a minit,' he whispered. 'It 's clearin'.'

'Well, wot of it?' asked Bill. 'It 's up ter us ter git out o' it.'

'Course it is, and all that,' was Micky's reply. 'But we 'd better stick in the shed till the next shower comes. We 'd be seen out on the field here, as there 's no cover; so we 'd better get into shelter.'

The two stole quietly into the shed and took up their position in a corner near the door, their backs against a huddle of hay-bales, their eyes fixed on the field outside, which was now in a measure lighted up by a full moon shining through a rift in the clouds. The spinney near at hand looked mysterious in the moonlight, the branches white with the burden of snow which they carried, the trunks of the trees wrapped in impenetrable shadows. Micky, an Irishman steeped in the superstition of his race, saw in it the dwelling-place of fell spirits, unearthly forms lacking substance, that changed their location without movement. Anything might happen to men near such a place, and Micky, with his susceptible imagination, felt a thrill of fear run through his body. He uttered a gasp as something touched him suddenly on the arm.

'Where 's your lighter?' whispered Bill.

'Man alive! ye 're not goin' to light a fag, are ye?' Micky inquired.

'Catch me such a fool!' said Bill in an aggrieved tone. 'Give me the lighter and see.'

Micky handed it to the man—the little wick-and-tinder contrivance which his wife had sent out to him from Ireland. Bill took it and thrust it under a bale of hay.

'Is it goin' ter snow again, Micky?' he asked.

'It 's gettin' dark,' was the reply. 'Get ready to move.'

'Just a minute, ole bloke, and we 'll 'ave a bit o' our own back.'

As he spoke there was a creak as the little wheel of the lighter grated on the tinder. No flash was to be seen, for Bill's hands were deep in the centre of the bale.

'Is it lit?' asked Mick in a hoarse voice.

'It is,' said Bill. 'Give me your knife, and I 'll nick the top off the wick, and leave it 'ere.'

A knife changed hands in the darkness. Bill cut the wick in two, leaving the lighted end in the hay.

'Now we 'll grease,' he said, standing upright and looking at the dark clouds running across

the face of the sky, steeping the world below in impenetrable gloom.

IV.

The two hurried away, Micky leading, the Cockney following in the rear, holding his head down against the storm as he ran. Fifteen minutes took them clear of the neighbouring village, and here, in a field, they stood for a moment and looked back. In the short time that had elapsed since their departure the lighted wick left in the shed had done its work, and a roaring fire was now making considerable headway. A great column of black smoke, shot with red streamers, was rising from the building and circling into the heavens. Somebody was shouting; a dog barked angrily; and even the escaped men could hear the roaring of the flames gutting the shed. The night was again clear, and a full moon drifting across the heavens lit the country for miles around.

Micky and Bill surveyed the scene in silence for a moment, then resumed their journey through the snow, panting from their exertions. The Cockney still held the knife and the lighter in his hand, but presently he passed them to the Irishman.

'Put them in yer pocket,' he said, 'and see and don't lose them. I've a fag or two on me, when we've time to smoke 'em.'

Micky did as he was told, tightened his coat-collar around his throat, and resumed his way.

'It'll take us all night to cross,' he remarked, gripping hold of a jagged edge of rock and drawing himself out of a hole into which he had stumbled. 'We'll make our own lines 'fore dawn, and maybe we'll get a bit iv rooty when we get there. Gi' me yer hand.'

He dragged the Cockney over the hole and across a stone dike, cutting his fingers on a rock as he did so. Bill's forelock fluttered about his temple, and several strands of hair entered his eyes. He brushed these back and tightened the cap on his head, pulling it well down over his brow. His breath came in short, heavy pants, and beads of sweat stood out on his cheeks and forehead.

'Tired, matey?' asked Micky, a show of feeling in his voice.

'Blime! It *was* a race!' answered the Cockney. 'Now we'll get on.'

They plodded forward, stepping boldly over bank and boulder. They fell into drains and crawled out again, encountered dikes and stumbled over them. Far up in the air above their heads a lonely bird shrieked loudly; behind, the fire burned fiercely, lighting up the face of the fields with its glare. The two men breasted the summit of the hill together, to be met by a fierce wind that blew in their faces and drove dark masses of cloud across the moon.

The desolate country stretched before them, level to the horizon. To spend the whole night tramping across it was indeed a cheerless prospect. Bill looked round him and shuddered.

'But it's not so far, after all,' said the Irishman, interpreting Bill's involuntary tremor. 'Besides, we've legged it along the road in this direction already this mornin'.'

'You know the way, even in the dark?' asked the Cockney. He was now looking listlessly back at the shed and the flames showing red against the sky. Perched on the hillock, it seemed to him that the fire was ever so far away. 'Is there any danger of us gettin' lost?' he asked.

'No danger,' answered Micky, his voice betraying sudden impatience and annoyance. He paused for a moment as if going to give expression to some disturbing thought; then he buttoned his coat and cried, 'Come on, matey. What are ye standin' there lookin' at?'

They set off across the fields, the Irishman stepping out briskly, and Bill dragging his feet with an effort, as if he had become tired already. Micky could hear him breathing heavily as he walked, and this, for some reason or another, annoyed him.

'If ye begin like that,' he shouted over his shoulder, 'how are ye goin' to finish up?'

There was no answer. A sharp wind swept along the ground, making mournful music; up in the air the lone bird was still shrieking eerily. In the clear belts of sky between the clouds millions of stars, scattered broadcast, shone like sparks on polished steel.

V.

The field was soft and spongy, as if the snow which fell a moment ago was thawing, and at each step the travellers sank to their ankles. Waste as a spread of waters, the white desert land stretched out in front, with nothing to break its monotonous surface save three stumps of fir that stood up, gaunt as spectres, in the distance. Micky stopped when he got close to the dead trees, drew his pipe from his pocket, filled it with thick black tobacco, struck a spark on the wick, and lit his pipe, holding his lighter in the curve of his hand. For a few moments he smoked in silence, sending great wreaths of smoke into the air; then he handed the pipe to his companion.

'That looks bad,' he said, gazing at the dark clouds which were rapidly covering the heavens. 'It'll be a regular storm.'

'Only a shower,' said the Cockney, pulling at the pipe. A strange note of kindness had crept into his voice, and he stared anxiously at the sky. 'Isn't those bloomin' clouds gatherin' quick?' he went on. 'It'll be on us in a minute. How far is it to our lines?'

'Seven miles; maybe more,' answered Micky. 'I'm not sure.'

'Not sure,' Bill repeated, then became silent.

Micky could see the spark of his pipe, as the

wind caught it, lighting up his companion's face, and he wondered vaguely why Bill and he had been such good friends for the last seven months. The two of them had been mates all that time, marching together from place to place, sharing the warmth of the same bed, even when that was nothing better than the wet floor of a basement behind the German lines. He had met Bill for the first time in a prisoners' compound. That was seven months ago, and ever since the two had been the best of friends.

'Funny bucko, Bill,' he muttered. 'But he's a grand mate.'

'What are ye sayin'?' the Cockney asked, handing back the pipe.

'It's time that we were off,' Micky replied. 'It's a good long walk from now till the creak of dawn.'

He stuck the pipe in his mouth and took a step forward. A heavy gust of wind rose and struck him across the face, sending the sparks flying from his pipe. This was followed by a sharp and sudden shower of fine frozen snow, and his clothes were white in an instant. A cold air swept up under his sleeves and down his spine, chilling him to the bone. He turned round and spoke to his mate.

'It's on again,' he said.

'Blast it!' said Bill, coming abreast.

'It'll maybe be only a shower,' Micky remarked, looking at the white slanting lines of falling snow. 'It's like love at first sight; it came too sudden to last long. Anyway, it put my smoke to one side,' he added, putting his pipe in his pocket.

'It's cold enough for anything,' observed Bill. 'Freeze the ears off a brass mule, it would.'

'Never seen a brass mule,' said Micky. 'Have ye?'

The Cockney tried to speak, but as he opened his mouth a swift gust of wind caught the breath from his very lips and carried his voice away.

Micky, now deep in difficulties of his own, paid no heed to his mate, for he had stepped into a morass and sunk to the waist. All that Bill could see of his friend was the trunk of his body and two arms waving helplessly over the snow. He stepped forward to help, but immediately sank to his knees in the quagmire.

'Keep out of it, Bill,' Micky shouted, ploughing through the slush and snow towards the Cockney. 'Where the hell are you goin' to?' he roared. 'Wasn't it enough for one of us to get in, and not two? I never saw such a one as ye are,' he concluded in a tone of resentment.

Having delivered himself of these heated words, he caught hold of Bill by the arm, and the two of them reached *terra firma* together.

'Ye're wet, Micky,' said the Cockney.

'Glory be! but it looks like it,' was the answer. 'It's cold in that hole. Talk about freezin' the ears off a mule! We'll get foundered in this damned place, be the look iv it. Safe in a bog with heels cocked up we'll be by mornin'.'

He shook himself, and looked round in vain for the trees which he had left just a moment before; the falling snow had hidden them from his eyes. He raised an indefinite finger and pointed in front.

'We'll go that way,' he said. 'We'll run a bit, and it'll keep us warm.'

Bill, without replying, followed him across the stretch of snow, the tails of his great-coat fluttering in the wind as he ran. The youngster's boots let in water, which squirted through his toes at every move. Adding to his discomfort was a nail, piercing through the sole of one boot and jagging at his foot. Now and again both men stepped into quagmires, out of which they could only crawl with great difficulty. They ran for a full twenty minutes, and both were perspiring when they came to a halt.

'We'll get across all right,' Micky roared, indifferent to the noise made by his voice. 'It'll fair in a wee while, and the night'll be a fine one yet. Anyhow, I'm all in a glister of sweat.'

'Same 'ere, ole man!' Bill answered in a hoarse voice. 'Ye know the way, Micky?' he inquired anxiously, after drawing his breath a little.

'Course I do,' Micky answered, clutching the boy's arm and setting off again, but moving more slowly this time. The Irishman seemed to be in a very good humour now, and whistled a tune. His wet trousers were already frozen stiff, and rattled like boards against his legs. Rime hung from his eyebrows and moustache; and even on Bill's forehead little lumps of ice began to take the place of beads of sweat.

VI.

Suddenly a cry, plaintive and mournful, came down the wind and reached the ears of the two men, then died away into the distance. Two pairs of eyes sought each other, and two hands gripped one another nervously. A gust of wind swept round the men, whirling the snow up into the air; then the cry, more plaintive, but louder and nearer, reached them again.

'What will that be at all?' asked the Irishman in a whisper. Bill could feel his mate's lips framing the words against his ear.

'Blime! I don't know,' he answered. 'Maybe it's the Devil.'

He laughed as he spoke, and urged Micky forward. The wind seemed to be changing. At one time it blew hard in their faces, chilling the tip of Bill's nose, and blowing the lapel of Micky's coat up against his chin. Again it swept from behind, carrying the snow against the men's necks and ears, and sweeping the frosty flakes up under the Cockney's trousers, chilling his whole body.

Afterwards came a lull in the storm, and the moon appeared straight overhead.

'What did I say?' cried Micky. 'Told ye it would fair. Knew it was too strong to last.'

Again the strange cry, now very near at hand, reached the two listeners. In vain their eyes sought out something that might be responsible for it. Nothing was to be seen but the long-drawn drifts ploughed by the wind on the surface of the snow.

'What's that?' Bill asked all at once, pointing a long, crooked finger in front of him.

'What?' asked Micky, following the line of the Cockney's arm with his eyes.

'That,' said Bill, still panting; 'the snow as 'as made itself up into big lumps and is comin' across to us.'

The storm had died down; the moon, its light reflected from a million crystals of snow, gave the night the clearness of day. Micky stared at the point indicated by his mate's outstretched finger, and saw something that made his heart leap into his mouth. The snow, rolled up into large balls, was moving towards the two lilliputian specks that represented humanity on that limitless field of white. These white balls were moving, coming towards the two men without any visible means of propulsion.

'Wot's 'appenin' now?' gasped Bill.

Just as he spoke the same plaintive cry that had haunted them before was borne to their ears again. Micky, on hearing it, clapped his hands against his thighs and emitted an oath. 'Goats!' he yelled; 'bloomin' old goats—and them lost just like our own two selves! I think I'll light my pipe,' he added. 'A little smoke 'll clear the air, and it's gettin' black as black overhead again.'

A dark cloud, flying before the wind, swept up the sky and wiped out the moon as a picture in chalk is wiped from a slate. The snow, again falling in long, wavering streaks, struck sharply against the two men. The goats, now very near at hand, could be heard bleating. Micky, trying to light the pipe, his back to the gale, was cursing. The lighter, glowing for a moment before it went out, showed his firm face and the outstanding bristles on his jaw. 'A fine mess this we've got into!' he cried, putting his unlighted pipe back in his pocket. 'I hope a million Jerrys get burned along with the shed, the rips iv perdition! I'm cold—cold to the bone. And, Bill, are ye cold too? Damn it, old chum! I'm more sorry for you than for myself.'

'Never mind me,' said Bill, making a brave attempt to laugh. 'Lead on, and I'll follow you! We'll be out o't all right 'fore mornin'.'

'If I could only get that pipe lit,' said Micky, biting a bit from the end of his tobacco-plug, 'it wouldn't be so bad.'

(Continued on page 380.)

LITERARY METAMORPHOSES.

By Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS, Bart.

THE metamorphosis here referred to is that of sex, by which I don't mean the mere assumption, for literary purposes, of a man's name by a woman—as was done by George Eliot and George Sand; or the reverse, as was done upon one occasion by Prosper Mérimée. For though it is true that Madame Sand was fond of disporting herself in male attire, and that Mérimée published a portrait of himself disguised as a woman as frontispiece to the so-called plays of 'Clara Gazul,' yet in neither case was the literary product affected by the travesty. What I intend to refer to here are the much more interesting cases in which whole books, or parts of them, have been deliberately written in character, by men as women or by women as men—as was done, among many others, by Scott, Dickens, and Anne Brontë. The device is, after all, but an extension of the dramatic element which forms part of all works of fiction; yet, from its exacting nature and the unremitting watchfulness which it demands, it amounts to a *tour de force*, admitting of various degrees of success in the performance. Thus, when Wilkie Collins, speaking as Madame Pratolungo, observes, when the threat of a shower has to be faced, 'I had nothing on that would spoil,' most male readers will feel, I think, that the author scores a point. But when Sir Herbert Maxwell makes the heroine of *The Letter of the Law*, in telling her own story, quote repeatedly from the classics, and, worse still, quote correctly, the same authorities will hold that he becomes liable to a forfeit. Of course, it is easy enough for the man-*pro-tem.* to assume swashbuckler airs, or for the woman-for-the-time-being to invite a crony to a hair-brushing and exchange of confidences. Both must remember, however, that a single incongruous detail will suffice to dispel the illusion thus created. On the whole, it is wonderful how seldom the skilled masquerader is caught tripping.

The change of sex as an expedient in story-telling is as old as the novel itself, or at least as the modern manifestation of that literary form, for it was resorted to by Defoe in his *History of Moll Flanders* (1722). In that realistic, though rather unedifying, record of a career which, beginning in Newgate and ending in the odour of sanctity, graduated in various disreputable callings by the way, Defoe has a virago as his heroine, and hence evades many of the diffi-

culties inherent in his experiment. For the virago, as the name implies, is a woman unsexed. In the invention of adventures, and the *verve* and the cynical irony with which his '*altera ego*' recounts them, Defoe's work is quite up to his own remarkable standard; whilst the artful introduction of occasional earnestness serves to disarm the charge of profligacy. If you bear in mind her antecedents and her opportunities, poor Moll is doubtless life-like enough. But how different in flavour are the delicious letters addressed by Julia Mannering to her quondam schoolfellow and present associate in an 'eternal friendship'! And if these letters are good in themselves, not less so is the art by which Scott makes them contribute to the telling of his story. The period of *Guy Mannering* is the eighteenth century, but the type of young lady here depicted long survived the date (1815) of its publication. The creature of an age of sensibility, combined with restricted freedom, she is flighty and romantic beyond anything to be found at the present day, and will thrill and flutter with the best of them. But for all her airs and graces as a spoilt child, you don't catch Julia making a fool of herself. Scott's success in the metamorphosis makes one wish he had essayed it oftener than he did.

Where Miss Mannering is petulant and sprightly, as befits an only daughter and an heiress, Esther Summerson, through whose lips Dickens tells the best part of the story of *Bleak House*, is subdued, unselfish, gentle, and, above all, lovable. I have known a good critic to take exception to her mannerism of setting the household keys a-jingling in her basket at significant moments in the tale. But, for myself, she is the finest product of all sexual transmigrations among novelists—a true pearl of sweet girlhood, and well worthy not merely of the love, but of the self-sacrifice of John Jarndyce. Sheridan Lefanu has a sound artistic reason for assuming a feminine nature when narrating the history of *Uncle Silas*. Lefanu was before all things a master of thrills, and by choosing a high-strung girl to describe the scenes of terror of his masterpiece as experiences of her own, he greatly enhances their effect. Yet, unless I am mistaken, there are one or two occasions when his disguise is forgotten, and a pair of trousers peeps for a moment below the petticoat. Once more, in making choice of his vivacious Frenchwoman to recount the vicissitudes of *Poor Miss Finch* (1872), Wilkie Collins was well-advised, for the advanced opinions and the antecedent trials of the ex-President's widow had to a great extent emancipated her from the prejudices of sex; whence her creator has less difficulty in identifying himself with her views. Unlike Scott and Dickens, Collins and Lefanu had essayed to write whole books in the character of women. The late William Sharp went further still, for, beginning in the earlier 'nineties of last century, he put forth a series of volumes purporting to be the work of 'Fiona Macleod,' the imaginative scion of an ancient Highland family, who had devoted herself to studying primitive life in the Hebrides, and to collecting its traditions. The true authorship of these works was kept secret from all but a few, and was not made known to the world until Sharp's death in December 1905. From this arose some quaint complications, for I remember Sharp's telling me that his publishers had forwarded him a letter, written by a young curate or minister, who had fallen in love with Miss Macleod after reading her books, and who wrote to offer her marriage. The proposal was courteously declined. But the imbroglio did not end there, for there came a second letter not long afterwards—this time from the young man's widowed mother, beseeching Miss Macleod to have pity on her only son, whose infatuation had reached such a pitch that he was threatened with decline. Here was a nice predicament for one who was nothing if not humane! But here, also, was an irrefutable tribute to his success in imparting a feminine tone to *Pharais* and the other works of the series.

Whilst Fiona Macleod was still pouring forth her quasi-Celtic stories and poems, the British public was further intrigued and mystified by the publication of *An Englishwoman's Love-Letters*, which claimed at the time (1900) to be genuine documents, though they are now acknowledged to be the work of Mr Laurence Housman. They tell the story of a woman's love for a man, slightly younger than herself, who is her neighbour in the country—a love which is returned and prospers, until, in consequence of a revelation made to him, the young man repudiates it. It is made clear that no blame attaches to the girl, and the most obvious solution of the mystery seemed to be that lover and loved one had been discovered to be children of one father—a guess to which the embittered character of the young man's mother lends a measure of support. Hopeless separation does not, however, end the letters, which, though no longer despatched, are continued up to the day of the writer's death from a broken heart. Their tone is at first somewhat too literary, but as they proceed they gain in spontaneity, until they become almost as harrowing as those of Marianna Alcoforado, the famous Portuguese nun, by which they may perhaps have been suggested. To take another instance, Mr H. O. Sturgis has published, under the title *All that was Possible*, the pathetic confession of an actress who has lost her character, in the conventional sense of the phrase, whilst retaining all that is tender and refined in womanhood, and who is doomed to suffer both for what she has lost and what she has preserved. Among the sexual metamorphoses of literature this is

one of the most remarkable. Again, besides the readable novel already referred to, Sir Herbert Maxwell first published his interesting *Passages in the Life of Sir Lucian Elphin* as the work of 'Amy Trevanion,' the hero's sister. In this case, however, by claiming to draw upon her brother's diaries, the *soi-disant* authoress does much to gloss over the difficulties of her task. And certainly, where a man writes as a woman, the author who reveals his true identity on the title-page handicaps his chance of getting his impersonation accepted.

My conclusion is that, though *no* man has ever yet contrived to write an essentially feminine book—such as, for instance, *Villette*, or the more recent *Dangerous Age* of Karin Michaëlis—and though the best men's portraits of women, from Shakespeare to Hardy and Meredith, have been drawn from the outside, yet many male writers have succeeded in writing credibly as women, and that this device for giving variety and verisimilitude to a narrative has justified itself. Why is it, then, I should like to ask, that women authors have shown themselves on the whole so shy of writing as men? A man has as a rule less of essential reserve than a woman, his life is open and uncloistered, and he prefers to express himself by means of deeds and downright speech. Ought he not, then, to be the easier of the two to simulate? The evidence, so far as I know it, is opposed to this conclusion. It is true that Anne Brontë, whose talent has been unjustly overshadowed by those of her more famous sisters, chose to relate the story of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* in the person of Gilbert Markham, a sturdy young farmer, and that she acquitted herself quite passably in this rather trying ordeal. Later on Miss Blanche Willis Howard took the man's part in *A Fellowe and His Wife*, a story told in the form of correspondence between husband and wife—the wife's letters being contributed by William Sharp, who thus acquired practice for his later and more ambitious essays in feminine fiction. To the mere critic this division of labour looks like a gratuitous courting of difficulties, but the creative talent recognises no rules except its own. Lastly, 'Michael Fairless' impersonated a man when writing *The Roadmender*—that fine record of a lofty mind which bends to humble toil, and finds in itself support and consolation. So far as it goes, the book is convincing enough. But the type of man delineated is a very uncommon one.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

JUNE drew near. May had been as capricious as a pretty woman, but the sun had now come North. Summer was in the air; steady sunshine bathed the gray battlements of the Castle and the roofs of the Old Town, and the green heart of Edinburgh was starred with vivid flowers. Even the statues and the ugliest band-stand in Europe could not spoil the prospect.

It was the last Monday in May—a 'blank day' in the Courts. I had been for a six hours' tramp over the Pentlands; and now, in the afternoon, I was making my way along Princes Street, duly impressed by the procession of the comely daughters of Edinburgh in honour of The Summer Frock. I had received a note from Keene-Leslie, from a fishing hotel in Rossshire with an unpronounceable Gaelic name. It ran thus: 'I am here for a week, away from hot pavements. I wish you would hurry up Stronach, the fishing-tackle dealer at the West End, about some trout-flies I ordered. Like a good chap, see that I get them soon, or I am undone. Weather obliging; trout the reverse.

'I have some *most* interesting information concerning the Duff Avenue gang. I shall look you up in Edinburgh on my way South in about a week.'

I was now sauntering westward to execute his commission.

It is doubtless one of the advantages of a 'single-street' town that you are pretty sure of meeting some of your acquaintances in its main artery. But it has its drawbacks. You may stumble across the last man or woman you wish to see. Soon I had bitter cause for murmuring the sacrilegious rendering by a jocund modern of our national bard's couplet:

> 'O, wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
> To see oor freens afore they see us!'

I beheld, about twenty yards away, coming towards me, the figure of an acquaintance known as 'The Rasp,' an ominous subtitle handsomely earned by the possession of a voice like the tearing of calico and a well-nigh perfect genius for saying the things one does not wish to hear. His stories are either 'chestnuts' or pointless. He purveys good news about people whom you dislike, and evil tidings of your friends. He never quarrels with anybody, and has no friends. He means well. Curse him and his breed! Most people have a *bête noire*, and 'The Rasp' is mine.

In the succinct American, he 'saw me coming.' Escape except by instant and undignified flight was impossible. He had marked me for his own, and bore down upon me like the Assyrian wolf. First he inquired about my health, and, before I could reply, mentioned kindly that he

thought I was getting too stout. I am only twelve-stun'-three. I felt inclined to break him over my knee, but men of his type never see the murder in their victim's eyes. He went on to spoil a good story in the telling of it, making it a cause for tears instead of joy; and when I did not laugh, he tactfully suggested that, 'of course, it wants a bit of seeing.'

Then he told me of the engagement of a pretty girl whom I know (and who waltzes divinely) to a little bounder with Whitehall spectacles and a stutter. He pointed out a man who was passing, and informed me in a reverential whisper that he owned three Rolls-Royces! 'An awfully rich chap,' he said. He said this twice. He also told me he didn't like the colour of my waistcoat.

'I must be off,' I ventured; 'I'm—I'm rather in a hurry.'

'You didn't look like it when I met you,' he remarked.

'No,' I said, goaded into savage reprisals; 'I wasn't, but I am now.'

The shaft glanced harmlessly off his rhinoceros hide.

'Well,' he said, 'I have nothing to do, so I'll stroll along with you.' The complacent ass then took my arm; and feeling like a chapter in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, I swallowed an imprecation and bowed to Destiny.

But mark the law of compensation in all things. Had I not met him I should not have heard so promptly about a telephone message to me at the club. When we were passing it he said, 'By the way, I forgot to tell you. I happened to hear the porter telling some one over the 'phone that you weren't in the club.'

'Thanks. *Good*-bye,' I said firmly, and dived into the hall. There I found a message (probably my landlady had sent it from a telephone-call office) that a telegram awaited me at my rooms.

I hastened to Jura Street. The little drab envelope's contents ran: '*Burglary at The Bield. Colonel in grave danger.*' I sent off a telegram to Tony in Ross-shire, asking him to meet me with all speed at The Bield, and caught the night train for the North, a prey to the blackest forebodings.

The long night journey to The Bield frayed my nerves. Haunted by disquiet, I could not sleep, and as it was too dark to read, I spent the hours in dismal wakefulness, hoping against hope that my fears would not be justified. But the more I thought, the deeper grew my anxiety. There I sat alone in my ill-lit compartment, wide-eyed and depressed, the train's monotonous rumble spinning a gloomy undernote to my thoughts. The slow hours passed. With the first deep flush of the dawn came the promise of a fine day. The mounting sun filled the heavens with splendour. By the time we reached the summit the hills were clear of shadows; Loch Garry gleamed like a silver shield; a fairer morning never welcomed me to my 'ain countrie.' But with it came one of the bitterest moments of my life. Dr Hall was on the platform of the little station in the Glen, and my first glance at his pale, grave face told me the truth. My uncle was dead.

'Two hours ago, peacefully in his sleep,' the doctor told me in reply to the question in my eyes. 'I sat up all night with him; and I have a strange story to tell you—the strangest I have known in my experience.'

'Not foul play?'

'Not in the sense of murder. Your uncle died of heart-failure after a great shock, and might have been found dead yesterday morning but for the accident of old Janet having been wakened by the wind slamming a door near her room. She rose to shut it, and when going back to her room, looked out of a window, and saw a light burning in the colonel's sanctum. There she found him, face downwards on the floor, unable to speak or move, and obviously desperately ill. At once she sent for me. Luckily, I had just come in from a night visit to a shepherd's house down the Glen, and I was at The Bield in ten minutes. But you must hasten. I have my car here. The police authorities will return in an hour, and the sooner you are at the house the better. I'll give you the main facts as we go.'

We hurried to the car, and as we skimmed along the doctor continued: 'A couple of hours after I reached the house the colonel rallied, and I was able to patch his story together. The central fact is that a man answering to the description of the prowler of whom the colonel told us entered his room at midnight and terrorised him. Your uncle's story was so startling that I telephoned the police authorities at once, and also took the precaution of locking up his room and leaving things exactly as they were, untouched. The police motored to The Bield, and on their arrival about five o'clock in the morning approved of what I had done. The colonel was then very low, and I advised that his evidence should be taken. The inspector telephoned to the Crown officials, who came in the early forenoon and took the colonel's sworn statement. It is unsigned, as he was too weak to lift a hand; but it was, of course, given before witnesses, and I understand that is all that is necessary. I got Dr Robertson from Castleton—the best man I know—to come yesterday afternoon, but when he arrived he could do nothing except agree with my treatment and my view of the case. There was little hope from the beginning, I am deeply sorry to say. . . . I'm about done up. I have only had an hour or so of sleep for the last forty-eight hours.'

The road to The Bield brought a rush of memories; beyond a few conventional words

of thanks to the doctor, I was unable to speak. Soon the car glided up the avenue. Angus was at the door, and the old man's eyes filled as I took his big, rough hand and passed from the radiant morning into the silent house. The doctor came with me into the hall, where he gave me the copy of my uncle's statement.

'You will perhaps wish to be alone,' he said, 'and I can be of little use just now.'

'You are in want of sleep, doctor,' I said; and, indeed, his face had all the signs of a tired man's. 'Will you rest here?'

'Many thanks. I must return to the surgery. I'll soon fall asleep, I assure you; but I must be at home, as I have one or two cases which I am anxious about, and I have no assistant. I'll come up as soon as I can. By that time you will have thought over the statement, and I am anxious to hear your views on the subject. But it seems clear to me that the watcher laid his devilish plans too well.'

The colonel's deathbed statement or 'deposition,' as it is called, amazed me. Given in presence of the Sheriff-Substitute, the Procurator-Fiscal, and the Clerk of Court for the County, it was dated at The Bield and signed by those officials in presence of the 'deponent.' Here it is:

'I am Colonel Ewan Forbes of Glen Ciuin. On the evening of Sunday last I finished dinner about 8.15, and afterwards went to my smoking-room. There I sat reading until nine o'clock, when Dr Hall, who is my medical man, called. His visit was not a professional one, but was in response to an invitation to come and smoke a cigar with me. He sat with me for over an hour, and left about 10.30. Immediately afterwards my housekeeper, Janet Blair, having locked up the house, came with the keys. This was at her usual hour. I resumed my reading, but became a little drowsy. I cannot say that I fell asleep. The next thing I remember is that the door of my room was suddenly opened and a man came in and instantly covered me with a revolver. I could neither speak nor move, but I was quite conscious of what happened. The man closed the door, and having locked it, came into the middle of the room, still covering me with the revolver. He was over medium height, with a dark pointed beard, wore a slouch-hat, and was dressed in rough brown tweeds. He did not speak—at least, I heard nothing—but keeping in the shadow behind the lamp, he stood watching me for a little. I tried to get up from my chair and to shout for help, but I felt very weak and giddy, and could neither utter a word nor lift a finger. He then rifled my pockets, and having found my keys, went straight to the dummy row of books which masks the little safe where I keep a number of private papers. He slid the imitation books aside, and having opened the safe with my key, took out all the papers from inside it and put them in his pocket. This done, he began to search the safe a second time. While he was doing this I must have swooned. I remember nothing more.

'I am sure that the man who came into the room is the same person whom I saw thrice near The Bield, the last time outside the window of my room late at night. My nephew, Neil Forbes, and Dr Hall know the particulars of my having seen this person before. I told them about it. The man is a complete stranger to me.' (Here follows a note by the witnesses that the deponent was unable, through bodily weakness, to say more or to sign his statement. They then signed as witnesses to the correctness of the deposition.)

I read the extraordinary statement over and over again. It was clear enough—too clear in its story of well-nigh incredible daring and cunning. I rebuilt the scene: the old man alone, the stealthy entrance, my uncle's sudden heart-failure, and the cool scoundrel hunting for the paper. The paper! Had 'The Searcher' got it? I had counselled my uncle to secrete it, and the little masked safe was in all likelihood the place he would have chosen as its hiding-place.

(*Continued on page 372.*)

A SIDELIGHT ON THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

By VLADIMIR POLIAKOFF.

WHEN the Revolution came, the great mass of the Russian Army went over readily to its side, or at least did not oppose its progress. This is all the more curious because the ordinary Russian soldier was, politically, absolutely uneducated, and at the beginning of the Revolution no powerful currents of opinion favourable to the new ideas existed in the army.

My personal experience of three years at the front, and also a careful investigation of the facts, lead me to the conclusion that the phenomenon was due to a deep-rooted dissatisfaction with the material conditions of life, and to a general 'Bolshevism.'

When one studies the facts, it is astonishing to find how the Tsar's Government itself created a state of things in the army propitious to any revolutionary uprising. We went into the war in 1914 united by the one patriotic desire—to beat the German aggressors. Yet, I must insist, the Government, and especially the High Command, never really tried to maintain and develop this feeling on truly broad national lines. As the war dragged on, month after month, nothing

was done on a large scale to keep the soldier informed and interested in its aims. Thus it happened that by 1917 the majority of the combatants had lost any genuine understanding of what they were fighting for.

The troops fought, and often fought well; they obeyed orders—but not for a great idea. The army, having thus lost interest in the great issues of the war, became easily accessible to any mutinous appeal addressed to the materialistic elemental senses of the mass. This mass of combatants under compulsion could not be securely kept in hand, because of the growing estrangement between officers and men.

From the beginning the Government and the High Command were mortally afraid of the revolutionary bogy. The fear (absolutely unfounded) was always present that revolutionary elements would appear in the army, and use it as an instrument against the existing régime. Much valuable time of the staffs was occupied in the preparation of lists of so-called 'suspects' and the detection of revolutionary propaganda as yet non-existent.

By heaping favours upon the officers it was hoped that a strong militaristic caste would be created, able to put down revolutionary activities in the ranks. All real favours were reserved for the officers—augmentation of pay, supplements for the high cost of living, bonuses, preferential treatment on railways, &c.

The preferential treatment on the railways accorded to officers was a permanent source of dissatisfaction in the army. Distances in Russia being enormous and terms of leave comparatively short, every day unnecessarily lost on the journey was bitterly resented. Whilst officers on the railways were accorded all facilities, the ordinary soldier was treated as a sort of criminal. He was allowed to use only the slower trains, was often put under guard, and (worst of all) forbidden to enter the refreshment-rooms, being restricted to the canteens (not always provided), where sometimes only hot water was to be obtained.

The officer home on leave enjoyed every reasonable privilege. The common soldier home for a couple of weeks, after a year or even two years of campaigning, was confined in every direction. He could not visit the better theatres and music-halls. Restaurants, and even inns, were often closed against him. He was not allowed into the fashionable gardens and parks. Sometimes the best street in the town was declared taboo or the use of the tramway-cars was restricted.

All these restrictions, little things by themselves, and many of them ridiculous, acted upon the men's tempers and made them more approachable to the agitator. The revolutionary leaders in Petrograd, for example, as one of their chief arguments for goading the garrison into rebellion, cited the shameful way in which soldiers were prohibited by the commandant from using the electric cars.

Next in importance comes the drink question. When the war started, Russia by imperial ukase was ordered to go 'dry.' Therefore the rank and file in the army never saw alcohol except in the flasks of the Germans they defeated. For men used to alcoholic drinks to be deprived of them is very hard. But for health or patriotic reasons, the decree, if equally applied to all, could be borne. It is easy to imagine the disgust of a soldier deprived of a lifelong habit on seeing his commanders allowed to use the forbidden drink.

Another cause for complaint was the eternal feminine question. Quite justly, soldiers' wives and sweethearts were not allowed to approach anywhere near the front line. This was right; but the troops saw that this rule did not apply to commanding officers or even subalterns, who were visited by their female relatives. Indeed, officers of high rank sometimes had their families staying with them. In the towns immediately behind the front the officers were afforded the chance of snatching a few bright moments. It must be admitted that the battalions of gay young ladies there were sometimes too numerous. On the other hand, the conduct of the soldier was severely controlled, and his occasions for a 'spree' were but few.

Soldiers on active service in the first years of the war were absolutely forbidden to marry, and later to get the necessary permits was extraordinarily difficult. This was a very great grievance indeed, among the men of better class especially, when they saw how easy this step was made for officers.

And so officers and men gradually drifted more and more apart. The unity of feeling which had existed at the beginning of the war disappeared. For reasons often paltry, but all the same real, the mass of the army began to feel itself separated from the commanding caste, and through comparing its own position with the privileges of the officers was brought to see in them not leaders, but oppressors and profiteers.

There were many other reasons for this besides those already mentioned. For example, there seemed to be two measures in the dispensation of military justice. The men were much more harshly treated than the officers. The latter often received lenient sentences for crimes the penalty for which in the case of a soldier was death or long imprisonment. It seemed as if the High Command was afraid to disaffect officers by a severe application of the law. The disciplinary powers of the officers over the men were increasing all the time, and there was practically no way in which a man could obtain redress for a sentence, however unjust.

The treatment of the wounded and the sick was also organised on class lines. The advantages afforded to officers in hospital and during

transport were too glaringly apparent. In the base camps, in the reserve battalions, and generally behind the front the men were left to themselves, and not looked after from the moral point of view at all. They were just for endless weeks and months penned up in barracks, often without physical exercise and drill, wasting their time smoking cigarettes and playing cards.

The numerous intellectuals included in the army on mobilisation were looked upon with suspicion. If they were not Jews they could get a commission and join the officers' caste; otherwise they remained suspects till the end. The Jews had the privilege of being allowed to shed their blood without the possibility of being promoted. At the same time, the intellectuals were exploited in every possible way by the officers. Such a state of things was also favourable to the spread of dissatisfaction, and gave the revolutionary cause its best agitators.

Decorations for service in the field and on the staffs were showered on the officers, whilst the men had to wait long for their hard-won ribbon of St George.

I remember the splendid dash and daring of the army of 1914, its irresistible *élan*. I hear yet the tramp of those splendid battalions. Where are my comrades? The Tsar's High Command destroyed the best of them in bloody sacrifices uselessly, on the Carpathians, in Poland, and on many a field. The rest were demoralised by a stupid policy, divided into classes, and betrayed into the hands of professional agitators.

What I have said about the estrangement between officers and men is the bitter truth, and explains the success of the worst sides of the Revolution.

CHRISTINE LONAVET.

PART II.

V.

THE following morning, soon after Lannart and Malet, much to their regret, had left us (our host had made up his mind that the Germans would quickly pay us a visit, and was very nervous and uneasy till they had gone), the good count brought the doctor in his own carriage. The wound was not really a serious one, but he said it would be about a month before I was fit for service.

Ah, those were very happy days for me that followed! I saw little of the family during the day, except at the midday meal; but the evenings more than made up for this, for then we all sat round the blazing fire. While the girls brought out their knitting, their father and I smoked and chatted, and Bobo the sheep-dog, who, since all his charges had been sold, had become quite one of the family, slept soundly on the rug before us.

'We have taken the liberty,' said my host one night, 'of using your horse in the plough;' and after a few remarks about its age, &c., he asked me if I would take four hundred francs for it.

'I am glad you find it useful,' I replied. 'The count tells me that it must have been a very fine horse once, as it is branded with the N. and the imperial crown.'

Lonavet was surprised at my knowing this, and seemed anything but pleased. Still, I did not want him to think I did not know its value.

'I won't take four hundred francs,' I declared.

'You won't?' he said.

'No,' I answered. 'You have been very kind to me, I have given you a lot of trouble, and I beg that you accept the horse as a gift.'

For a moment he looked upon me almost as a fool, ere he grasped my hand and thanked me. 'But, *ma foi!* you must be rich,' he added.

'Well, not exactly,' I answered; 'but I am not poor. I will tell you how I am situated.'

'Yes, let us hear,' said my host, rising to throw another log on the fire, whose flickering flames lighted up the long, huge kitchen, which, I should say, judging from its groined roof and fine oak panelling, had originally been a guard-room. The fluttering light—for we had but one brass candlestick—in the semi-darkness made the room seem larger than ever.

'Very well,' I replied; and so, with the two girls opposite, their elbows on the table and their bright eyes fixed upon me, I commenced.

'Well, you know, my father has a large farm in Champagne, and he had two brothers, Étienne and Louis. Étienne is my god-father; he is a large timber-merchant at Bourmont, on the borders of Lorraine. As he has only two daughters, at sixteen I went to learn his business, so that when I was old enough I could take it over, in order to keep it in the family, for it was a fine business, and we had as many as twenty horses. Among other things, at this period I learned German. I don't say I speak it well; but taking my uncle's advice, and smoking a pipe near a pig-sty, I certainly got the correct accent. Then I went to serve my two years in the army. I had been back from the army three years, and my uncle said I should soon be a partner, when last May we heard that Uncle Louis had died at Martinique, and left to his two brothers for their children over half a million francs. As there were four of us and Uncle Étienne had his two daughters, that meant that we should have nearly one hundred thousand francs apiece. But though it made us rich, I can

truly say that we young folks were really sorry to hear of Uncle Louis's death. He had been very wild when he was young; but he was clever, and, moreover, very kind-hearted. He had no children of his own; his wife was dead; and when he came over, as he did every four years, he thought he could not do enough for us. As neither my father nor my uncle could go, and my elder brother was going to be married, I went out to Martinique and saw his partner, M. Mardelet. This gentleman's only son had turned out badly, and M. Mardelet took a liking to me, and proposed that I should put the money that had been left me into the business, and that I should stay there; but, of course, I told him I could arrange nothing till I got home. Though the war broke out in July, there being no direct cable, we only learnt of it from a ship arriving a fortnight later. I could not get a ship back for some time, and I did not arrive at Bordeaux till the middle of September. When they knew that I had been a corporal in my old regiment they made me a sergeant, and sent me into Tours with some conscripts.

'But where is the money?' asked M. Lonavet.

'Safe in the bank at Bordeaux.'

Satisfied with that, he sat thinking. He had known nothing about me up to that time, so, though courteous and polite (as his nature was), the *patron* had been reticent and reserved. But a change came over him from that date, and nothing could exceed his cordiality. He told me openly he had made a lot of money by the war, and that he hoped to make still more, as they had had a fine harvest, and he had the grain hidden away, and expected to get yet higher prices. He even told Christine that as soon as ever I could go about a little, she should take me to see where the cows, and also my horse—'l'Empereur,' as they called him—were concealed. The change in his manner put me in the very highest spirits, the beauty and the common-sense of Christine having quite won my heart. She was always in my thoughts, for I had never seen her equal. Of course, her father had seen that from the beginning, but then he did not know my circumstances. Now that he knew everything, I hoped that, if she would consent to marry me, he would not object.

The farm, situated as it was between Von der Tann's Bavarians and the Forest of Marchenoir, where we were forming our new armies in the west, was then in a fairly safe position, but at any time it might be the centre of a skirmish or a battle. It was a strongly built place, and whichever side held it, it would probably be shelled and burnt before it was taken—as, alas! it was a few weeks later. This thought would sometimes come to the minds of all of us, and cause our merry laughter to cease.

It often fretted me to think that when all were so busy I was a mere drone, and I suggested that I could do some churning.

'Well, if it pleases you, you shall do it to-morrow when I bring the milk back,' said Christine.

So at eight the next morning I found myself in the great dairy.

'It's a very fine dairy,' I said. 'You have had it all whitewashed.'

'Yes,' she answered, lowering her voice. 'We have two cellars. There is one crammed full of corn, barley, and oats right under us. We had this bricked up; but, of course, the new brickwork would have shown, so we had to whiten the whole. Often as they have been in here, the German hogs have never dreamt of what is beneath.'

At that moment she was emptying a pail of milk into the churn, and the bright eyes of the splendid girl, who stood there with her sleeves turned up, showing her plump arms, sparkled with merriment as she thought of how, for once, her hated foes had come off second best.

'*Grâce à Dieu*, we have not had them lately. They are too busy down Orléans way, so perhaps they will leave us alone.'

They had brought a chair in for me, and placing it by the churn, I began to turn the handle.

'Yes, sergeant,' she said approvingly, 'that will come soon;' and away she went.

It was cold in the dairy, and I made the thing spin with a vengeance.

'*Mon Dieu!*' she said when she came back and looked inside, 'you have worked hard. You know,' she continued in a softer tone, 'it is really very, very kind of you.'

'Bah! I would do a precious sight more than that for your *beaux yeux*, because'——

What I might have said there and then Heaven only knows, she looked so pretty; but at that moment there was a clatter in the great courtyard.

'*Ô Ciel!*' she exclaimed, turning a trifle paler as she looked out of the window. 'These brutes are coming again! See! there are only a few now, but I know what it is. *Quel malheur*, father is out!'

They were Bavarian Uhlans in dark-green uniforms, with light-blue and white pennons to their lances.

'I will come with you,' I said; and she called to the old servant Élise to keep the churn going.

Hobbling beside her, I went out.

'This,' said the sergeant, holding out a paper, 'is to tell you, *monsieur et madame*'—a term which brought the roses to Christine's cheeks—'that you are to get ready to receive two hundred men and horses.'

'My father,' she said, 'who owns this farm, is out. You may search where you like, but you will find no fodder for the horses, as everything has been taken by those who have been here before.'

'Well, you must explain that to Colonel Von Misthausen,' replied the sergeant.

As it happened, they had their own fodder with them.

VI.

Ever since Bazeilles, when they shot women and threw babies out of the windows, the Bavarians had had a very bad name. But the discipline of this particular regiment was strict, and not a word was said by the Uhlans that could be objected to, even before their officers arrived.

The men of the regiment were distributed for the night among various farms and houses, but the colonel and the superior officers were quartered on Lonavet, and the two girls had to wait on them. I could not bear to see them doing this work without trying to help, so I hobbled about and did what I could. Little did those Germans think, as they spoke in their hog-like gutturals in the most open manner about their movements and the war generally, that I understood what they said. One major was complaining to the colonel about his horse having gone lame. He put it down to the roads, and wondered if they were all as bad.

'Well, Schwobe knows more about that,' replied his chief. And then Schwobe told them that the roads were normally very good indeed; only, the artillery had cut them up. He went on to say that he had been all over the district the year before in a gig, under the guise of a commercial traveller for an imaginary firm of wine-merchants of Coblenz, named Meyer. This and many another horrible tale of deceit I heard, and such was my anger that I left the great kitchen for a time, as the laughter that greeted each story of systematic spying drove me wild. I could not have imagined that such cold-blooded treachery could exist.

The next morning, soon after the Germans had taken their departure, the old count arrived in his brougham to see me, bringing with him some more game and grapes. I told him what I had heard. He was astonished that I knew German. He was as furious as I had been at first at what I had learnt, not so much at the deception practised, as that was, he said, a *ruse de guerre*, but at the simplicity of his countrymen in not seeing through it. Usually he stopped and chatted quietly for some time, but now he became restless and excited about the information I was able to give him as to the strength of some of their forces and the routes they were following. When he was leaving he patted me on the back, and told Julie, who happened to be present, that I was a wonderful fellow; that he must be off, as he thought good use might be made of what I had told him. As for me, I heartily wished afterwards that I had held my tongue.

Every day I was getting stronger; and when Christine asked me one afternoon whether I should like to go with her and see where the cows and my horse were hidden, I gladly consented.

Christine had naturally a very beautiful and sympathetic disposition, a rare quality either in men or in women, but all the more extraordinary in one so young and strong as she was.

'It is not more than two kilometres, but if you get tired you must take my arm.'

'Oh, well, in that case I shall soon find I am tired,' I replied slyly.

'Oh no, you won't,' she retorted merrily, with a toss of her head. 'I know what you can do. If I thought it was too far, I should not let you go. But I am glad you are coming,' she continued, 'as we must sell the cows, and a man is calling to see father this afternoon. You will be able to help me to bring two of them back as soon as it is dark enough. We are obliged to sell them, now that the snow is coming. You cannot hide footsteps in the snow. Apart from the Germans, there are *francs-tireurs* about, and one fine day we might find the whole lot gone.'

The place where we were going had been a monastery before the Revolution, but when this was totally destroyed the grounds were turned into a wood. The immense cellars remained, however, and it was in them that, at the first coming of the invader, the surrounding peasants and farmers had hidden their sheep and cattle.

Christine had given me a stick and a lantern to carry, and we lighted the latter. The steps descending to the cellars had a sort of broad gangway.

'We have four cows left,' she said, 'and these two,' pointing to a couple of white Charolais animals, 'are the ones I want. *Prenez garde.* Rosette is a bit *ombrageuse* with strangers; so I will take her, and you take Fifine.'

We soon got halters on the two cows, but we had no end of trouble with Rosette. Christine was tugging as hard as she could, and we had got half-way up the gangway, when we heard voices up above, and the clatter of hoofs.

'*Sainte Vierge*,' exclaimed the girl, 'if they are Prussians we are fairly caught!'

But we were quickly reassured.

'Is that you, Mademoiselle Lonavet?' said a voice.

'Yes,' she answered.

'Well, I have seen your father. I have come from M. le Comte. You have a horse down there, and I want to see it.'

Looking up in the dusk, we saw a young lieutenant of the Chasseurs, with Jean, the count's grandson, on his pony. We got the cows up, gave them some hay, and then we all went down again.

'That is where the bullet struck it,' said Christine, holding the lantern to the horse's shoulder; 'and there is the crown and the N. It is a fine horse, and has a nice temper.'

He was a handsome young fellow, this chasseur, and he looked at the horse, and he looked at the girl, and as the light from the

lantern fell on her beautiful face I saw the gleam of admiration in his eyes.

'*Vous êtes bonne vendeuse, mademoiselle*,' he said undecidedly. 'Your father wants fifteen hundred francs; that's a lot for a half-starved twelve-year old.'

'Is that all?' said Christine. 'I never thought he would part with it in these times under two thousand francs.'

'Why not say three thousand francs?' he replied with a laugh.

'Ah, but he's a beautiful horse!' continued Christine. 'I shall be sorry to part with him;' and as she spoke she began stroking the animal's forehead and kissing his velvety nose.

'Oh, what waste of kisses!' I said.

'Yes; is he not lucky?' remarked the lieutenant.

'Is he?' said Christine merrily. 'Well, that's my affair.'

'Look here,' said the chasseur; 'I will come in the daylight to-morrow, tell your father, at eight.'

'As you please,' replied Christine; and mounting the steps, he disappeared.

We got the cows home, and the purchaser, who was waiting for them, took them away in the dark, after the two girls had kissed the placid Fifine, whom they did not like parting with. I don't know what price the cows went for, but Lonavet was highly pleased with the transaction, and then began talking about the horse.

'Take twelve hundred and fifty francs for it, father,' said Christine, 'while you can get it. Any day the Germans'——

While she was speaking there was a knock, and the lieutenant came in. '*Ah, bon soir*, M. Lonavet,' he said. 'When I got to the château I found I must start early to-morrow; so look here,' he continued, putting a bundle of notes on the table; 'I will give you one thousand francs for that old *rosse*. You know I have not really examined it, and I do not much care whether I get the beast or not.'

But Lonavet would not take the offer, for he saw the eager look in the young fellow's eyes.

'What do you say, mademoiselle?' asked the lieutenant, appealing to Christine.

'Oh monsieur, *c'est votre affaire et non pas la mienne*.'

'*Eh bien*,' said the chasseur, 'this offer is the last: twelve hundred and fifty francs, and a kiss from mademoiselle to seal the bargain.'

'Well, you can give me one,' laughed Christine; 'but I don't say I will return it.'

There was a dubious smile on the face of her father; but he saw the notes before him, and the sight was too much for him. Anyway, he had got the steed for nothing.

'Done,' said Lonavet; 'and I'll go with you.'

The kiss was given—and returned by the blushing Christine.

'*Merci mille fois, mademoiselle*,' said the gallant chasseur with a satisfied smile. 'Whatever the horse turns out to be, that kiss will always be the best part of the transaction.'

Now, though I had never received such a favour as that, I did not feel angry or jealous; for somehow—I don't know why—I felt that Christine thought as much of me as she did of him.

'Well, father's done a fine day's work,' said Julie to me when we were alone, her sister having disappeared.

'Yes; and so has the lieutenant,' I replied, 'with that kiss.'

'Oh, don't you mind; you will get one too before you've done, if you only have the pluck.'

The words filled me with hope, and as I thought of them I forgot the war and all the misery around me.

(*Continued on page 376.*)

ROMANCES OF MISSING HEIRS.

By JOHN G. ROWE.

EARLY in February 1917 Mr Justice Coleridge, in the Probate Court, dismissed a claim of declaration, under the Legitimacy Declaration Act, that George Beresford, a gardener, was the lawful issue of the fifth Marquess of Waterford by his first wife, and therefore entitled to the peerage, which is now held by the seventh marquess, a youth of eighteen. The claimant to the peerage, who was originally known as Tooth, had taken the name of Beresford. Lord Beresford is a great-uncle of the present marquess.

On 2nd April the same year the Probate Court gave leave to presume the death of the Honourable Francis Patrick Clements, who was a son of the late Earl of Leitrim, and heir to his elder brother, the present earl. It was stated that Mr Clements was formerly an officer in the navy, but resigned his commission owing to lung trouble. It was in 1907, when he was twenty-two years of age, that he suddenly disappeared whilst staying in London. 'According to the *Police Gazette*, he had been working as a stoker on a vessel bound for New York. He left the ship on its arrival in the United States, and has never been heard of since.'

Strangely enough, in the same year, I believe, as Mr Clements thus vanished from human ken—that is, 1907—the Dublin Probate Court heard a remarkable romance of another Irish heir. On that occasion a Mr Robert Leeson Porter applied for letters of administration over the estate of his late father, Richard Burton Porter, of Belleview, County Cork. The story, as related in court, was that, some twenty-seven years before,

the applicant, Leeson Porter, left Ireland for the United States. In 1888 he was arrested in North Carolina in mistake for another man named Scott Parton. Parton was 'wanted' for murder, and it was of this terrible crime that Leeson Porter found himself accused. Several persons swore that he was Parton, and it is even stated that 'photographs of the two men were identical.' The consequence was that Porter was kept in jail for a long time. It would seem that eventually the real culprit, Parton, was laid by the heels, and Porter's innocence vindicated, although my authority does not say so. On being released, however, the luckless Porter temporarily lost his senses. 'Subsequently he heard that he was being sought as the missing heir to his father's estate, and came to Ireland.' The newspaper cutting before me states that 'the judge granted the order for administration, subject to advertisements being published in the United States to see if any other claimant could be found.'

My commonplace-book contains records of another real-life romance, connected this time with a missing heiress, about the year 1902, as well as I can calculate, for, unfortunately, I didn't date the cutting at the time. Beginning, 'A telegram from Butte, Montana (says the *Standard* correspondent at New York), tells the story of a genuine romance,' the cutting goes on to narrate that a Mr John Anderson, a Swede, had for years been looking for his cousin, a young woman, who was wanted as the heiress to a fortune in the custody of the Swedish courts. Her parents had emigrated to the States, and been murdered in a foray by Cree Indians. Their daughter disappeared at the time. Mr John Anderson went out to the Wild West in search of her, and made exhaustive inquiries as to her fate. He was talking with some Crees one day, when he noticed a *white-haired* squaw, called 'Sarah Bigcloud.' The account before me says 'white-haired,' but I should imagine it is a slip for 'a white squaw with fair hair.' Anderson questioned the woman, and learned that she knew nothing about her early life except that her parents had been white, and had been killed by the Indians. She had been brought up by the tribe, and had married an Indian, who had recently been killed by a snowslide. She produced a ring with an inscription, which she was unable to read: 'To Mathilda, from Papa and Mamma, 1885.' Mathilda was the name of Anderson's missing cousin, and 1885 was the year of the parents' murder. 'After Anderson has put the facts to legal proof,' the account before me concludes, 'the couple will return to claim the inheritance.'

In August 1904 a Burton-on-Trent cabman, with one leg, Benjamin Tyrrell by name, claimed to be the heir to the extinct Tyrrell baronetcy and the Thornton Hall estate at Crakemarsh Hall. Several Burton-on-Trent lawyers considered the case, and thought 'that he had a genuine claim to the baronetcy, but said that he could not obtain the estate owing to the Real Property Limitation Act of 1874, which declares that the possession of real property for twelve years without acknowledgment of title to any person gives the possessor an absolute title, and an action to turn such possessor out cannot be sustained.' It was, therefore, alleged that all the satisfaction Tyrrell, the cabman claimant, was likely to gain if he pushed his claims to the furthest legal extremity, would be 'a penniless baronetcy.' What the upshot of the matter was I have not been able to learn: I saw nothing further about it.

A Manchester evening newspaper, about 1903 or 1904, published in its 'agony column' the following advertisement: 'Notice to lady and gentleman who fifty-one years ago lost their child, a little girl, with light-blue eyes, light flaxen hair, and fair skin, in Eccles, near Manchester. Any one wishing for further particulars, apply to R. Shaw, 52 Harold Street, New Clee, Grimsby.' A newspaper reporter apparently interviewed Mr Shaw, who told 'a curious and romantic story.' His dead wife was the little girl referred to in the advertisement. He had married her thirty-six years before, and she had died the previous March, aged fifty-three. When he first met her she was living with an old lady in Hull, whom she called 'Granny.' 'The old lady was a widow, and appeared to have plenty of money.' The two young people married 'on the sly,' as the old lady was antagonistic. His wife then told him that 'she could remember playing in a beautiful garden in front of a big house with stone steps. Suddenly a dark lady leaned over the wall and pressed some sweets upon her. Then a handkerchief was placed over her mouth, and the next thing she remembered was being in a train with 'Granny' (Mrs Payne).

'Granny,' it appears, relented towards Mr and Mrs Shaw, and eventually came to live with them, though she still frequently expressed her disapproval of the match. 'She should not have thrown herself away on a labourer,' she is alleged to have said, 'when she could have had a lord.' Once, when she thought she was going to die, 'Granny' called Mrs Shaw to her, and said, 'Maggie, I have deceived you all my life. Your father was a very wealthy man living in Eccles, near the racecourse. You may find the house, because there is a very peculiar tree in front of it. There was a woman in love with your father, but he rejected her for your mother. The woman scorned was also wealthy. She stole you while your parents were at the races, and she gave me nine hundred pounds to take you away and bring you up here in Hull.'

Mrs Shaw took no action in the matter, as

she did not wish to get 'Granny' into trouble. She believed her maiden name was 'Dent' or 'Dennis,' and she told of a visit that she once made with 'Granny' to Manchester to see a lady, who at the sight of her nearly fainted, and, turning to 'Granny,' asked, 'What have you brought her here for?' 'I promised you I would, and I have kept my word,' 'Granny' replied. Such was the extraordinary story published in the newspapers at the time when Mr Shaw inserted his advertisement—which he did, he explained, in the hope of finding some clue that would establish the parentage of the woman he had made his wife. But whether he was successful I do not know. I include the strange tale in my list for what it may be worth in the reader's opinion.

But the missing-heir romance *par excellence* is the famous Tichborne case. Who has not heard of it? It was the great sensation of the year 1871. The Tichbornes were a very old English Roman Catholic family. They had a fine house and estates three miles from Alresford, in Hampshire, and the property was worth twenty-four thousand pounds a year. Sir James Tichborne had two sons—the elder of whom was Roger Charles Tichborne—by his wife, a French lady. Roger spent the early part of his youth in France, and in 1845, when he was sixteen years of age, he was sent to Stonyhurst, the well-known Jesuit college. There he particularly shone in Euclid. Two years later he joined the military school at Sandhurst, and was much laughed at for mixing up French with English in conversation. In 1849 he was a subaltern in the Carabineers, at that time stationed at Portobello Barracks in Dublin. On a holiday visit home in 1850 he met and fell in love with his cousin, a Miss Kate Doughty; but the young lady's father, as well as his own, opposed the match, and, in a pet, Roger sold out of the army and decided to travel. He went to Havre, and set sail thence, in 1853, on board a sailing-vessel for Valparaiso. In South America he led an adventurous life, and ultimately made his way to Rio de Janeiro, where, in April 1854, he embarked in the sailing-ship *Bella* for New York. In July 1854 his family received word that the *Bella* had foundered at sea with all on board.

Lady Tichborne clung to the fond hope that her son was still alive, and advertised widely for him; and in 1866 a letter was received from Wagga-Wagga, New South Wales, Australia, the writer of which stated that he was Sir Roger, and asked for funds to pay his passage home. This man ultimately came to England, and Lady Tichborne, then in her dotage, acknowledged him to be her son. He explained that he had been picked up and taken to Melbourne, where he assumed the name of Thomas Castro, and married a Roman Catholic woman named Mary Anne Bryant.

The heir-at-law to the Tichborne baronetcy and estates was a boy at school at the time—Henry Alfred Joseph Tichborne, the son of Roger's younger brother. This boy's guardians denounced the Australian claimant as an impostor, whose real name was Arthur Orton, the son of a butcher of High Street, Wapping, London. When he left England in 1853 Roger Tichborne was a painfully thin young man; the 'Claimant' was a positive 'mountain of flesh,' a hole being cut in the table at which he sat in court to accommodate his obesity. A trial in the Common Pleas followed, and was 'unexampled for continuous duration,' lasting one hundred and eighty-eight days.

Charles Russell, afterwards Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief-Justice of England, 1894–1900, fought the case for the boy heir-at-law; and the late Dr Edward Vaughan Kenealy, the ex-M.P. for Stoke-on-Trent, pleaded the cause of the 'Claimant,' who was completely bowled out in cross-examination. He did not know his alleged mother's Christian names, nor could he speak a word of French, although Roger Tichborne knew more French than English; he could not remember the names of any of the fathers at Stonyhurst, and believed the Asses' Bridge (the humorous name generally given to the 5th Proposition in the first book of Euclid) was a bridge near Stonyhurst. 'The lost Sir Roger was proved to be tattooed in a very remarkable manner, while the "Claimant" was not.'

The jury stopped the case, and Lord Chief-Justice Bovill committed the 'Claimant' for perjury. He was duly tried for this crime in 1873, and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. Released on ticket-of-leave in 1884, Orton died in poverty and obscurity in 1898.

SUMMER.

SWEET, who will walk with me? Will you,
While skies are blue?
Wilt wander with me, hand-in-hand,
In Summerland?
The hawthorns trail a milky way—
Young April's fled—the world's at May,
With song of birds, and scent of hay,
And skies of blue.

Sweet, who will walk with me? Ah! say,
When skies are gray,
Wilt clasp a lover's maimèd hands? . . .
Then desert lands
Shall blossom as the veriest bower,
A rainbow ride above each shower,
A sunbeam glint through every hour
Of every day.

For Love shall walk—a pioneer—
Before us, dear;
With fairy lantern lit and trimmed,
And over-brimmed
With magic oil. Ah! in thine eyes
His limpid light reflected lies;
And Life is Summer, be the skies
Storm-cast or clear.

LILIAN HOLMES.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

A RECALCITRANT CHIEF.

By C. G. NURSE.

I.

IT was nearly noon on a hot-weather day at Aden, and I was seated under the punkah in the anteroom of the native infantry mess after a late breakfast. My outdoor duties, begun before sunrise, had been followed by a couple of hours' office-work, including some mess accounts; and as the newspapers, now nearly a week old, had ceased to interest me, I had been passing the time in trying to calculate my prospects of promotion by looking over a copy of the Indian monthly army list. Owing to a plethora of senior officers, these did not appear to be particularly rosy, but 'hope springs eternal,' and in any case there were enough discomforts in the present to discourage undue worrying over ultimate possibilities. Having finished my second cheroot, I was contemplating a temporary retirement to my quarters for my usual siesta, when a figure, sun-helmet in hand, appeared in the doorway. It proved to be the adjutant; and after pausing for a moment to allow his eyes to become accustomed to the subdued light of the room, which was in strong contrast to the glare outside, he approached my chair and said, 'You have to report at the general's house with the C.O. at 4 P.M. to-day—white uniform, with sword—and the C.O. wishes you to get a bazaar conveyance and call for him at 3.15.'

'What's the trouble now?' I inquired.

'I haven't the least idea; but the C.O. has just had an urgent letter from the Staff Office.'

'All right. I'll call for him at 3.15.'

In the tropics, especially during the hot weather, official business is as a rule transacted in the morning, and my midday rest was somewhat disturbed owing to uncertainty as to why I had been sent for at an unusual hour. I was not conscious of any recent dereliction of duty, but my last interview with the general had not been, so far as I was concerned, altogether a pleasant one. I had, in military parlance, been severely 'told off' for having accompanied one of the tribes of the Aden Hinterland on the warpath against a neighbouring tribe. My part in the business had been merely that of an interested spectator, and I had taken no actual hand in the fighting. But the British Government always maintains an attitude of strict neutrality in all intertribal dissensions, and the general's view that the mere presence of a British officer with one of the tribes might cause misapprehension was probably a sound one.

On the way to Steamer Point I tried unsuccessfully to 'pump' the colonel as to the reason why we had been sent for, but he disclaimed all knowledge on the point. The heat was oppressive, and the light cover of the four-wheeled conveyance, built of American hickory-wood, in which we were seated seemed to focus the sun's rays rather than mitigate their power. The road between the crater and the general's residence is entirely devoid of shade, and it was with no little relief that we descended in the porch of Government House. We were shown into the private office, where we found the general, who is also political resident, and his first assistant, seated at a table on which were spread various maps and plans. The chief staff-officer of the district was also present; and shortly after our arrival the captain of a cruiser then in harbour and the commander of the Indian Marine ship *C*—— were announced. I began to feel convinced that there was something unusual in the air, and awaited with a good deal of curiosity the solution of the question why I, a junior officer, had been included in what was evidently to be a kind of conference or council.

Presently the general opened the meeting by saying: 'Gentlemen, you may be aware that we have treaty relations with most of the chiefs in this part of Arabia. A certain sultan, whose territory touches the coast between here and the Persian Gulf, has recently been disregarding his treaty obligations, and it is the intention of Government to give him a lesson.'

The general then pointed out the situation on the map, and explained that it was proposed to send a small force by sea, with orders to land at night, and attempt to surround the village in which the recalcitrant sultan* was reported to have his headquarters. If the sultan could be captured, he was to be brought to Aden, with a view to impressing him with the power of Government, and in order to persuade him that

* The term does not imply any very exalted rank, as all petty chiefs in south Arabia call themselves 'sultan.'

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treaties could not be considered mere 'scraps of paper.'

Turning to me, the general said, 'You know Arabic, and appear to have a liking for adventure; so I have selected you to command the small force to be employed, which will consist of a hundred men of your own regiment, and a few sappers and miners. The latter may be required, as it may be necessary to blow up the fort in the village where the sultan usually resides. Colonel W—— will allow you to pick your own men, as I want to have a thoroughly reliable force, though the matter is to be carried through, if possible, without firing a shot.'

Further details were then arranged, and I was informed that an Arab assistant to the resident, who knew the sultan personally, would be sent with me, lest the Arabs might substitute some underling for the man who was wanted. My party were to proceed to their destination in a troopship of the Royal Indian Marine, and as the appearance of a man-of-war would probably cause a general stampede into the interior on the part of the Arabs, it was arranged that H.M.S. —— should appear, ready for action, at noon, after I had effected a landing.

II.

The next few days were spent in selecting my men, and in seeing to details of equipment. I took the men chiefly from my own double company, and included the subahdar major, a stout old veteran of about fifty, who was thoroughly reliable, if not so nimble as he had been in the days of his youth. Secrecy had to be maintained regarding our destination, and I let it be supposed that we were to embark for the Somali coast, which was frequently the scene of tribal disturbances.

When the day of our departure came I was suffering from fever, with a temperature of over 100 degrees, but I said nothing about it, lest some one else should be sent in my place. A first independent command, on what was virtually active service, is a chance no young officer would care to miss. As soon as I had seen my men comfortably settled on board ship, I took a big dose of quinine and turned in. Next day my temperature was normal, though I still felt a bit shaky as the result of the fever. The weather was fine and the sea smooth, so that my men did not suffer from sea-sickness—which was a great relief to me, as the average sepoy is worse than a lady-passenger when the sea is at all rough.

Our orders were to keep well out at sea till after dark, and then to approach our destination warily, in order that the Arabs might have no inkling of our arrival. At about 10 P.M., when the Arabian coastline became visible, having given orders for my men to be ready to fall in at a moment's notice, I joined the commander on the bridge. We kept along the coast, at a distance of a few miles, trying to make out from the chart the promontory that was our landmark. About 1 A.M. the commander became convinced that we must have passed it, and we consequently put about and steamed westward, keeping closer to the shore. At last we sighted our destination, a rocky hill, on the east side of which was a small bay, affording in fair weather a landing-place out of view of the village, which was situated on the west of the hill. We anchored in the bay, and carefully scanned the point where it had been arranged for me to land, only to find that the whole coastline was covered with surf, as there was a strong breeze from the south-east.

'Quite impossible to land you there at night under present conditions,' said the commander. 'Your whole party would probably be swamped. I'm afraid we shall have to put to sea again, and wait for a more favourable opportunity.'

'But what about H.M.S. ——?' I inquired. 'Can you be sure of intercepting her? If she arrives before I have landed my little lot, it will upset the whole apple-cart.'

'We can try to intercept her; but, of course, we shall have to get out of sight of land, and there is just a chance that we might miss her.'

I thereupon suggested to Commander B—— that we should attempt a landing on the western side, which would be under the lee of the promontory.

'I could send a steam-pinnace there, towing a couple of boats,' said the commander; 'but, of course, they would not contain your whole party.'

'How many men would they accommodate?' I inquired.

'About thirty; perhaps thirty-five.'

I had to decide rapidly, as we were already several hours later than had been intended; so I said, 'Very well, I will take thirty men, or as many as we can pack into the steam-pinnace and two boats, and you must do your best to land the rest later on. If, after daylight, you find you can land them on the eastern side, please do so; otherwise, send them where the first party lands.'

The boats were at once lowered, and I managed to pack in them about thirty-five men, taking my place in the pinnace with the R.I.M. officer who was in charge. I had carefully studied on the map the position of the village which it was my object to surround, and when we passed it, just about the 'false dawn,' I could distinguish no lights, so I hoped that the inhabitants were unaware of our arrival.

III.

Dawn was breaking as I landed my party about a mile beyond the village, and I at once sent back the boats to the ship, and proceeded to draw a cordon across the neck of the promontory, a distance of nearly a mile. The officer of the R.I.M. who had brought me ashore had

landed with me, eager for some excitement, and as he spoke Hindustani, he took charge of part of the line for me while I disposed of the rest of the party. By the time I had placed my men it was daylight, and I could see figures running about beside the village, which was about half a mile from my nearest picket.

I scanned the ground carefully with my field-glasses, and a more inhospitable-looking corner of the earth I had never seen. Behind the village rose a rocky hill, and in rear of my line of pickets more rocks; all the rest of the ground was covered with sand, with some stunted thorn-bushes. There was no cultivated ground within sight, but a couple of small boats lying on the beach near the village suggested that sea-fishing and the landing of a few goods for transport to the interior might afford the inhabitants a scanty means of livelihood.

Presently a couple of Arabs appeared, carrying matchlocks with lighted fuses, and asked who we were, and what was our business. I replied that our business was to carry out the orders of the *Sirkal*,* and they therefore returned to the village not much the wiser. I ascertained from them, however, that the first intimation they had had of our arrival had been the appearance, on their return journey, of the boats in which we had come ashore. I hoped, accordingly, that the sultan might still be in the village. As the number of men at my disposal was barely enough to hold the neck of the promontory, I determined to await the arrival of the rest of the party before advancing towards the village. The breeze, which had been blowing since the previous evening, had by this time died down, and the sun's power was making itself felt. Taking advantage of the scanty shade afforded by a thorn-bush, I sat down on a rock in rear of one of my pickets, field-glasses in hand, uncertain from which direction my reinforcements might arrive. The mirage, which was increasing every minute, soon began to render distant objects indistinct, and after a time, owing to its effects, I could no longer see the Arab village. An interlude was afforded by the arrival of a naik and three men from the picket on my left, bringing with them a couple of Arabs.

'*Do dushman pukra*' ('Two of the enemy captured'), reported the naik.

'What were they doing?' I inquired.

'They were trying to pass through our line.'

'All right. Leave them in charge of No. 1 picket, and go back to your own party.'

The two prisoners, both elderly Arabs, were evidently very much frightened; but I soon reassured them, and they squatted down resignedly in rear of the picket.

After a time I caught sight of what appeared to be a body of men advancing in my direction over some rocky ground to the eastward, but before I could clearly distinguish them they disappeared into the mirage. Then I heard a challenge from the picket on my left, the tramp of armed men over the rocks, and a few minutes later my reinforcements appeared, headed by the portly figure of the subahdar major, who duly reported 'all present,' and stated, with evident satisfaction, that, in spite of a difficult landing, 'not a cartridge had got wet.'

IV.

I was now in a position to round up the village; so, leaving my pickets where they were, I advanced with the rest of the party. The village consisted of about forty huts, with a small, two-storeyed stone tower. I found the Arabs in a great state of excitement. Most of them were armed with matchlocks, and a few had rifles of a more or less obsolete type; but they made no show of resistance, and lined up for inspection when ordered. The Arab assistant-resident failed to find the sultan among them, and all the men I questioned disclaimed any knowledge of his whereabouts. I therefore selected a couple of the older men, and sent them into the village with orders to bring out all the women and children before I commenced a house-to-house search. The women showed great signs of alarm, many of them weeping, and some had to be forcibly dragged from the huts.

I rather expected to find that the sultan had taken refuge in his tower, but this was drawn blank; and I now ordered my men to search the huts. The sepoys entered into the work *con amore;* and after a short time a havildar (sergeant) appeared, dragging by the scruff of the neck an Arab of about thirty, whom he had found hiding under a heap of forage in one of the huts. He was dressed in the usual Arab kilt, and appeared to be terrified. There was nothing to distinguish him from the other inhabitants of the village, and I was rather surprised when the Arab assistant-resident recognised him as the recalcitrant sultan who had been the cause of all the trouble. He protested strongly against his liberty being interfered with, but I placed him under a guard, and awaited the arrival of the cruiser, now nearly due.

H.M.S. —— arrived at the appointed time, and the captain expressed his disappointment that his services were not required, as he would have welcomed the opportunity to send a landing-party, which would have been a pleasant change for his men after constant board-ship routine. Major A——, the first assistant-resident, landed with the captain, and some of the Arab *akils* (elders) approached him, and asked that the *Sirkal* might deal gently with their chief, and that at any rate his life might be spared. They seemed much relieved when Major A—— assured them on this point, and explained that had the sultan duly recognised his treaty obliga-

* *Sirkal* = Government; the Arabic rendering of the Hindustani word *Sirkar*.

tions, he might have cut all their throats had he pleased, and Government would not have interfered. But treaties must be observed, and if they would escape trouble in the future, they must keep their chief up to the mark in that respect.

A couple of hours later my party re-embarked on the Indian Marine ship *C*——, and I was able to get a bath and a square meal, of both of which I was in urgent need. Our prisoner maintained a surly and defiant attitude, which was not improved by the playful gestures of some of the sepoys, who kept drawing their hands across their throats as a hint of the probable fate that was awaiting him. I soon, however, stopped their jesting, and after a time the sultan began to lose his terror-stricken appearance, and assumed an attitude of resignation. He even went so far as to have a few words' conversation with me when he found that I could speak Arabic.

The return journey to Aden was uneventful, and in due course I handed over my prisoner to the political authorities, and made my way to Government House to report progress. The general expressed his satisfaction that the object of the expedition had been accomplished without the expenditure of a single cartridge, and I returned to my quarters to write my report, and resume the usual monotonous round of regimental routine.

V.

Some three or four months later I was passing a coffee-shop in the bazaar, where a number of natives were seated at small round tables sipping coffee and playing dominoes. An Arab near me rose from his seat and made me a profound salaam. I answered his salute, and was about to pass on, when it suddenly flashed upon my mind that his face was familiar to me, and I recognised my former prisoner. The hang-dog expression on his countenance had entirely disappeared; he looked well nourished, and was dressed like a better-class Arab of the towns. I inquired how fortune had treated him, and he replied, '*Janàb* [Your honour], I have eaten the bread of affliction, and drunk the water of solitude; but now I am a free man, and return to my own country after a few days.'

'May you have long life! You have doubtless learned many things since you arrived here.'

'Sahib, I was an ignorant Bedu* [nomad] when I thought to oppose the will of the *Sirkal*. *La yanfah al hadar min al kadr* [There is no escaping fate]. I have now seen the power of the *Sirkal*, the ships, and the guns in the forts. I came here a prisoner, but I return an ally of the *Ingliz* [English].'

'Take care to prove faithful to your allegiance,' I said. '*Fi amàn Allah*' (literally, 'In the protection of God'—the exact equivalent of our 'Good-bye'). 'Forget not that the arm of the *Sirkal* is long!'

'I am not likely to forget it. Farewell, sahib! May your path be prosperous!'

He evidently bore me no ill-will for the share I had taken in his conversion.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MUCH perturbed by the thought, I was making a pretence of breakfasting, when the sound of voices from the hall reached me, and the Chief Constable—an old friend of the colonel, whom I had known since my boyhood—was announced.

'An inexplicable business,' said he, after greetings and condolence. 'All we have found out is that there are certain footprints which make it clear that the man came out of the wood at its nearest point to the house, and after crossing the lawn to the north of the Laird's Room, went to the toolhouse. His footprints are not distinct on the lawn; but in a flower-plot near his exit from the wood, and on the black mould between the lawn and the toolhouse, they are plain. From the toolhouse he took a short ladder, which he carried to the gunroom window, and by its aid got admittance to the house. Angus's statement shows that when he examined the window after the colonel was carried to bed, it was closed, but the catch was unfastened. The burglar either had an accomplice inside, or he had contrived somehow or other to gain access to the house beforehand, and had tampered with it himself. Once in the gunroom, and the rest was easy. He had only to slip a few yards along the corridor to reach the door of the Laird's Room. Having entered, he rifled the safe and the colonel's pockets and decamped, leaving the ladder lying on the path below the gunroom window, where it still is. Then he appears to have crossed the path to the lawn again and made off, keeping to the grass, for the only other distinct footprints are a considerable distance away, near the entrance to the avenue. They lead through the lodge gate to the middle of the public road. There we lose sight of them on the hard beaten surface. But they are the footprints of the same man, either running or walking cautiously on tiptoe. There is no doubt that the footprints are the same as those discovered after the mysterious visits which were reported to me some time ago by Colonel Forbes. I posted

* The singular form of the word 'Bedouin.'

a couple of my men to prevent the prints from being obliterated.'

We went out by the front-door, where an inspector and a subordinate were waiting. The eastern wing, shaped like an L, is bordered by a path which runs between the wall of the house and a lawn dotted with flower-plots. The Chief led the way, keeping to the lawn, and pointed out that there were no footprints on the path. Round the corner of the path we reached the short horizontal branch of the L close to the gunroom. Near it is an open space of the same character as the pathway, with no grass on its surface of ordinary black mould. It lies between the end of the lawn and some outhouses, and here the footprints told us their owner's movements as though we had been looking at him. They were unmistakably new, and their track formed the sides of a triangle, its apex at the toolhouse door, its base a line between a point near the corner of the lawn and a spot below the gunroom window.

The inspector silently handed me a lens, and I bent over the footprints. The markings were distinct, even without the lens's aid. The first print which I examined was that of a left foot, a broad sole with large nail-marks round the edges; but when I turned my attention to the right foot, sure enough, there was the plain imprint of a triangular patch in the centre. It was clear to demonstration that, as the Chief had said, the footprints were those of 'the prowler'—the man whom the colonel had seen earlier in the year; that he had walked across the open space to the toolhouse, then to the gunroom window, through which he climbed, and, his dark work done, had left by the window and crossed the pathway, to find himself again on the lawn.

'Now come this way,' said the Chief. Between the edge of the wood and the north-east corner of the house he halted, and pointed to a little flower-plot. On its soft surface, the toe pointing towards the house, was the deep mark of the man's right foot with the triangular patch. It was obvious that he had come from the wood, and in the darkness had blundered into the flower-bed.

Still keeping to the grass, we now retraced our steps and walked towards the lodge gate. About a dozen yards from the lodge were more prints, but of the toes only, as if the man had been running quietly or walking on tiptoe. They led from the grass border through the gate to the middle of the road. There, as the Chief had told me, the hard beaten surface had not retained an impression.

'My men found no further trace of them, although they have searched all round. Even the footprints in the village about a mile away have been examined, but with no result. I confess that I am puzzled,' the Chief confided to me as we went back to the house. 'Yet the main facts are simple. The man knew The Bield and the whereabouts of the hidden safe. He must have seen the light in the room, and known that the colonel had not gone to bed. I believe that he wanted to get the key of the safe, and was ready to murder its owner if he resisted, but found his job simplified by the colonel's collapse. He is no ordinary criminal. He has been seen thrice, and each time he disappeared mysteriously. Now he coolly turns up with his plans matured, ready for action. He makes no attempt to loot, and I imagine there is nothing valuable enough in the house to induce a cracksman to take a special interest in it. What motive, then, had he? Do you know?'

'I think I do,' I answered, and gave him an outline of my adventures in Italy and London. 'He is one of "The Searchers," and his motive is to steal a certain paper. "The Searchers" will stick at nothing. They are hand-in-glove with the Camorra, and, like it, they are a very old organisation. They are few in number, but highly versatile, for they include among their operations anything from company swindling and "flash" note manufacture to plain murder.'

'The Camorra! I have heard of the blackguardly society, although I have not had the pleasure of meeting it professionally. But I know that it has a long arm. In one case it hustled a marked man up and down the world for five years, and got him in the end. He was knifed at Montevideo. But about this paper you referred to—has the man got it?'

'That I cannot tell. The colonel may have hidden it. I have not had time to search, but I will do so this afternoon.'

We went to the Laird's Room, which was locked, and had been left (as the doctor had told me) exactly as it was when the colonel was found. The blind was up; a magazine lay on the floor, beside it the stump of a cigar; a tumbler, with about a table-spoonful of whisky-and-soda, and a half-empty siphon stood on the table.

'Nothing further can be done meanwhile, except to continue our investigations. The man's description has been circulated,' said the Chief with a dissatisfied frown on his handsome face. 'All the roads and stations are being carefully watched. We found no trace of any motor-car having been either seen or heard on the night of the burglary. We have taken casts of the footprints, of course; but the scoundrel has disappeared as suddenly as if he had been whisked away in an aeroplane.'

The statements of the household had been taken, but no suspicion of the crime or of complicity in it attached to its members. The colonel's bachelor establishment did not demand a large number of servants. The domestics were a cook-housekeeper and two maids, who slept in The Bield, and a stable-boy who did odd jobs in the house, and came every day from the

village. The outside staff were Angus the lodge-keeper, a gamekeeper, an under-keeper, and two stalkers. Angus occupied the lodge. Duncan Ross, the first keeper, a married man, lived in a cottage about half a mile away; Hector Matheson, the second keeper, a bachelor, in a bothy convenient for his beat near the western march of the estate. The two stalkers, Rob Macbain and Finlay Mackenzie, were also single men; they shared a bothy three miles away, at the edge of the forest beyond the moor. There was usually a chauffeur employed at The Bield, but no suitable successor had been found to the last one, who had died about a month before, and the colonel had been driving the car himself, a man from the village doing the cleaning and the running repairs.

In brief, old Janet's evidence was that she had been awakened by the noise of a door banging in the wind, that she got up to shut it, and then noticed a light shining from the colonel's room. Surprised (as the hour was late), she put on a wrapper and went to the Laird's Room. There she found the colonel lying on his face on the floor, breathing heavily and unable to speak. She ran to the dining-room for some brandy, roused the maids, and sent one of them for Angus. When he arrived, with her help he carried her master to his bedroom.

The two maids concurred. They came downstairs when Janet roused them, and had seen the colonel lying on the floor before he was carried to his room.

Angus's statement tallied with those of the others. The colonel was quite helpless when he carried him to bed, and never spoke to him. The doctor had been summoned at once, and arrived shortly afterwards. His evidence bore out that of the servants.

Dr Robertson of Castleton, who had been sent for by Dr Hall, agreed with his colleague's treatment and opinion.

None of the outside servants—the keepers and the stalkers—had heard about the affair until next morning, nor had any of them been near The Bield on the evening of the burglary.

(*Continued on page 387.*)

OLD SOHO SQUARE.

By A. Francis Steuart.

UNLESS one goes, like Tom Pinch, direct to Islington (where there is Cloudesley Square), we are told that there is only one 'perfect square' in all London, and that is the ancient and dignified square designed by Gregory King (1648–1712), herald, genealogist, engraver, statistician, and called at first 'King's Square,' a name ousted by the more popular title, 'Soho Square,' by which it is known to this day. It is the one open space of any considerable size that has always existed in the crowded foreign quarter of London called Soho (perhaps after an old hunting-cry, 'So Hoe!' used when the neighbourhood was still waste land). From the reign of King Charles II., Soho—before Covent Garden took its place—was the locality where the nobles of the Court who had not flitted to the new St James's district (which still commemorates the Jermyns, Clevelands, Arlingtons, &c., whom one sees in the pages of Gramont) did love to congregate.

The first 'great man' to build there was the king's reputed son, James, Duke of Monmouth, who acquired the whole of the south side of the square, and had a house—Monmouth House—erected on the site, after the designs, it is said, of Sir Christopher Wren; although a letter of 1683 says that 'One Mr Ford, a joynor, ye Ds Survayor . . . is ye sole architect of this house.' Poor Monmouth occupied the house for only a very short time when he was reconciled to the king in 1683; after that, disgrace, 'kingship,' flight, and execution filled up his cup of sorrow.

The house (*teste* J. T. Smith, who saw it demolished at the end of the eighteenth century) was as brave as oak staircases, ironwork gates, Grinling Gibbons carvings, and the Duke of Monmouth's arms could make it. Sold in 1693, it was in later times the residence of the French ambassador, the Comte de Guerchy. Here he found a most defiant subordinate in that curious personage Le Chevalier D'Eon, his secretary, who lived part of his life as a man, part of *her* life as a woman, and played a remarkable rôle in Louis XV.'s secret diplomacy, *le secret du roi*.

But long before the French ambassador's day Monmouth House had passed into other hands. It was bought by Lord Bateman. He it was whom George I. refused to create a Knight of the Bath, saying he 'could not make him a gentleman;' he made him instead an Irish peer in 1725. Lady Bateman was a granddaughter of the great Duchess of Marlborough, Pope's 'Atossa,' and had unluckily fallen under her displeasure. The result was that the duchess caused Lady Bateman's portrait to be hung before her in her room with the face blackened over, and on the frame these words were inscribed: 'She is much blacker within.'

A shoal of nobles occupied Soho in the eighteenth century. They included the Admiral Lord Berkeley, who offered to kidnap the Prince of Wales, to oblige his father, George I.; Lord Byron; the Earl of Carlisle, who, as we shall see, owned two houses there, one on the east

and the other on the west side of the square; Lord Leicester, the savage father-in-law of Lady Mary Coke; Lord Peterborough, that brilliant meteor of his time, who travelled all over Europe at express speed, 'who would neither live nor die like other mortals,' and who had 'seen more kings and postillions than any man in Europe.' In addition to these and many others, no fewer than four ambassadors lived in Soho Square, no doubt helping to make Soho as foreign as it is, and giving it a feeling of 'extra-territoriality.'

Of the second Carlisle House, on the east side of the square, the banqueting-hall, very much altered, made in 1792 the nucleus of the existing Roman Catholic Church of St Patrick. One learns much of this mansion after the family of Howard left it. It fell into the clutches of a very remarkable adventuress, Mrs Cornelys, who designed to amuse all fashionable London, and for some time was successful in so doing.

Theresa Cornelys was a child of the stage, daughter of a Genoese actor named Imer. She was born at Venice in 1723, and soon became celebrated as a beauty and an actress. To be an actress at this period was not far from being an adventuress, and Theresa conjoined the two careers. *Elle brillait* at the Court of Baireuth, then with various vicissitudes in the Netherlands, Paris, Holland, and London, singing sometimes under her husband's name Pompeati, sometimes under that of Trenti. When, after overcoming many pecuniary adversities, she was starting afresh in London, she took the name of a Dutch lover, Cornelys.

Mrs Cornelys seems to have seized the great idea that the *bon ton* of London is easily bored and desires to be amused, and she acted accordingly. She first purchased (1760) the enormous house in Soho Square, and then proceeded to adapt it for entertaining the 'smart set.' Gaining the ear of some gay spirits (at the head of whom was Miss Chudleigh, the maid of honour), who called themselves 'The Society,' she gave subscription assemblies and balls which 'at first scandalised, but soon drew in both righteous and ungodly,' says Horace Walpole. Then she built on additions, 'and made her house a fairy palace for balls, concerts, and masquerades.' These met with much opposition from the 'unco guid,' and madame was threatened with the Alien Act. Still she persevered, and lavished enormous credit on her undertakings. Nothing daunted her—vast expense, the visits of awkward old friends like the Chevalier Casanova de Seingalt, prosecutions for keeping an 'irregular house,' or opposition from theatres and operas, the rivals of her 'musical evenings.' For a long time she kept her head high and above water. Royal patrons attended her routs (not, we may be sure, honest King George III. and Queen Charlotte), and we read that at one of her masquerades in 1770 a lady dressed as a sultana wore thirty thousand pounds' worth of jewels. Although encompassed with a sea of money difficulties, and in the *Gazette* in 1772, we learn from that agreeable young roué, William Hickey, that she was still courageously seeking fresh fields in 1780. He says: 'In the early part of the winter a new species of evening's amusement became quite the rage under the name of "The Promenade." Mrs Cornelys's truly magnificent suite of apartments upon the principal floor were opened every Sunday night at seven o'clock for the reception of company. So much did it take that the first people of the kingdom attended it, as did also the whole beauty of the metropolis from the Duchess of Devonshire down to the little milliner's apprentice from Cranbourn Alley. The crowd from eight to twelve was immense. When in town I never failed attending at it.' The ticket for this entertainment, which included tea, coffee, capillaire, orgeat, and lemonade, cost three shillings. The next year seems to have been Mrs Cornelys's last in any degree of splendour. Then scientific lectures were tried in place of promenades, but (naturally) did not draw so well; concerts were sporadically given; but the property had lapsed into the hands of that 'weary word' Chancery, until it was pulled down in 1788. Mrs Cornelys flitted from hotel to prison. In 1795 she emerged to attempt to sell asses' milk at Knightsbridge in a suite of rooms which she (always remembering her former patrons' tastes) had fitted up for 'breakfasts.' This new scheme did not succeed, and she was forced, by the pertinacity of her creditors, to seek an asylum within the rules of the Fleet prison; and there she died on 19th August 1797, aged seventy-four.

Another house in the square—also devoted to entertainments, but of a different calibre and less well omened—was the 'White House,' which was the happy hunting-ground of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Queensberry ('Old Q'), and Lord Hertford. The bizarre (but beautiful) decorations of the house, some of which resembled the Cabinet d'Enfer of Montmartre, probably gave rise to Thackeray's description of *les petits appartements* of Lord Steyne: 'One, sir, fitted up all in ivory and white satin, another in ebony and black velvet; there is a little banqueting-room taken from Sallust's house at Pompeii, and painted by Cosway; a little private kitchen, in which every saucepan was silver, and all the spits were gold.' Of the bygone banquets one need not speak, and about the 'White House' orgies one had best be silent.

Other great names dignified 'the Square.' The great Puritan Cromwell's daughter, Lady Fauconberg, led there an 'emancipated' career (that is, she went to plays) after the 'Restoration.' Sir Cloudesley Shovel, the ill-fated admiral, lay in state there before his body was buried in

'the Abbey.' John Evelyn, the diarist, took houses there, and the wily Bishop of Salisbury (Burnet) lived near by. The Venetian Minister and the Spanish Minister (Ripperda) may still have wraiths there, if residents leave such things. Sir Joseph Banks, the traveller, gave fresh lustre to the square, and was so well known that when Captain Cook's Tahitian Omai was lost at any time in London, his cry was, 'Sir Joseph Banks. Take me to Sir Joseph Banks.'

All these notabilities are mere shades, but with them a lover of history populates the square. They are no more extant than the statue of Charles II., which formerly decorated its centre, but has long since disappeared. It was by Caius Gabriel Cibber, and the base had emblematical figures of the Thames, the Trent, the Humber, and the Severn, a great quantity of whose waters has flowed under the bridges since it was erected.

Nowadays Soho Square is a bright spot again, full of sunshine, and a centre of business. No longer a residence of courtiers, it has yet, like the rest of Soho, ceased to be *terra incognita*. Gone are the days of W. S. Gilbert's 'Policeman Peter,' the wag who got hopelessly lost in Soho:

> For weeks he trod his self-made beats
> Through Newport, Gerrard, Bear,
> Greek, Rupert, Frith, Dean, Poland Streets,
> And into Golden Square.

No, Soho is now a well-known place. No longer must we go to Dickens and Thackeray to learn about it. But we can still go to them to add to our pleasure in Soho, to find that Ralph Nickleby lived in Golden Square, and Doctor Manette not far from the square we have been describing. Is it not something to remember, too, that Becky Sharp's father had lodgings just out of our square in Greek Street, and lived, during his peripatetic life, so long in one street which runs into Soho Square that he could get from his pupils the sobriquet of 'Sharp of Frith Street'?

CHRISTINE LONAVET.

PART III.

VII.

WHEN Lonavet returned that evening he was in the most affable mood. The knowledge that he had sold his horse and his cows naturally put him in good spirits, and when his daughters had gone upstairs and we sat smoking, he told me that if I wanted to marry Christine, I might. This filled me with such delight, I could hardly speak at first. I thanked him again and again, and when I went to bed I could not sleep. Why one so pretty and so clever should marry me I could not make out. However, that was her affair. Then the idea of her being unwilling to marry me came into my head, and this seemed so horrible that I tossed about more than ever, till the cocks that were hidden in the roof began to crow.

So I got up. Alas! early as I was, Christine had already gone, and before she came back the count's brougham drove up. His man brought a note for me, asking me to go to the château at once. I would rather have stayed, but as the fine old soldier had been so kind to me, I went.

The general soon came to business. 'You are not quite fit for service yet, my boy,' he said; 'but I know you want to serve your country, and I will tell you how you can do it, with your knowledge of German. You are the only man for leagues that I know of in these parts who understands a word of it. My late major-domo, Guillaume Loissier, married my *cuisinière*. Both he and she had saved up money, and I lent him some more. He has now nearly paid me in full. He took the Lion d'Or at Artenay, which is not three leagues from here, on the high-road from Paris to Orléans. From its strategical importance, the Germans have made it a sort of permanent headquarters. Well, I want you to go to the Lion d'Or as a waiter. I will give you a note to Loissier. You will learn a rare lot there, and my grandson will ride over every day on his pony, or my man will come in a cart. They will take back a packet of coffee or anything to keep up appearances. Do you see? Do you follow me?'

'Oh yes, *mon général*,' I replied, with some hesitation, for love pulled me one way, and duty to my country another. 'You mean, I should be a spy.'

'Well, of course, you can call it that if you like. I should say *un vrai patriote*. How could you do your country a higher service? You have brains in your head. I don't want to flatter you, but I know that you have courage also. I will move heaven and earth to get you the *Médaille Militaire* for settling those devils the other day; and, *mon Dieu!* if you will only do this, I will try—only, of course, it depends on what you find out—I will try to get you the Cross of the Legion of Honour.'

Well, though I did not much like the idea, I knew it would be for only a very short time, so I consented; and it was agreed I should go the next day, and that his grandson should take a note in advance to Loissier at once.

It appeared that during my absence a man, having heard Lonavet had sold two cows, had come to him and offered to buy the other two, and

Christine and her father had gone off with him to see them. When I came back, therefore, Julie was alone, and I told her what had taken place at the château, and why, on the next day, I was going to leave them for a short time. Julie had the same fine, clearly-cut features as her sister, but she was much fairer, and had wonderfully translucent hazel eyes, and these now opened wide with astonishment. 'You are going! You are going!' she exclaimed. 'Oh, *mon Dieu! vous verrez, il y aura du tapage.* Oh yes, there will,' she continued impetuously, as I in my turn looked at her in astonishment. 'When Christine hears of this, there will be the very deuce of a row.'

'I don't understand,' I answered.

'Well, there they are—they have come back—I can hear them—you will see,' she said, running off.

I had not to wait long ere Christine came hurrying in with an anxious face.

'What's this, Étienne?' This was the first time she had ever called me by my Christian name, and I could have kissed her for it. 'What's this about your going to Artenay and turning spy? I never heard of such a thing! *C'est abominable!*' she continued, her eyes flashing with anger. 'I will see the count. I will tell him what I think.' She spoke with such vehemence and at such a rate, all the time pacing up and down, that I was quite taken aback.

'Listen,' I said. 'Don't you see, I am serving my country till I am quite well? Moreover, I am going to have the *Médaille Militaire;* and if only I succeed in this business, very likely I shall get the Legion of Honour.'

'Honour!' she exclaimed scornfully; 'for spying? *Sacré bleu,* to talk of honour for that dirty work!'

'Well, but it's risky—very risky,' I answered.

'I know that,' she answered. 'That's the wicked part of it. You will be shot *sur-le-champ.*'

'It does not follow I shall be caught; but if I am, what then, eh?'

'What then?' she exclaimed suddenly, standing still for a moment with her hand to her forehead as she gazed upwards with a heaving breast. 'What then?' she repeated, stamping her *sabot* on the tiles. 'Then what about me? Holy Virgin, are you blind? Am I nothing? Because,' she continued with a blush—'because'——

In a flash I saw it all, though for a moment I was dumbfounded by my good fortune. 'I am not blind, *ma chérie.* I love you—I love you!' I cried, springing up and throwing my arms round her and smothering her with kisses—kisses she returned as warmly, as I drew her to a chair, where she sat on my knees and then buried her head on my breast.

'But listen to me, Christine,' I said softly.

'I will,' she answered, looking up lovingly. 'I am happy now.'

'I must go. I have given my word. What would the count say, and what would he think? I cannot break my word, even for you. But I am getting strong, and I am not going to be there a day longer than need be. You see that, don't you?' But ere she could answer she heard her father's footstep, and sprang up.

'You told me, monsieur,' I said, 'I might marry Christine, and she has consented.'

'I am very pleased,' answered Lonavet, taking my hand. 'But what's this I hear about your leaving us to-morrow?'

I told him, and he was as furious as his daughter had been.

'I will see the count, too,' he said. 'It's no business of his. *C'est abominable—abominable!*'

VIII.

'We have sold those cows,' said Christine that evening as I sat by her with my arm round her supple waist. 'There is little to do here now. I will go to the Lion d'Or, too.'

'You!' said her father, aghast.

'I know Loissier. I know he wants help. I'll go as *fille de chambre* or something. I can stay at Henri's.'

Her brother Henri had a large tannery at Artenay, in which her father had a fair amount of money. Henri, when the war broke out, had joined his regiment; but the Government soon found that they must have leather, and the young fellow, who had married his partner's daughter, was recalled. It would have been necessary otherwise to close the business, as his father-in-law was very ill. This idea of Christine's, therefore, was not so strange; and, in any case, her father knew that if she got an idea in her head, nothing that he or anybody else said would get it out.

Early the next morning I started, after many a fond adieu from Christine, who said it would not be very long before she followed me. The worthy innkeeper welcomed me warmly, but the count had evidently not told him the real reason of my coming. He was a short, bustling, bald-headed little man, and in normal times was quite capable of managing a quiet country inn; but he was of a highly nervous disposition. He made mountains out of molehills. The coming and going of the hated Germans, the *va-et-vient* all day and half the night, almost sent him off his head. His wife, too, what with five young children, and having to cook for those brutes, was sorely worried, as the maids had fled in alarm as soon as ever the Germans came into the district. Fresh officers for the most part coming and leaving every day, my appearance as a waiter caused no comment. In fact, as they guzzled and stuffed, holding their knives half-way down the blade, eating chicken with their fingers, cleaning their teeth with the drumstick, gollop-

ing their soup so that you could hear them across the road, they cared little who waited on them, so long as they got enough. I nearly got into trouble on the first day, though, when one captain, who was fortunately just leaving, overheard me saying to Loissier in a low voice that he ought to provide a trough for them. Turning savagely on the poor man, the captain said he would have me arrested; and so he might, only the bugles were sounding. This was a lesson, and I tried to become an automaton.

If my arrival was unnoticed, it was quite otherwise when Christine appeared. Looks of admiration followed her everywhere. Even the scornful way she set the plates down, sending the soup right and left, could not prevent that; but though I loved to have her near me, the insolent looks of the younger officers made me so angry that I told her I would remain even a shorter time than I had intended. I kept my ears open, especially after the wine had gone round, and, for one thing, I learnt that some ten thousand men had been taken from Von der Tann's command for the occupation of Chartres and Châteaudun. But it was one evening about the end of October when I made my chief *coup*.

The meal had lasted some hours, but the senior officers, who slept in the hotel, were still smoking and calling for beer and wine, when a major in a Jäger regiment came in.

'Hullo, Schwipesbrücke!' exclaimed an old Bavarian colonel. 'Why, I heard you were done for at Sedan.'

'So I was nearly, but I am all right now. We suffered badly.'

'Not worse than we did. I tell you, I have barely half my regiment left. Those drafts from München have never come yet; and I assure you,' continued the colonel almost in a whisper, 'it is a good thing those French do not know how very few our numbers really are.' Thereupon he gave particulars of some of the other regiments.

'Bah!' said the other. 'After all, what does it matter with these half-starved sheep? We can manage them all right.'

Every day the count's grandson or the trusty old coachman came over to the tannery, and I sent accounts in writing of all that I reckoned would be useful. But that phrase about its being lucky that we had no idea how small their numbers really were I considered so important that I feared to trust the message to any one, as it might be intercepted, and I told young Jean to get his grandfather to come himself. This the latter did. Christine kept out of his way, as it appeared she had actually gone up to the château the day after I left, and, to use the old count's words, she had been a regular 'devil in petticoats.' He was so impressed with what I told him that he promised to get me promoted when I left, which I told him would be very soon.

Of course, as in every case where officers meet together in war-time, many rumours got about, and they were all excited by one that the Crown Prince, attended, as usual, by General von Blumenthal, was coming from Versailles to make a tour of inspection and give decorations, &c. *Unser Fritz* was a great favourite. He was strict, but he was as humane as he was brave, and the men loved him. Buttons were brightened, and uniforms furbished up with more exactitude than ever; though, as it turned out, it was all a *canard*, and he never came at all. However, I duly sent word of this to Count de Valancourt, at the same time reiterating that I was going to return to service in a few days. But my departure, or rather flight, took place sooner than I expected.

(*Continued on page 391.*)

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XVIII.—GENERAL POM-POM.

THE worst of being in a cadet school is the number of inspections you have. Inspectors for trench warfare, gas, bayonet-fighting, administration, general training, &c., &c., keep popping in. Each man believes that his branch is *It*, and should you fail to come up to his requirements, then there 's a bad report, a thousand curses, and lots of trouble. All the same, the system is absolutely necessary, and keeps specialists and instructors up to the scratch. The greatest defect is this: these inspectors frequently ask for suggestions, but often fail to back them up. This, I imagine, is due to the apathy of a higher authority, or the obtrusion of the inspector's own point of view. We often talked about this, and our view was that all cadet-school instructors ought to form a corporate body and demand 'the goods.' By the way, it was whispered that one real good W.O. man was named Browne. He, it is said, always endeavoured to get the schools whatever they wanted.

Good old Browne!

We always liked the visits from the younger men of the Staff. They were so bright, so business-like, and they *did* take an interest in all we were doing. Many gave us valuable tips, which were much appreciated. Indeed, were it not for these smarter men, military training would be in a muddle. They are being allowed fair scope, but if the powers that be would only sack all the old foozlers who are tottering round the various districts and home commands, life would certainly be brighter, and training would

be pushed along by the younger men, who at present cannot get full play for all their splendid ideas. We of the New Army belong to the New School. We are willing to learn from a duke or a pauper, but the teacher must have BRAINS. We are not concerned about seniority or foolish traditions.

I also think it is a great pity that we never saw *real* generals. We longed for lectures from Robertson, French, Haig, Allenby, Birdwood, and all the other good fellows who have done so well. We never had one. Of course, many such men are doing bigger things abroad; but some are at home, and others frequently cross the Channel. We would have pawned our shirts to go and hear them, for we do admire them. Certainly we got their ideas in the form of pamphlets. But what's a pamphlet compared to the living man? A mere shadow, and not at all impressive. I am writing this, of course, for a definite purpose. The W.O. will see these lines long before John Brown's diary is published, and something, I know, will be done. They always do things in the army when they see them in PRINT.

After all, what is the use of sending old dug-out generals to talk to cadet schools. Some are nice old gentlemen who have done well in Ashanti or on the Frontier—*in the past*. Others, again, are petty-minded old fools, who simply upset the instructors and give the cadets a thin time. They may be jolly good disciplinarians, and all that sort of thing; but we got our discipline from the best source (a Guards sergeant-major), and when we saw a general, we did expect him to talk sensibly about the war, and not about clean buttons, pipeclay, haircuts, and the proper way to stand to attention.

Brass-polish and pipeclay never win a war.

Still, some of those ancient mandarins gave us fun. For example, old General Pom-Pom, who was in a bath-chair in August 1914, suddenly found himself elevated to an active job. His great stunt was the carrying of a drill-book in his hand. This was his authority, and Heaven help the man who deviated from the official path! Unless an officer was prepared to slay the Boche according to the text-book, he declared we should lose the ruddy war. He was kept on, not that the Higher Command had any great belief in him, but no doubt because they imagined he would frighten the life out of the 'undisciplined' stuff carrying swords and sporting pips—especially one pip, for one pip is the sign of all that is reckless, careless, inefficient, &c., according to General Pom-Pom.

But we got to know him. Every unit had a secret-service agent in his office, and when he decided to make a raid on some poor 'unsuspecting' C.O., a little bird whispered that General Pom-Pom was *en route*.

Out came the whitewash, pipeclay, blanco, brasso, greasy paste, and 'soldier's friend.' Pioneers whitewashed every post—not forgetting the Last Post—and slapped the stuff all round the walls and the doors of the billets.

Pom-Pom was a devil for whitewash.

The band was hauled out by the hair of the head to practise the general salute, while all the men were hustled to get everything shining and—in line. Even the dixies in the cook-houses had to be drawn up according to the plans laid down by army architects. Before General Pom-Pom was half-way to the unit, the men were being moved about the square like perfect machines (he loved that), the band was playing 'The British Grenadiers,' and every officer, including the C.O. and the adjutant, was tropically busy on the square.

Pom-Pom galloped on parade. 'Morning, colonel; morning. What's the scheme to-day?'

'Ceremonial drill, sir. The companies are just being exercised. Then I'm going to work the battalion.'

'Excellent! Excellent! Nothing like ceremonial stuff for these fellows. Makes 'em smart! Makes 'em smart! By Jove! your band plays well. Reminds me of old days. Good to hear 'em! Good to hear 'em! Let's see your battalion show now, colonel.'

'Very good, sir.'

The battalion was mustered, during which the C.O. tactfully asked old General Pom-Pom if he would kindly take post at the saluting base.

'Certainly! Certainly!' and off he trotted to the flag-pole. There he sat on his old bus horse, pouting like a pigeon, and studying his wonderful shadow on the ground. The men, of course, were quite interested. Pom-Pom was very popular, on the whole, with the troops, and they *did* love to swank to the tune of 'The British Grenadiers.'

The band played.

Down came the battalion like a perfect machine. The general straightened himself again.

'Battalion—eyes right!' roared the colonel. The heads came round with a click, and the general saw one thousand cheery, sun-tanned faces.

'Splendid, men! Splendid! You can beat the Guards any day.'

They stalked past as proud as dukes.

Next the C.O. formed them into line. And one thousand well-scrubbed Tommies, with buttons and bayonets glistening, advanced in review order.

'Battalion—halt! General salute—present arms!'

'Ta—tum—tum—talee, tiddle—um—tum—talee,' went the bugles.

'Battalion—slope arms! Order—arms!'

'MAGNIFICENT!' roared Pom-Pom. This shout of praise could be heard miles away. Then he toddled round the billets. His eye caught the

whitewash, saw the neat kits, and the cooks' dixies—*all in line.*

'That's all! That's all, colonel! I'm very pleased! I congratulate you on your excellent unit. Morning! Morning!' And off he galloped on his bus horse.

The colonel smiled and faded away.

. . . . . .

General Pom-Pom came to our school one day. He went through the same performance. Even Ginger borrowed my Vinolia to have a wash. Pom-Pom stumped on to the parade in a way that shook the earth, looked at us very keenly, and muttered, 'Good stuff! Good stuff!'

One of his ideas was that a company officer must know the name of every man in his company. While he was inspecting our company he arrived at me.

'What's this man's name?' he asked Captain Bloggs.

'Eh? Smith, sir.'

'Is that right?' he inquired of me.

'Yes, sir,' I replied with emphasis. I wouldn't have let our company officer down for worlds. After all, it is a good deed to keep an old general happy.

'Where's your pull-through?' he asked Tosher.

'I guess it's broken, general.'

'No d—— guessing for me, my lad. Get it mended and shove it in your butt-trap.'

We enjoyed this immensely, and felt that General Pom-Pom could beat Tosher any day.

'Are you married?' he asked Billy Greens, who was always rather pale and carried a worried look.

'No, sir.'

'What are you in civil life?'

'A curate, sir.'

'Thought so! Thought so!' he said, passing on.

We all grinned.

'Ah! You're a musician, aren't you?' he inquired of a youth with lustrous locks.

'No, sir—a Socialist!'

'And you're fighting?'

'Yes, sir.'

'What for?'

'To destroy militarism.'

'Oh!' . . . The general hurried away.

After the inspection he gave us a few words. Not much intellectual food, but a lot about the bayonet.

'At 'em, when you see 'em come. Give it 'em hot. The short jab in the chin, or the smart thrust in the paunch. They loathe it! They're afraid of it! The bayonet will win the war,' he concluded.

On the whole we enjoyed his visit, and agreed that General Pom-Pom was good fun, kind-hearted, loyal, intensely patriotic—but not the man to win the war.

(*Continued on page 396.*)

THE WAY HOME.

PART II.

VII.

AN hour and a half had passed since they set the shed on fire. The storm had increased in fury; the wind was terrible, and seemed to shake the very earth to its foundations. The two of them staggered fitfully through the welter and whirl, speaking scarcely a word, each deep in the splendid isolation of his own thoughts. They were almost worn out with sheer weariness, sick of the struggle against the tireless storm.

With every passing moment the storm increased in volume. A gust of wind, more terrific than any that had come before, surged violently across the field, whirling the snow under the feet and round the eyes of the two soldiers. Bending almost double, clutching their coats and drawing them tightly round their bodies, they plodded on. Now and again one fell into a hole, but the other was ever ready with a hand to help his luckless comrade out.

'Aisy 'll do it, Bill,' the Irishman cried, coming to the assistance of his friend when the latter fell into the snow. 'Aisy does it, old mate. Whoa!'

He spoke as if to a restless colt, then broke into a lilt, doubtless with the intention of keeping up his own courage and the courage of his companion, and helped him out of his predicament.

Then, when Micky got into similar trouble, Bill was equally quick to succour and cheer. 'Stick to it, ole mate!' he would say. 'Put some ginger into it, and out you come.'

With these words, he would catch Micky's arm and haul him from a hole into which he had fallen.

After these mishaps, both men would take a few experimental steps forward, leaning well out of the perpendicular against the gale to keep themselves from falling. Now and again, when the frenzy of the squall spent itself, the two soldiers would halt, take advantage of the temporary lull in the storm to speak to one another, and button their coats, which were continually flying open.

'Heavy! Be the glory iv God, heavy!' Micky roared on one occasion. 'Never had as tough a nut as this to crack in all my natural. Isn't it a buck of a night, me boyo?'

'Not 'arf!' answered the other man, spitting the snow from his lips. 'We aren't togged up nohow for a night like this. And I've an orful pain in my inside. S'pose it'll be the snow that went down my back thawin'.'

'Poor matey! I'm sorry,' said Micky. 'But we'd better be gettin' along.'

'Where?'

'Anywhere away from here.'

'But we're as well here as somewhere else. What's the difference?' asked Bill, catching his breath as a gust of wind caught him.

'Well, let's get along, anyway,' cried the older man, seizing the youngster's arm and pulling him forward. 'If we step out quick, we'll get warm. G'on—Shanks' mare!'

VIII.

The two struggled forward, stumbling, reeling from side to side, and buffeted by the cruel wind that lashed against and tore around them. Micky trudged on, a little distance in front, holding Bill's hand, his eyes staring tensely into the wilderness of white before him, and seemingly lost to everything else in the world.

All at once, as the Cockney withdrew his hand and brushed his forehead, Micky spoke. 'Ye damned little Sassenach, ye've been a good pal to me, ye have,' he said, without turning round. 'I'd do anything for ye to get ye clear o' this. If once we get to our own lines, it'll be a dixie iv hot tay, and I'll not drink one drop iv it till ye've yer fill, Bill.'

There was no answer to this remark. He looked round, to find that the Cockney had disappeared.

'Bill!' he shouted. 'Where are ye, Bill?'

No answer greeted him, nothing but the sough of the wind, the sharp hiss of the snow driving through the air, and the lonely cry of the bleating goats in the distance. To the man everything seemed strange and unearthly—the whole world, himself, his clothes, and even his clay-caked, dirty hands, which became suddenly white when he held them out for a moment. The dry, whirling snow settled on his nose, moustache, eyelashes, and got blown into his ears, well-nigh deafening him. He peered round eagerly, surveying the circle of world that remained to him now that Bill was gone. The thickly falling flakes blinded him; he could hardly see ten paces in any direction.

'Bill!' he called again, using his hands as a speaking-trumpet. 'Where are ye, Bill?'

Still no response. Micky became frightened, so that he could scarcely believe in the reality of all that was happening.

'It's like things that be after I be out on the booze for a fortnight,' he said. 'Maybe it's dreamin' that I am.'

He clutched eagerly at the thought, only to thrust it roughly away from his mind as a fresh sweep of wind lifted the snow from beneath his feet and lashed it against his face. He was alone in the darkness, waiting fearfully for the coming of death—a death cruel and terrible. As if in protest against the terror that now overwhelmed him, he called out in a loud, shrill, despairing voice, 'Come back, Bill; I want ye.'

There was no answer.

'I'm done for!' he exclaimed. 'This is to be the end.'

IX.

Blindly, as a man in a dream, Micky walked back for a few steps, then paused irresolutely. He felt that he was going in the wrong direction, not back on his tracks, but forward. There was nothing to guide him; nothing was fixed in the world in which he moved. Snow and wind were in the throes of unrest everywhere, and he himself, a poor, helpless, shivering, human atom, as restless as the wind and the snow.

He stood in a drift, his legs deep in it almost to the thighs. He made no effort to drag himself clear until something heaved under him and threw him on his back. Struggling to his feet, he riveted his eyes on the spot where he had just been standing. The snow was moving, rising upwards as if caught by some gigantic and invisible hand! Next, the centre of the moving mass broke in twain, and Bill's head, then his shoulders, and lastly his legs emerged from the trampled drift.

Beating his breast and stomach with his arms, Bill endeavoured to shake the snow from his clothes. Then his eyes rested on Micky, who was staring at him, an expression almost of terror on his face.

'Was it you, ye big hulkin' Irishman, that was standin' on me?' he asked, laughing pitifully.

Micky shuffled his feet, grinned awkwardly, then grew serious. 'Not hurt, Bill, are ye?' he asked. 'My! I thought that I had lost ye. How did it happen?'

'I went down whop through the snow,' said Bill. 'Then some fell atop of me, and almost choked the life from me. But it's warm down there, and I must 'ave dropped off for a kip.'

'That was the wrong thing to do,' said Micky, clapping his hands vigorously, one against the other. 'Why didn't ye shout when ye fell?'

'And the bloomin' snow on top o' me?'

'I might have lost ye, ye know! But give me yer hand, and we'll get on our journey,' he added. 'And, Mother iv God, what's that at all?'

A lurid flash lit the obscurity of the night, then another and another—five in all. And these were accompanied by the long-drawn echoing thunder of guns throwing their shells out into the darkness. The two men sank to the snow, and lay there, quivering with fear.

'Gawd!' said Bill in a whisper. 'Almost walked right inter 'em, we did.'

'Field-guns,' said Micky. 'Short range. We're right for Blighty.'

'Think we're nearly there?' asked Bill, his teeth chattering.

'Not as yet, me bucko,' Micky replied. 'But we're on the right road, anyway. We've been paddin' it for close on three hours, and not goin' straight all the time. But we're near the Jerrys' trinches now. Wish I'd a bomb to throw on their heads.'

He laughed down in his throat, and rose to his feet with a bound. The proximity of the battle-line had heartened the man, and he was ready to run forward now, indifferent to any peril.

'If I'd only a bomb to throw into the middle iv them!' he repeated.

'Gawd! you're a big Irish fool,' said Bill, struggling to his feet. 'You're allus ready to run into danger. As if this damned journey's not as much as any one wants. Gawd! I'm sick of it. I've no feelin' in my feet or hands. I'm played out—done up—finee.'

'Then up on my shoulders, and I'll carry ye the rest iv the way,' said Micky, bending down and seizing the youngster by the waist.

But Bill drew back. 'Naw,' he said. 'I'll manage, old man. I was only jokin'.'

X.

Staggering fitfully, the two men set out again, fighting their way through the whirling snow, moving like automatons, their coat-tails flying to one side, the wind making a whistling sound as it flew past their open mouths. Their caps had long since been blown away, and the wind, snatching at their hair, ruffled it all over their heads. For ten minutes, during which they plodded onwards, not a coherent thought dwelt in their minds; eye and ear took in nothing but the streaks of white falling from the heavens, and the wind whistling through the night.

Suddenly both pitched forward into a drift piled deep in a ditch of some sort, and fell flat in the snow, Bill on top of Micky.

'It's no good, Micky,' the man underneath heard the man on top say in a weak voice, and with these words in his ears the Irishman sank into a merciful slumber.

He dreamt. He was running along a sunlit road, and a large, angry dog, with red tongue and flaming eyes, was following him. Why was that animal chasing him, he wondered, following him, and coming nearer every step he took? And the dog was a mad one, he knew. It would overtake him, tear at his leg, and he would go mad too.

He tripped and fell, his face striking heavily against a stone as he came to earth. In an instant the animal was upon him, chewing at his great toe. Only then did he discover that he was barefooted, having probably lost his boots in the race. But he could not call to mind when and where he had lost them.

He turned round and round in an effort to shake the dog off, but was unable to free himself from the terrible grip. Then some one came to his assistance—a thin-faced man dressed in corduroy trousers and flannel shirt—and endeavoured to pull the dog away. But the animal would not let go its hold; the harder the man pulled the tighter it clung.

'I'm going to pull the brute off,' the man exclaimed, clutching the animal by the hind-legs and stepping on Micky's chest. 'I'm going to pull him off, for the killing of you is my job. You tried to strangle me, but 'twas not an easy task. You didn't succeed, you English pig!'

Micky could now see that the thin-faced man in corduroy trousers had changed in some manner. He was no longer the same; in fact, he was now the German sentry whom Micky had throttled a few hours ago.

'I'll get this dog off you,' he repeated. 'And then I'll kill you.'

He dug his heels into the Irishman's chest, but this was more than the prostrate Micky could bear. He turned round, and opened his eyes, to see the white streaks of snow blowing to the earth, and to feel the wind striking against his face. The air was filled with fire and sparks and streamers of flame. Something black and big was resting on his body, pressing him down. He gazed at it curiously, wondering if he was still asleep or awake, and if that on which he was looking was real, or if it was merely the phantom of a disordered imagination.

'So here's where I am,' Micky exclaimed. 'And the whole world's on fire. But maybe it's star-shells. . . . And the dog?'

He paused for a moment, trying to recollect the gist of his dream.

'Chawin' my big toe, it was, the brute!' he muttered. 'Was there a dog and a Jerry? . . . Ah! it's my poor toe that's frozen. That's what it is. . . . Where am I at all? Where is Bill? We must be somewhere, anyway. . . . We've been paddin' it for three hours or more. —Bill!'

'Micky!' a very feeble voice above him answered. Yes, it was Bill sure enough, lying on top of him.

'We're goin' to freeze,' said Micky, groping for his mate's hand and getting hold of it. 'That'll serve them damned well right!'

'Who?' asked Bill in a low voice, changing his position and slipping into the snow by the side of the Irishman.

'Everybody,' was Micky's answer, given in a surly tone, as if he had just been offended by some one. 'Why should we be out here, the two iv us, like lost cooties, and every one

else snug in their dug-outs, and some maybe in nice warm beds? It's hell to think of it, Bill. Mother iv God, hell!'

'D'ye know where we are?' Bill inquired, his breath coming short, as if the effort to speak pained him.

'Be the colour iv the sky, with the star-shells goin' up, we'll be in a trinch,' said the man, pressing the hand which he held. 'We're off the level now, and the snow's piled deep in a sap or a fire-bay and the two iv us are in it to the neck.'

XI

The wind came in gusts, blowing directly against their faces and heaping the snow over their bodies. Occasionally it seemed to sober down somewhat, but not for long. As if to make up for such lulls, the blizzard would afterwards increase with tenfold vigour, and sweep and swirl round the devoted couple more cruelly than before. And all round star-shells were rising into the blackness and bursting into flame.

Micky drew closer to Bill, and pulling off his muffler, handed it to the Cockney. 'Tie that round yer neck if ye can,' he said. 'It'll keep ye warmer. As for me, I'm almost done. But if the day would come we might pull through yet. I wonder what time's it?'

'Dunno, but I think it'll be well on. Wot about tryin' to cross No Man's Land and gettin' 'ome?' said Bill, raising his hand and wiping away the snow from his face. Then he placed the muffler over his throat, but made no effort to tie it. 'Ye're a good pal, Micky,' he said, apparently forgetting the remark of a few moments before. 'A good ole pal; one that's allus obligin'. And, Gawd! it wasn't 'arf a tough night.'

'Tough it was, Bill,' said Micky, staggering to his feet. 'But the worst iv it's over, and we'll get up on the lip iv this trinch and strike home.'

'That's awright,' said Bill in a sleepy voice—'awright for you; but I'll lie 'ere and 'ave a real kip. I'm too damned comfy to start ploughin' through the muck again. You slide off, and leave me 'ere, Micky.'

'As if I would,' said the Irishman. 'And I've three childer at home in Ireland as well as the wife. I don't like thinkin' iv never seein' them again, but if yerself don't come with me, I'm not lavin' here, Bill.'

'Wot's the best road 'ome?' said the Cockney, rising to his feet and floundering through the snow towards a point where the drift rose to a ridge. This was the parapet.

The two soldiers clambered out and into the waste of white which might be No Man's Land. Arm-in-arm they ploughed forward, their horizon bounded by the falling snow, their feet and hands chilled, their boots tripping against strands of wire which strewed the ground. They came to a barbed entanglement, walked along its fringe until they reached an opening. Here they went through into the open field.

A bullet swept through the whiteness and whizzed past their heads; a second went plunk into the snow in front of them. Another step forward, and it would have hit one of them.

'Thanks be to God!' said Micky. 'It's a sign that we're near home.'

A second belt of spiked entanglement obstructed their way, the strong props standing upright, each wearing a little cap of white, and long, crooked strands of wire stretching taut between the posts. In front, the ridged snow, rising to a height, told of a parapet. Up from it a Very light whizzed into the air, and burst into a million petals of flame.

'Through here with the pair iv us,' said Micky, who was first to see an opening in the wire belt. 'We'll crawl up to the parapet, for who knows but it may be a new draft in, and windy?'

They trudged through, lay down on their bellies, and began worming their way forward in the snow, Micky leading, his whole mind concentrated on the job, Bill following behind, crawling like a slug and almost covered by the snow. Presently Micky became conscious of cessation of movement behind him. He stopped to listen when almost on the brink of the parapet, but could no longer hear the sound of movement or the soft crunch of the snow as Bill worked his way through it. He looked round, to see his friend in the snow, a dark and motionless figure. Probably Bill was asleep, Micky thought, and in a subconscious way it was borne to him that sleep would be fatal. He turned back, and crawled to the side of the youngster.

'Bill!' he whispered. 'Are ye sleepin', Bill?'

There was no answer.

'Bill!' he whispered again, and felt that his voice was a very little thing in the midst of the night, the wind, and the loneliness. He listened intently, but no answer reached his ears.

He wriggled round the boy, and as he did so a sharp pain shot up his left leg, and rested in his groin. Movement, he felt, was a monstrous futility, out of keeping with the wavering life that hovered within his body. He lay back shivering, and in a moment he was conscious of a feeling of repose stealing over him.

XII.

Pictures out of keeping with his present plight came and went before his eyes. Scenes of boyhood and manhood resolved themselves into dream-pictures before him. He was again looking on the little cabin amongst the Donegal

hills in which he was born, son of Hudagh Liam, a hard man, near-going, and full of money. Now he could see his home—the neatly brushed floor, the good turf fire, and the shiny delf in rows on the dresser. His mother was there, a kind woman, generous to the poor, dressed in a frilled cap, a woollen cloud, and a quilted petticoat. She was busy with the besom, sweeping the stray ashes from the hearth into the fire. And again he was there, Micky Hudagh Liam, a barefooted boy sitting by the fireside, his toes near the flames, and his heels in the ashes.

A mass of snow, lifted by the wind, settled on his face, destroying his dream and almost choking him. Struggling to his feet, he coughed and spluttered for a full five minutes, and endeavoured to brush the snow away from his clothes and hair. The snow which had fallen in under his coat-collar was thawing; he could feel the water slipping down his legs into his boots. By rubbing the ice-rime away from his half-frozen lashes, he was able to open his eyes and look round.

The storm was as fierce as ever. A heap of snow beside Micky rose higher than the surrounding sheet of white, and under this heap he knew that Bill was lying.

'Maybe it 's dead he 'll be,' the man muttered, then set to work, scraping deep down into the drift with both hands, pulling out from the snow the body of his comrade.

Presently he touched the boy's face, knowing it only by the resistance it offered to his hand, for all warmth had gone from it. Catching Bill round the shoulders, he tried to lift him upwards, but was unable to accomplish his design. Instead of lifting the youth, he staggered across the prostrate body and sank into the snow, the fall bringing his face on a level with the youngster's. How pale he looked! All the redness had gone from his cheeks and lips; his eyes were closed tightly, as if he were just sleeping; his mouth was open, the lower jaw hanging well down, and the teeth of the upper gum showing.

Micky wondered if the boy was dead, but the thought did not seem to trouble him much. It did not matter. All that had happened during the night, and all that was happening now, seemed, somehow, perfectly natural. Micky felt pleased with himself, with everybody and everything, even with the Germans who had so ill-used him.

Again he became drowsy, as with half-opened eyes he watched points of light appearing in the air and fading away into the darkness. The wind roared louder and louder, and the snow piled higher and higher over the two men.

XIII.

Even when a party of men in khaki came out from the trench and lifted the cold figures out of the snow, Micky and Bill were not aware of their delivery. It was only next day that the Irishman, snug in a hospital ward well to the back of the British lines, recovered consciousness. He sat up in his cot and looked round him; then his eyes rested on the M.O. at the foot of the bed.

'Where 's my mate, sir?' he inquired.

'Lyin' 'ere, ole pal,' said a voice from the next bed. 'You 're a bloomin' swank, not knowin' your pore pal.'

'The two of you have escaped from the Germans, haven't you?' asked the doctor.

'That 's right,' said the Irishman.

'Not 'arf,' said the Cockney.

'Lucky boys,' said the doctor, with a smile.

Bill looked at Micky; Micky looked at Bill.

THE END.

TO ORKNEY.

WHEN o'er the surging foam the vikings came,
They made thy misty isles a resting-place;
And dwelling there for years, they left their name
Deep graven on a hardy, virile race.
By creek and cove their towers and castles rose:
They launched their galleys on the restless deep,
To rush with eager valour on their foes,
A mighty harvest from the seas to reap.
They passed away; but legends still are told
Of Sweyn, of Kolbein, and of Hakon brave,
And other heroes, fearless, fierce, and bold.
The friendly sea they loved became their grave.
Those beetling crags have witnessed many a fight.
O Northern Isles, seen through the misty light.

Thy land-locked bays, O Orkney, once again
Have seen a great Armada, armed for war,
No feeble galleys creeping o'er the main,
But taller, fiercer, mightier, lordlier far.
A 'silent navy' hid 'in northern mists'
Has guarded well 'the freedom of the seas;'
Than that great fleet no stronger power exists,
Whose flag still waves victorious in the breeze.
Around thy cliff-lined shores new heroes lie,
Slain, not in battle, but by deadly mine,
Whose deeds with those of old in glory vie.
Thy rock-bound shore is now a nation's shrine,
O Northern Islands, swept by wind and wave,
Whose voices chant a requiem for the brave.

And now within thy misty 'hopes' and 'flows'
A vanquished foe in sorrow hides his head;
These untried warriors, all unused to blows,
As guilty prisoners to thy gates are led.
Thy boom-defended headlands close them in,
And friendless they are left beside their foe,
Shamed that they tried no victory to win,
And thus dishonoured in their overthrow.
Hold well thy trust; Britain relies on thee,
Grim, guardian outpost of the northern sea.

While in thy fane, 'the glory of the north,'*
Thou treasurest memories of heroes old,
Shall no memorial of their noble worth
Be raised for those whose tale is yet untold,
Stern sea-kings still, with courage all aflame,
Dauntless in danger, bold as vikings' breed,
Determined, whether death or glory came,
To save their country in her hour of need?

G. W.

*St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall.

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A SCIENTIFIC METHOD OF TEACHING.

By J. STRACHAN, M.D.

PART I.

I.

IN this transitional period of the world's history, and of the conditions of life and industry in this country, there is in the minds of many a very significant questioning as to whether our school methods, upon which so much depends, could not be turned to more practical account. Some are strongly advocating the teaching of science to enable us to compete on more equal terms with Germany in chemical and other science products; others want more attention given to modern languages in order that we may extend our trade with foreign countries; while some still pin their faith to the ancient classics as the foundation of all learning and culture. There is, no doubt, much to be said for these and other claims which are being put forward; but, underlying the whole, there is the fundamental question of the method and principles of teaching upon which the practical bearing of all so greatly depends. What is awanting in our present school system is, I hold, not the teaching of science or any other special subject, but *scientific teaching*—in other words, a method of teaching founded upon, and conducted in strict accordance with, natural law.

It will, I believe, be generally admitted that the results at present being obtained from school-work are, as a rule, and as compared with the time and labour bestowed upon them, far from satisfactory. Teachers as a class are, as I have occasion to know, thoroughly conscientious and painstaking in their work, but are themselves dissatisfied with, and are apt to be disheartened by, the poor results they are able to obtain; while the coercive methods they find it necessary to apply must be very distasteful to themselves as well as to the pupils. All this, however, is put down to the demerit of the defaulting pupils, who are said to be lazy or stupid—faults, be it noted, not as a rule observable in their after-careers.

I know that much improvement has within recent years been effected in school teaching—all, I think, in the direction I advocate—but, from long observation in an important educational centre, I am convinced that the lines upon which it is run are, in the main, much in need of being relaid upon strictly scientific principles, by which I mean in accordance with natural law as manifested by the action and conduct of the young.

It seems to be too frequently assumed that learning by the young is something beyond, and contrary to, natural inclination, thus requiring to be superimposed by coercive means. This is as far from being the truth as it would be if the same were said of the taking of food. The young are as ready to learn as they are to eat, but under the same conditions of suitable pabulum and properly regulated dietary.

Take the case of children before school age. Do they learn nothing unless under compulsion? The question would seem absurd except in its bearing upon the future of the child, the fact being that this is, perhaps, the most fruitful educational period of man's existence. At the age of five the child has acquired a fair working knowledge of at least one language (sometimes of more than one), has learned the names and properties of hundreds of objects, and has advanced a certain distance in general knowledge and intelligence. It does not require an extensive acquaintance with young people to convince us that this voluntary or automatic learning according to opportunity goes on with ever-increasing width of scope during the whole preparative stage of life.

II.

We may be told that the above is all very well with regard to the general learning of everyday life, or when there is a special bent for some particular line of knowledge, but that it is not found to apply in the case of school subjects. I am afraid that this is only too true, and that, as a consequence, these subjects are very indifferently learned. But might we not find a complete parallel in the case of food? Suppose that certain foodstuffs, being considered specially nutritious or otherwise beneficial, were forced upon the young without regard to taste or appetite, should we not experience the same difficulty and want of success in feeding? Taste and appetite or their mental equivalents are no

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less important in teaching, or feeding the mind, than they are in feeding the body, and it is only by trusting to, and following, their guidance that school education can be either safe or successful.

The sensorium—a ganglionic structure at the base of the brain in direct connection with the eyes and the ears—may be regarded as the vestibule of the mind, through which all communication with the outer world is obtained. The action is very similar to that of the plate or film of the photographic camera, merely receiving impressions from the organs of sense, which may represent the lens. Such sense impressions, as with the photographic plate, are identical as pictures with the object or sound producing them. They may be very evanescent, fading away almost immediately, or they may be 'fixed' by the application of attention, as *memory*. The sensorium is possessed by the lowest of vertebrate animals, as the fish, in which memory acts as a retrospective guiding influence, leading to where food has previously been found, and causing the animal to avoid what has been hurtful. In man it may be regarded as an index to the mind in recalling associated mental concepts, but is as entirely apart from the mind as is the index of a book from the pages to which it refers. The intellectual powers lie, so to speak, behind the sensorium, and, by the faculty of observation, keep a watch upon what is passing there, eagerly, especially in the young, taking up and assimilating whatever may be found to *interest* the mind. Such interesting matter, when received, is worked up by the various faculties into conceptions, ideas, thoughts, knowledge, &c., in intimate relation to, and association with, those already existing. This mental feeding, along with the physical growth and development of the brain, goes on day by day, and almost every waking hour, gradually and steadily, according to opportunity and educational provision, piling up the structure, from the single idea (as the ticking of a watch and the falling of an object) in the infant, to the myriad swarm of the adult mind, each a vital and active organism, and all working together like bees in a hive, in the mysterious cosmos of the human intellect.

In considering the question of teaching or imparting such special knowledge as is deemed necessary, it must thus be kept in view that we have to deal with 'a going concern,' and that the duty of the teacher is simply to apply to special purpose a process in full activity and doing excellent work. In mental as in gastric feeding our office is not the imposition of a disagreeable task, but the ministering to a very natural and, in its operation, very enjoyable craving. The matter sought to be imparted must be of such a nature and be presented in such a form as will engage the interest, which is the mental equivalent of taste; and the amount or duration of the lesson must be regulated by voluntary attention, which is the gauge of capacity for the time being. The young mind has very little will-power. The teacher, therefore, cannot exercise despotic authority in the matter to any good purpose. Sight and hearing may be directed at will, and attention may be enforced by command, sense impressions being thus imprinted as memory upon the sensorium; but *mind* owes allegiance only to the promptings of Nature. Interest can be aroused only by presenting the matter in attractive form, and attention retained only in accordance with the vital condition of the brain-cells concerned, of which there is no other indication.

III.

Information is conveyed to the mind, first, directly by observation of sense impressions reflected on the sensorium, and, second, indirectly by language in transmitting thoughts from mind to mind.

(1) *Observation* is entirely automatic, and is first manifested in the infant by what is known as 'noticing,' a very important and anxiously-looked-for indication of normal brain action. From this initiative the mind develops, at first gradually, but, as weeks and months pass, more and more rapidly, the child thus learning to identify persons and objects, acquiring language and becoming familiar with its environment, long before there is any thought of actual teaching. In later years observation becomes very much a matter of habit, and may, by judicious encouragement and direction in youth, become a very valuable feeder of the mind, especially in the field of nature study. It should be an essential part of the training of every child.

(2) *Language.*—There are two forms of language by which knowledge may be conveyed—namely, (*a*) the spoken or oral, and (*b*) the printed or visual. The words used may be the same, and the information or sequence of ideas may be equally well expressed in either. The question for the teacher is which form of language has the more ready access to the young mind. In the case of adults years of constant use have practically made the two interchangeable, although some of us still much prefer listening to a lecture or a sermon to reading one. With the pupil reading is a more or less recent and imperfect acquisition; the worker has not yet mastered his tool. A series of printed words may, by an effort of attention, be imprinted as memory on the sensorium, where they may, for a time, be read off by the 'mind's eye,' and repeated vocally without any reference to the thoughts they may contain, which have never reached the mind. Such mere verbal memory records are of absolutely no intellectual value, and should have no place in education. With true *oral* teaching, on the other hand, there need be and should be no memory of words, the language used passing directly *through* the sensorium to the corresponding ideas in the

mind of the pupil—that is, of course, if the words employed are such as will form this connection in the brain organism; otherwise they are like 'dumb notes' on the piano or the organ. The test of true teaching is the spontaneous reflection of the matter taught in the talk or play of the pupil.

I have heard it argued that it is impossible for a teacher to give the individual attention required to teach a class of, say, thirty boys. Why 'individual'? If we provide a good savoury meal for thirty boys, it is not necessary to go round to each and stuff his allowance in with a spoon. By sight and sound the same item of instruction goes to each and all simultaneously, with no individual effort except that of attention. 'Ay! but there's the rub,' say the teachers. 'How are you to get the attention of thirty boys to a school lesson?' Well, I have frequently seen a popular lecturer rivet the attention of over a hundred boys for an hour and more. 'So have we,' they will say; 'but the lecturer has his lantern-slides, pictures, and diagrams, and does everything to make his lecture attractive.' Why, I would ask, should not the school have lantern-slides, pictures, &c., and do everything to make the lesson attractive? 'Because we have other means of securing attention,' they may say. 'We have pains and penalties to apply for inattention, and with these we can compel attention as required.' It is here they make a very great mistake. The eyes and the ears, as has been said, can be directed at will or in obedience to authority, and sense impressions may thus be forced only upon the memory. Such mere verbal memory is possessed, as is well known, by the parrot and some other birds, and, in some cases, to a very large extent by the idiot. It should have a secondary place in education, which has to do chiefly with *mind*. With true oral teaching, on the other hand, there need be no memory of words, which are only the vehicle for conveying the living thought of the teacher, through the sensorium, to the *mind* of the pupil, who should be encouraged or required, after a sufficient interval to allow of thorough assimilation, to put the matter *in his own words* for conveyance back again to the teacher. The pupil should also be encouraged, if far enough advanced, to read from a book an amplification of what he has been taught orally, which he will do with pleasure and benefit, as exercise for the new ideas. With true teaching he will almost certainly be found talking to parents and companions about what has been learned.

Then as to time. Excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, there are about two hundred school days in the year; thus a single daily item of knowledge, thoroughly *taught*, and so organised in the mind, will amount to two hundred such items in a year. If an associated group of, say, five such items were included in the lesson, as probably could be easily done, the year's result would rather astonish the present-day school inspector. A quarter of an hour's lesson should be sufficient for this purpose, and, with some revisal of that of the previous day, amounting in all to about half-an-hour, might be as long as the attention could be held continuously with advantage. To push it beyond this limit would tend to promote a habit of inattention.

I would here suggest that in teaching a foreign language the *noun* should be taken as the basis, the object, as far as possible, being presented to the eye, named, and handled—the lesson, of course, being conducted orally and conversationally. This would give, as a result of a year's teaching, a vocabulary of about a thousand names of selected objects, along with the verbs and other parts of speech which would come in time after time, and day by day. No English, but only the language being taught, should be used during the lesson; and no grammar, as such, but correct grammatical speaking, which even a young child can readily pick up by ear, should be aimed at. The arts of reading and writing can be easily acquired *after* the language has fully entered the mind. The philological teaching of grammar may or may not be found desirable afterwards, but is not necessary for correct speaking. We are not required to construct a language, but only to impart one ready made.

(*Continued on page 407.*)

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXIV.—*continued.*

'I MAKE no claim to being a detective,' the Chief told me frankly as he rose to go. 'Ours is a law-abiding county, which affords few opportunities for Gaboriau mysteries. But although serious crime is rare, undiscovered criminals are rarer, and I admit that I am mortified by my non-success so far. However, I am hopeful. I have a cordon of the county police and plain-clothes men carefully posted, and if "The Searcher" gets through, I'll want to know the reason why.'

The two constables were left to watch the grounds, and the Chief departed.

He could hardly have been gone for more than ten minutes when another car buzzed up the avenue, and my spirits rose considerably, for the car's occupant was Tony, sunburned and looking uncommonly well. He had got my telc-

gram very late on his return to the Ross-shire hotel on the previous evening. In the morning he started early, and having heard at Castleton of the colonel's death, came on with all speed.

Without delay I gave him the police reports and the witnesses' statements; and after he had mastered the facts, I showed him the footprints and the gunroom window.

'Seems plain, Neil,' said he when we returned to the house. 'But before we go further I have something to show you.'

'The important news you mentioned in your last letter?'

'Yes. You'll open your eyes when I tell you. The family tradition about lost jewels sent by the Pope long ago—the *fons et origo* of the whole business—has been much in my mind. I worried away at it, and got Clement Hughes, who is attached to the Embassy at Rome, to become interested. He is keen on record-hunting, and is a great friend of Monsignor Rafia, one of the first men in Europe at that sort of thing. I gave Hughes the probable date of the gift, and among the "Narratives of Scottish Catholics" in the Valini MSS. at Rome, they unearthed an original letter written in English by a Father Sempill, one of the early Jesuits, to the then General of the Order.'

'What extraordinary luck!'

'Luck! I don't call it luck. A search through the archives at Rome ought to have been the first step thought of. Why it wasn't done long ago beats me! Your respected ancestors must either have been the slackest of the slack or were ignorant of the importance of the business. Lord knows! Perhaps they thought it a wild-goose chase, and as the years passed the story became a hazy legend. However, this letter clears up a good deal, but not, alas! one point. The other half of the paper is still missing. But here you are!' He triumphantly produced his letter-case and handed me the document.

I read the letter with extraordinary interest. Addressed '*To the Right Reverend Father in Christ*,' dated 1563, quaintly written, spelt, and worded, it ran as follows (Father Sempill's spelling, and here and there his diction, being modernised for the reader's comfort):

'† *Pax Christi* †

'I write racked in Mind and Body, yet resigned to the decree of Divine Providence and sustained by the knowledge of the Prayers of Your Paternity and the Brethren. We hoped ere this to have safely accomplished Our Mission, but it hath not come to pass. I am in great Sorrow, for Father Hamilton, who was of frail body, is Dead, and the Manner of it is this. Father Hamilton along with Father Fraser and myself did arrive in Edinburgh with *The Casket* in safety, and were received in Gracious Audience by Her Majesty. But there are many Currents to contend with when a Queen is young and beautiful; full certain were we that we were watched and spied upon, for—a strange thing—the New Religion hath grown, and although I know that the Deliverance of Israel will come, it is not yet, and many of the People bow the knee to Baal. Fearful of the Safety of *The Casket*, in our humble duty to your Paternity and Holy Church, we left Secretly and by Night for the North. Never travelling by day, we made slow progress, but at length came near C——. And here was Black News. The Castle of C—— was a smoking ruin and its Master a Prisoner in the Keep of Blackness on the Forth. *The Casket*, therefore, could not be delivered. Further, the Wolves of Heresy, who never cease their Questing, were near, but by Good Fortune we were hidden by a Son of the Church, until we did one night make our way through the Forest and entered the Great Dark Pass, our Purpose being to reach the East Country where we could find Kinsmen and Friends. The Written Word cannot picture the Savage Wilderness we entered. On the evening of the second day a Great Storm arose. Father Hamilton could go no further, and for Two days and Two nights we did hide with him in the Midst of blinding Snow. On the third day he died and Father Fraser and I did bury him with our own hands in a Secret Place among the Mountains. *Exultabunt Domino Ossa Humiliata.* The Castle of C—— being burned and Its Master a prisoner and in peril of his life, the safety of *The Casket*, blessed by His Holiness, weighed upon us. We therefore determined to hide it in The Grave until such time as we could return in Secret for it. This done, with many Prayers for its Safety, we left our Dear Brother in that Lonely Place and set out East and Besouth through the Pass. After enduring Monstrous Hardships, travelling only by night, we at length arrived at the House of a kinsman of Father Fraser in the Valley of Dee. There we devised a Writing showing where Father Hamilton's Grave lies. Lest it should fall into the hands of any Externs, we did divide it into two parts, Father Fraser secreting one half and I the other. Now Father Fraser's kinsman was suspect, and his house had already been searched once. He dared not harbour us long, wherefore we determined to return South. To avert Suspicion we set out by different Roads disguised as Countrymen, our Design being to meet in Edinburgh. There I arrived in safety, but in an extremity of exhaustion, and to my sorrow to this day I have neither seen nor heard of Father Fraser. I have made strict and secret Enquiry, and cannot think that he hath been taken. I pray that he hath sailed again to Rome, and here I await news of him and the commands of Your Paternity. By the Guiding of Providence I did contrive to get secret audience of the Lady of C——, who is at *a place* near Edinburgh. To her I told my story, and gave her a double of the half of the

Paper in my keeping, so I make no doubt that, these Evil Days over, *The Casket* will be found and come to its rightful Owner. Certain am I of its present Safety.

'Like Father Hamilton, I am of weak body, and I fear me that in this World my Work is near to its End. Yet have I Solace in the certainty of the Prayers of your Paternity and the Brotherhood and in the knowledge that He Who Ordaineth all things hath sweetly Ordained this my Tribulation.'

'This straightens matters out considerably,' said Tony when I had read it through. 'I often wondered how half of the paper got to The Bield, but the Lady of C—— is, of course, the Lady of Ciuin. She got it, and more we don't know, except that she or her husband—if he ever got out of Blackness alive—did not find the grave. Note the phrase, "*Exultabunt Domino Ossa Humiliata.*" It is clear that Father Hamilton's grave is somewhere in the Cairngorms, and that the secret paper holds the key of its whereabouts. If "The Searchers" have got our half, they may find the grave first; but if we manage to get their half, then we'll cut them out. Let me have another look at our half.'

The oft-read little paper was produced. Tony took it to the light.

'Here we have the Larig mentioned by name, and the words "Sron na Leirg." What is Sron na Leirg, Neil?'

'A great wind-searched waste of granite nearly four thousand feet high. To explore it would mean labour for weeks, but I don't think that the reference to it is intended for anything more than a guide. The words "Until you do come" point to its being a sign-post, a direction, and nothing more.'

'I agree. The hiding-place must be more accurately indicated than by a mere reference to a mountain. But we must make sure that "The Searcher" did not find a copy in the colonel's pocket or in his safe. The Pass near Sron na Leirg must be watched without an hour's delay. We can't do this, for I want you to help me with my *data* here. Who are the outside men—keepers and stalkers and so forth—on the estate? Are they trustworthy, and how long have they been here?'

I gave him the names of the outdoor servants, adding that I was convinced of their trustworthiness and loyalty. They were all old servants, and devoted to the colonel.

'I dislike taking any one on trust in my job, Neil. Anything is possible. However, I'll risk it! Whom do you suggest to keep an eye on the Pass?'

'The two stalkers. They know the ground.'

'How soon can you have them here?'

'By a bit of luck one of them, Finlay Mackenzie, is in the village now. The good fellow, when he heard of the trouble we were in, turned up this morning and offered me any assistance he could give. I'll send Angus for him.'

Finlay soon arrived—a short, slight man, but with plenty of breathing-space in his hillman's chest; tough as whipcord, and with an eye as alert as a bird's. I have known him, after a long day on the hill, trot lightly and easily home—a good three miles—without turning a hair. He knew every foot of the Cairngorms from boyhood.

'Finlay, we want you and Macbain to watch a bit of the Pass for us. We are not after poachers this time, but you had better take your rifles with you. There may be danger.'

Finlay's face visibly brightened at the mention of danger.

'You can pick up Macbain on the way, and the two of you will take posts near Sron na Leirg. The man we are looking for has something to do with the colonel's death.'

His mouth hardened. 'He'll get short shrift from either Rob Macbain or myself if he mak's ony trouble,' said Finlay with grim simplicity.

'No doubt; but we don't want him to suspect that he is being watched. Avoid any appearance of it, but observe the movements of any stranger who appears anywhere high up the Pass. He may be looking for something, and may be equipped with tools for digging. If he shows any signs of using them, stop him, and send Macbain with a message here at once.'

'And what will I be doing with him, sir?'

'Treat him as you would an ordinary trespasser, civilly but firmly, and don't let him out of your sight. Tell him that you are one of the watchers in the forest, and that wandering off the beaten track is not allowed. He must not suspect that we at The Bield know anything about his movements. The main thing is not to let him out of your sight. Macbain and you can relieve one another, and one of you will report to me in the morning.'

Finlay went over his instructions, and having thoroughly mastered them, set out to look for his fellow-watcher.

(*Continued on page 405.*)

CANNEL COAL

WE are all interested in coal in these days of shortage, and consequently have come to realise its paramount importance, not only as a fuel, but also as a source of many valuable substances derived from it by distillation out of contact with air. A few of these obtained from coal-tar are benzene, toluene (used in explosive-making), carbolic acid, creosote, and anthracene

(the starting-point for many of the aniline dyes). Is it to be wondered that the chemist feels sad to see so many precious raw materials being burned up in coal-fires? He tells us to use coke, and conserve such substances for the industries of the country.

Most of us are familiar with three varieties of coal—the ordinary bituminous coal of the household; anthracite, the smokeless variety for which South Wales is famed; and lignite, the brown coal which generally preserves the structure of the wood from which it is derived. A fourth kind, however, is known, and is of considerable interest, both on account of its properties and of its mode of formation. This is cannel coal. In appearance it is a dull black substance. Not possessing the characteristic layers of bituminous coal, it does not split on breaking, but has a conchoidal fracture. It does not soil the fingers on being touched. There is no difficulty in lighting it, and it burns with a bright-yellow, candle-like flame. (Hence the name cannel or can'le coal.) This brightness is due to the large amount of volatile substances it contains. These, however, are of quite a different nature from those obtained from other kinds of coal.

This luminosity of flame, when coal-gas was first used for lighting purposes, gave cannel coal a high commercial value. In the days of the fish-tail burner it was much sought after by manufacturers of coal-gas, because its use among other coal imparts considerable additional luminosity to the whole of the gas produced. In those times it sold for as much as five pounds per ton. After the introduction of the incandescent mantle it became practically worthless—so worthless, indeed, that in many cases it was not even brought to bank. The reason for this is that to produce a good light with a mantle a hot non-luminous flame is necessary, the light being due to the glowing of the mantle brought about by the intense heat of the flame.

However, since the oil-engine and the use of oil as a fuel have given a commercial importance to any strata from which petroleum oils can be extracted at a profit, cannel coal, being rich in such oils, has acquired a new importance. One ton of cannel coal is found to yield anything from ten to one hundred gallons of crude oil, part of which is water. This oil is obtained by dry distilling the coal in closed retorts. The crude oil so obtained is separated into the various oils which it contains by a process of fractional distillation. The more volatile oils boil off first; as the temperature gradually increases heavier oils pass over into the receivers successively fitted to contain them. In this way are obtained petrol, benzine (used in dry-cleaning processes), kerosene or burning oil, lubricating oil, vaseline, and paraffin-wax. Besides these, inflammable gas and ammonia pass off. The former is used for fuel and illumination; while the latter is converted by sulphuric acid into ammonium sulphate, a valuable fertiliser. The famous oil-shale of Torbanehill, torbanite or bog-head cannel, is often regarded as a variety of cannel coal, and it is well known that about half of the forty thousand tons of paraffin-wax produced annually is derived from Scottish shale.

Cannel coal is always found as a lenticular or basin-shaped mass, and the edges often pass into bituminous coal. On account of this, its nature, and the fact that it contains beautifully preserved fish and shell remains, it is concluded that it was formed under water. Imagine for a moment that you are living in the carboniferous epoch. Think of a tropical climate and a huge swamp, almost surrounding an extensive lagoon. The swamp supports an abundant flora of ferns and tall trees, whose roots find food in plenty in the rich black mud. On the still surface of the lagoon float masses of green weed, consisting of a low form of plant life known as algæ, whose remains, as they die, sink to the bottom of the lagoon, and there, with fragments of ferns and leaves, form a thick vegetable slime, the home of millions of bacteria, which set up a carbonising fermentation. This goes on as long as the conditions remain favourable, until the lagoon is almost filled with the accumulation of countless centuries. Meanwhile on the shores of the lagoon the lepidodendron and sigillaria live in luxury among the ferns, and, on dying, fall into the swamp whence they sprang.

By slow degrees the sea-floor sinks, submerging the swamp and the lagoon, so that the rivers now spread over them their sand and their mud, layer upon layer. As time goes on the pressure of the sediments above, combined with the action of the bacteria, converts the vegetable slime into cannel coal, and the remains of the vegetation of the swamp into bituminous coal. Later upheaval and folding again raise the sea-floor, and the one-time lagoon and swamp are now deep-seated in the land. Thus we have preserved for us the basin-shaped mass of cannel passing into bituminous coal.

It is instructive to note how an invention brought cannel coal into the first rank of commercial importance, how an improvement of that invention made it worthless, and how another invention again raised it to a position of first-rate importance.

CHRISTINE LONAVET.

PART IV.

IX.

IT happened that there was a distinguished general of brigade, Von Löwenthal by name, lying ill with pleurisy upstairs. He had made his nephew his aide-de-camp, and the conceited young puppy—a regular *Schlachtenbummler*, as the Germans say—now arrived. He was a captain in the Garde du Corps. It was the first time he had seen Christine, and he was struck at once with her beauty. A villainous look came into his protruding eyes.

'*Himmel!*' he exclaimed to his neighbour as she was leaving the room, 'that's a deuced pretty girl. I did not know you had birds like that in these parts. I'll bet you twenty marks,' he added with a wink, 'I make her acquaintance. I understand how to deal with those pretty'——

I was an idiot—an insensate idiot. I saw the mistake a second afterwards, but I allowed myself to be carried away by an uncontrollable fit of anger. 'Do you, you scoundrel?' I cried, but luckily in French. 'She is my fiancée, and we shall see about that when the Crown Prince arrives.'

For a moment the fellow and his brother-officers were speechless, and then all was confusion. Some produced their revolvers; others sprang up and seized me.

'You understand German, you *schweinhund!*' they cried.

'Only a few words,' I said. 'I went more by his looks.'

'Where do you come from, you spy?'

'Martinique.'

'And why did you learn German?'

'I picked up a few words for business.'

'This is a serious matter, my friend,' said the colonel, 'as you will find out. Call the guard, and tell the landlord to come.'

As it was the headquarters, a sentry was always posted before the hotel, and the first room on the left as you entered was set aside for the guard. Behind the guardroom was a smaller room looking on to the yard. This had iron bars to the window, as Loissier had a small safe there, which was hidden in a cupboard.

'Ah, this will do nicely for you till the firing-party comes to-morrow morning,' said the aide-de-camp with a sneer as I was pushed into this room and left to my own thoughts, which chiefly centred on my darling Christine. Ah, how I blamed myself for losing my temper! I sat down on a sofa and buried my head in my hands. Of course, Loissier was sent for. He, poor wretch! had not much courage at any time, and he lost his head and thought only of saving his own skin. At once he summoned Christine. He swore—and perfectly truly—that he had not known I understood any German, and declared his conviction that, at all events, I did not know enough to do any harm. Even the Germans had to admit his sincerity.

Then Christine came. Her imploring voice and her beauty were not without effect. 'If he does know a few words,' she said, 'you can't shoot a man for knowing a little of your language. Where would you be, messieurs, for you speak ours?'

This woman's logic brought a smile to their faces, especially that of the senior colonel, who *au fond* was a kind-hearted, home-loving man, who had always taken the Crown Prince as his model.

'But I may see him,' she cried. 'Oh, let me see him alone!'

'Yes, you shall see him for ten minutes,' he answered; 'but I am truly sorry for you.'

X.

So it came to pass that suddenly, as I sat in the darkened room, the key was turned. 'Ten minutes, mademoiselle,' said a voice; and holding a candle, Christine entered. She was deadly white; her fine eyes had a strange look in them.

'You shall not die,' she said, sinking into my arms, and rocking herself against me. 'If they kill you, they kill me.'

I thought she would swoon away, but she quickly recovered. I fancied even in the dim light she looked plumper than usual. Standing up, she took off a black woollen shawl and produced from somewhere a heavy, long cloak. Without a word, she put these articles under the sofa. I don't know how the time passed—it seemed but a minute she was with me. I gave her one long, long kiss, the man led her out, and the door was locked.

I remained half-dazed, and heard mechanically the clarion sound of the Last Post and 'Lights out;' and then all was quiet but for the tramp of a sentry in the spacious stable-yard, for the inn had been a famous posting-house in the old times. Away to the right of it were a number of ammunition-wagons which had arrived that day, and for safety had been placed in the yard. On the left side of the yard were a narrow lane, with a slight wooden fence, leading into the *grande rue*, and a little vacant ground between the stables; and immediately opposite the room I was in was an old, tarred, lean-to shed. This had one or two very old carriages in it, one actually without any wheels.

It was a very dark and rainy night. Suddenly in the shed I saw a bright light. I gazed bewildered at it, not realising at first what it

was. But soon lurid flames shot up. Quietly I opened the window, and the smell of smoke came in. I closed it again. At that moment the sentry gave the alarm. How can I describe what followed—the blare of the trumpets sounding '*Zum Feuer*,' the excitement of the men aroused from their sleep? In a moment the whole place became a pandemonium as an officer shouted, '*Wasser, Wasser—laufe schnell!*' and the men rushed madly about, knowing as they did the danger they were in from the ammunition-wagons. I saw the sparks blowing about and the lanterns glimmering as the men darted hither and thither, amid the shouts of the officers and the swearing of the troopers.

There was another door in my room by the sofa. I heard officers rushing down the stairway. 'Get the general down; we shall all be sent to heaven in a few minutes,' shouted one. '*Ja, oder H*——!' cried another.

Outside, too, in the street, to add to the confusion, I heard what seemed to be a woman's voice crying, 'Fire! fire!' I listened—yes, I felt certain it was Christine's.

'What the deuce are you all doing here?' suddenly cried an officer in the guardroom. Something was said about a prisoner. 'Curse him, you fools! he can't get out.'

Then I heard Christine again, apparently in the entrance, crying, 'Fire! fire!'

'Who are you? Stop that noise;' and it seemed as though she stumbled. Some were calling for buckets, others giving orders to harness the horses to drag the wagons out.

Then the door gently opened. It was Christine. 'Put this over your head—it's a petticoat,' she whispered.

Mechanically I did so, though I nearly split it. 'Now for the cloak and shawl!' I quickly found them, and beside her went through the empty guardroom, through the entrance, down the steps, and past the sentry. Without a word, we quickly walked into the street, where soldiers and civilians were running towards the inn as fast as they could. 'It's raining,' said Christine in a tremulous voice, putting up an umbrella, which completely hid us as, arm-in-arm, we went along the street. The poor girl was trembling so much that I feared she would fall, but she clung to me, and we pushed on through the thronged street. It had all happened in a few minutes. It seemed like a dream.

'Where are you going, *ma chérie?*' I asked.

'To Henri's,' she said.

XI.

Her brother had hurriedly dressed on hearing of the fire, for all the world knew by the trumpets what had happened. He was perfectly taken aback at seeing us, especially myself, as he had heard the news that I was to be shot the next morning. 'Hide him! Save him!' cried his sister. He knew the risk he was running, but, fine patriot that he was, he did not hesitate a moment. Taken by surprise, however, he could not make up his mind where to put me, for in his house and the tannery he had Germans quartered on him. While he paused Christine staggered. We placed her on a sofa, but it was only after she had had some cognac that she came round. This had taken a little time, and suddenly we heard voices and heavy steps.

'Here's the major and the captain coming. *Ô Ciel*, what shall I do?' cried Henri, aghast. 'You can't go in the attics. I don't know where you can go.' He paused a moment. 'There's only one chance. Follow me.'

He darted upstairs with a candle, and I followed him. 'I can't help it,' he said. 'It's their room, but they leave early to-morrow.'

It was the principal bedroom in the house, with two beds in it. These were surrounded with heavy red curtains that went down to the floor.

'Under you go,' whispered Henri, pointing to the bed opposite the door at the top of the stairs.

Neither of the two officers had gone to bed. They had been smoking and drinking down below when they heard the trumpets. Perhaps to give me time, I heard Henri talking to them and expressing surprise at the fire. I could hear all that was said, and for Loissier's sake I was not sorry to learn that it had been got under. Then I heard the two officers ascending the stairs, and, apart from my recent experience at the Lion d'Or, I don't know that I ever felt more uneasy in all my life.

'I can tell you, Steinmesel,' said the major, 'I feel very bad. It's not only the neuralgia, but I feel shivery all over, and going to see about that confounded fire has made me worse. I hope that there will be a strict inquiry about that. Some one ought to be shot. It's lucky old Löwenthal was not blown to bits in his bed.'

'Schwipesbrücke told me,' said the captain, 'they caught a spy there this evening, and now he's escaped.'

'I never heard anything about that,' returned the major. 'Why didn't they shoot him straight away?'

'Well, the Crown Prince is coming, and I suppose they thought they had better be careful, as there was nothing against the fellow apart from his knowing a little German. You can't shoot a fellow straight away for that, for they found nothing on him.'

'Can't you?' replied the major. 'Fancy what that fellow must have heard! *Mein Gott!* he would not get much mercy from me. Now,' he continued, after a while, 'I am going to drink half that carafe of cognac, and if I don't feel better to-morrow morning I shall stay behind.'

I heard him gulp the brandy down, and then

he bumped into bed just above me, leaving his junior to blow out the candle.

XII.

Of all the horrible nights I ever spent in my life, that was the worst. It was only the draught from the door and from the old wainscoting that prevented me from being suffocated. The major began a heavy stertorous snore, and the other soon joined in, and there was a regular duet. I feared to go to sleep lest I might snore also, for in that case, if one of them woke, I knew that there would be no second escape. And then, too, I thought of Christine, and what the noble girl had risked for me. Hour after hour I heard the church clock strike. Strive as I would, I felt I was gradually going off, and I fancy I must have slept a little, when I heard a heavy step on the stairs and a trumpet-call outside. The officers' orderly came in with a candle and informed them that it was half-past five.

'*Ach, Himmel!* I can't go,' said the major.

'I am sorry for that, sir,' said the captain. 'You had better send Hans for Schunk.'

'Yes, I will send Hans,' he answered, 'for I do feel ill. Give me the rest of the cognac, and tell Schunk, if you should see him first, to come as soon as he can.'

It did not take the captain long to dress, and immediately he had gone and all was quiet, my prospective brother-in-law came in with a candle.

'I am very sorry, major, to hear you are ill. Is there anything I can do? Will you have some coffee and eggs? I can write down the time you wish breakfast, and give the paper to your servant.'

The major thanked him, and told him he was going to sleep again till the surgeon came.

'*Bon!*' said Henri. 'I will leave you, then. Oh, *ma foi!*' he exclaimed suddenly, 'I have dropped my pencil;' and I heard it roll on the floor. 'I would not lose that for anything,' he continued. 'My wife gave it to me before we were married. Don't disturb yourself, major. I'll find it.'

This was the last thing the German was likely to do, as he had turned over and did not answer. Pretending to seek for it, Henri placed the candle on the floor quite near the bed, and put a paper in my hand. On it were the words: 'Wriggle backwards; the door is open.' Quickly, but very gently, I did this, while Henri, talking aloud all the time about his pencil, searched the floor. In a moment I was downstairs. Not a word was said. Opening a door, I followed him outside, where it was still fairly dark. 'This is the office,' said Henri. 'This place is always locked. Take this,' and he gave me a bottle of wine and some bread.

'Where's Christine?' I asked.

'Fast asleep.'

'*Bon!*' I said. 'Don't wake her.'

XIII.

I had finished my meal when Henri came in, followed by Christine. 'Oh, *ma chérie*, how can I thank you enough?' I cried as I embraced her.

'Never mind about that now,' said her practical brother. 'The surgeon has seen the major, and his servant has gone off to the *pharmacie*, so, while no one is about, you must get away.'

On board ship, on the voyage back from Martinique, it had been so rough that one could not shave, so I had grown a beard, and had left it.

'The first thing is to have your beard off.'

'Oh no,' said Christine. But her brother insisted, and produced the scissors. When this operation was over, a black blouse that he wore in the tannery was brought out. This, with an old hat and leggings, caused a smile to appear on Christine's face. 'He looks awful,' she said.

'Never mind that. Why, his own mother would not know him!—Now, come to Pinnard, the barber.'

As we crossed the street we passed several German soldiers, but not one turned to look at me. Henri whispered something to the barber. He was an intelligent fellow, and giving a significant nod, took us into his private room.

'Look here,' he said when he had shaved me; 'they were going to have some charades at a château near here, but they did not come off owing to illness, and I have a fine white beard and wig. What do you say to that?'

The room echoed with our laughter as I put these on. I left the shop so altered that I, too, was certain my mother would not have recognised me. As some lime was required at the tannery, it was arranged that Christine and I should have a lift to within a league of the farm. So sure was I of my disguise that I sat on the front-seat beside the old driver. It was necessary to pass the Lion d'Or, and I actually saw Loissier explaining with many gesticulations to some sympathetic friends all about the fire. When we got rather to the north of Coulmiers, where four roads met, I gave old Joseph my last five-franc gold piece (these were abolished after the war), and Christine and I descended. For the first time we were alone, and, what with my white locks and my long beard, I fear that if any one had seen me kissing the young girl he would have thought me a very wicked old man.

We made a short cut through a wood, where some trees had been felled, and sat down on a big log.

'It's an extraordinary thing,' I said, sniffing the air; 'there is a smell of *pétrole*. I think there must have been some in the cart.'

Now, Christine had been very gay hitherto, but at this remark she turned paler and became serious.

'Étienne,' she said softly, placing her hand on my shoulder—'Etienne, I must tell you; but you will never, never tell father, or Henri, or any one.'

'I swear it, *ma chérie*.'

Well,' she said, 'after they said you would be shot in the morning, I did not exactly know what I was about. I said nothing to Henri, but before I went to wish you adieu, I got you that cloak and shawl. After I left you, I ran down into the cellar and got a lot of straw envelopes, and bought a small bundle of wood at one shop, and a bottle of petroleum at another. Then, when all was quiet, I went down that passage by the inn, scrambled through the old fence, dodged behind that old broken carriage, and placed the straw and wood against the tarred shed. I poured the petroleum over the little pile, and got it well alight, then ran and threw the empty bottle into a neighbouring garden, and, trembling all over, waited in the rain for a time. Soon I heard cries of "Fire!" and immediately the trumpets and the bugles began all over the place. I began to cry "Fire!" myself as loud as ever I could, for I knew the greater the excitement was, the better it would be for you. I went right into the hotel and cried "Fire!" and a brute of a German officer told me to cease, and struck me in the chest and knocked me down.'

'He struck you!' I cried savagely. '*Ô Ciel!* I heard him tell you to stop.'

'Yes, he did,' she continued. 'But why tell you any more? You know the rest.'

'Yes; and I know you are the bravest and finest girl in Christendom,' I cried, 'and I can never repay you.'

'Well, everything is all right now,' she continued; 'but we must go.'

A bright light came into her eyes, and, supremely happy, we went on till we saw the old farm in front of us.

'I will go on,' she said. 'There may be Germans there. If I beckon, you come.' So I hid in some shrubs. Soon she beckoned, and I advanced.

XIV.

'It's all right. Julie is in, and father is somewhere near. We'll have some fun with Julie,' said Christine merrily. 'I will introduce you as a Monsieur Barlac, who wants to see father.'

As soon as we entered the kitchen Julie rushed forward and kissed Christine, but told her she looked pale. Then she was formally introduced to me. Making a pretty curtsy, Julie said she would go and find her father. Soon she came back, and her father arrived with Bobo, the sheep-dog, who knew me almost at once.

'Ah Bobo,' I said, stooping down to stroke him. A second after I received a violent push, and my hat and wig were sent flying.

'Ah Étienne, *mon brave*,' cried Julie, laughing boisterously. 'So you thought I did not know you. I saw through the whole thing at once.'

'Did you? Well, you made me a pretty curtsy, anyway.'

Her father had stood still, perfectly puzzled; but I soon explained all that had taken place.

'Well,' he exclaimed, 'I never wanted you to go. What an extraordinary and merciful coincidence it was that the fire should have taken place that very night!'

'Yes; was it not wonderful?' said Christine with a sly glance at me. 'The Holy Virgin must have done it.'

'It is a pity, though, they were not all blown up,' concluded her father bitterly.

The next day the old count came down, for his grandson had come back the evening before with the news of my escape.

'I knew I should find you here, *mon brave*. *Cherchez la femme* always holds good. Now, tell me all about it.'

It made me smile when he remarked, as Lonavet had done, on the extraordinary coincidence of the fire, and expressed the same bitter regrets as to the Germans not having been blown up. Then, after congratulating me on my escape, he said it was now time for me to rejoin my regiment.

'Oh no,' said Christine; 'he's not well enough yet.'

'But, mademoiselle, you would not like the disgrace of his being fetched. Ignorant people, who do not know what he has done, would brand him as a coward.—Is it not so?' he continued, turning to me.

'I know it,' I answered. 'I will go the day after to-morrow, the 1st of November.'

'*Bon!* I will give you a letter to the Staff, and if they don't give you a commission *sur-le-champ*, it will not be my fault.'

XV.

Thanks to the old count, I received a commission at once. Naturally I was depressed at parting from Christine, and it was lucky I did not know that within a fortnight she and her father and sister would be flying to Brittany, leaving their burning home behind them. Ignorant as I was of their misfortunes, soon all my patriotic ardour returned in the excitement of my surroundings, and I could only think of my duties. I can truly say that the three weeks that followed, till I was placed *hors de combat* by dislocating my shoulder and breaking my leg (through a shell smashing a ladder from which I was directing the fire of my men), were three of the happiest and most exciting of my life. My short career as an officer could not have commenced at a more lucky time, as there was just then a brief ray of sunshine in the fortunes of my country, for on the 7th of November we drove the Bavarians under Count Stolberg back on Artenay, and on the 9th we gained our one and only real victory over the Germans at Coulmiers, when we took two thousand prisoners.

Thus I had time, at any rate, to gain the *Médaille Militaire*, which has been one of my most treasured possessions ever since.

I found when the war was over that fortunately my father's farm had suffered no damage; but, alas! it was otherwise with my uncle Étienne's property on the borders of Lorraine. However, he had made a fair amount of money, and having but two daughters, with the legacy he had received he decided to retire, leaving the business to me. My family readily agreed to my marriage with Christine, for they knew how the brave and beautiful girl had saved my life. With her beside me, I did not fear to face the world, but my own common-sense told me that by the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, the business of my uncle Étienne would never be so profitable as it had been in his time, and I knew the future would not be an easy one. Then suddenly all the clouds were swept away, for I received a letter from M. Mardelet at Martinique, who urged that I should come over, and repeated his proposal that I should put the money my uncle had left me into the business and become his partner. I received this letter about a month before I was married in May.

It was at the wedding that my young brother Louis first saw Julie, and fell desperately in love with her. But he did not find it an easy matter to catch that lively young girl. She was like a filly in a field. She let him come pretty close, and then she tossed her head and went off again.

But Louis had nearly one hundred thousand francs, and that was the oats in the sieve. She came, she sniffed, but still he could not catch her. Getting despondent, he went to her father.

'Don't you worry,' said Lonavet. 'She will take you all right.'

At last, thinking she had amused herself long enough, and secretly fearing that she might lose him, she allowed Louis to slip the halter over her pretty head; and—apart, of course, from Christine—no fellow ever got a better wife.

Though I did not altogether like leaving my native land, both my parents and my father-in-law, remembering the money my uncle had made, for all his wild life, urged me to go. So Louis took over the business, and thus my dear Christine and I commenced our new life in a foreign land.

Three years afterwards Mardelet returned to France, leaving the whole business to me. My uncle, in the twenty years he was out there, made about half-a-million francs. We remained, with a few intervals when we went to France, nearly thirty years—in fact, long enough for our two eldest boys to be of age to carry on the business—and then returned with our eight children and a fortune of two million francs. I am no longer young, but I am hale and hearty. I can still eat, drink, and smoke as much as I like. The children have got the fine constitution of their parents, and the good looks and the abilities of their mother. The world has gone well with me, and I envy no man.

But all this good fortune must be put down entirely to Christine, for it was her brave heart and her clear head that really guided the ship. She is a true daughter of France. Yes, I have seen a good many women in my time, but none to be compared with her in any way. It may be selfish, perhaps, but I do hope and trust that I may die first; for if it is otherwise, I feel that life will no longer be worth much.

THE END.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XIX.—'THE BOYS.'

ONE thing the school, the war, and my regiment developed, and that was a love of my comrades—'The Boys.' What a delightful term! So human! So reminiscent of youth and fun and joy! Each day strengthened this love, till it became almost a passion. This was the true Democracy, for 'The Boys' have no social measures, only the simple standards of Faith, Hope, and Charity. When such comradeship is allied to regimental *esprit de corps*, there is created a *moral* that is invincible. Whatever pain and sorrow the war has brought me, I have always gloried in this meeting of the waters. Stripped of the masks created by politicians and Who's-Who snobs, we discovered common aims, common interests, common ties of affection. Ginger Thomson, the hide-bound prophet of Imperialism, was the sworn comrade of Nobby Clark, the ramping, raging lion of the Free Trade school; Tosher, the wild Canadian, walked arm-in-arm with Billy, the sweet and refined; and I, the dreamer, plugged along with Beefy, the full-chested Balzac of the camp. In our little hut we ragged with good feeling, and all seemed to look for an opportunity to do a good turn, like the proverbial Boy Scout. It was a manly, a noble, phase of life. Selfishness was absent. Love was triumphant.

But, oh, the sadness and the madness of the scheme! While our love was being developed, we were training to die. Now, death is nothing. But to one who loves mankind it seemed a scheme of the very Devil to breed such god-like men for the shambles. Here were the cream of the race, the flower of strength, the pick of intellect, supermen—with the hand of Death upon them. But that is war as the Kaiser willed it. By a stroke of his pen this proud,

inhuman monarch has caused the death and the madness of millions. Oh cruel monster! If there be a God, then his punishment is assured.

Often I thought of this aspect of war. At night there passed before me the ghosts of my dead comrades—line after line of clean-limbed, open-eyed, fresh-faced heroes of battle. I had marched with them, supped with them, danced with them. Their lives were an open book. No deceit. No camouflage of the roué or the sneak. Their dreams, their loves, their passions, good and bad, I had known. While few were saints in any sense of the term, none were hardened sinners. Their patriotism and self-sacrifice had ennobled them. And they had gone—gone, I believe, to higher and better realms. But what a passage! Crucified on the altar of *Kultur*—gassed, bludgeoned, mangled, tortured, and maddened by the German rules of war. I had seen them go; seen them fall in the trench, with that groan which tears the heart; seen them stagger back while attempting to go over the top. And in that awful No Man's Land, where bullets hum like dragon-flies, and shells scream like drunken sirens, I had seen them stagger, clutch, and writhe in the agony of death.

How true they were! How brave! Boys of every class and calling. Duke's son and cook's son, charging, cheering, fighting, and dying in the breach. Ah, how glad I was to have met them, but how sad to part! True, they have not died in vain, but they left on me, a youth, marks akin to those of sorrowful old age. I was haunted by their eyes, sometimes unnerved when I thought of their screams. And yet I was proud. They had played the game; played it as no troops of Clive or Wellington were ever asked to play it; played it against the most brutal foe this world has ever seen. Your Trojans and your Spartans are mere tyros compared with our men to-day. Far better to be clubbed and speared than suffer the horrors and the madness of modern war.

When I thought of the murdered manhood, the slaughtered genius, and the wiping out of such noble sires, I felt afraid—afraid for the Old Land, the Old Flag, the Old Home by the hillside. Would all these things remain? Could we still carry on? Would the hog-like Huns, who breed as the vulgar always breed, be able to win 'the war after the war'? Beaten in the field, robbed of victory, would this coarse-grained tribe cunningly exploit the survivors of a finer race? I wondered. For this is a serious aspect of the war. There was no conclusion to my musings, but somehow I did believe that Providence protects the clean. The Empires of Hannibal, Nero, Napoleon, and the Romanoffs are no more. They outraged the laws of peace and goodwill. So I believed that this unfailing law would cripple and dissolve the Empire of Wilhelm. Right is might. That has been our slogan in this great crusade.

Yet we are not a perfect people. The war has tested us and found us wanting. But the war can save us—*if we are wise.* We must search our hearts. The dear boys have died that we might live. How shall we live? Must we go back to the parish pump? Is there no avenue of escape from class war and the devilish tricks of the political machine? Shall the remnants of our army return to be tools of the men who never fought; tools of those who quarrelled for place and personal gain; mere puppets, hounded to the polling-booth to vote for sneaks and rogues? God forbid! Our slaughtered boys must form the rampart wall against the selfishness and the pettiness which mar our otherwise beautiful country. The old order will *not* do. The eyes of 'The Boys' have been opened. They are thinking; and sometimes their thoughts are bitter. If these thoughts were printed in full, our proconsuls would be staggered. There is no hope for Britain if soft-handed, soft-job mandarins retain the reins. Yet 'The Boys' are mute, for they have no Press. They require none. When they return in force they will sweep away the fools and build a happy land. They are not Bolsheviks, not 'Tories' or 'Radicals.' They are patriots. The patriotism born in suffering is a product of God. You cannot define it, and you can never master it. Do not attempt it. Should you warp, twist, or bend it for mere material ends, you will rouse a bitterness and a madness which may destroy you, as Trotsky has destroyed the real soul of a noble nation. Only honest men can deal with 'The Boys.' Brave men can lead them. Clean men can inspire them. But these leaders will not be found in great numbers amongst the old mandarins—the men who stayed at home. Ah, no! 'The Boys'' standard is bravery. 'White men' they know and understand. The puppets of the party whips they will blow away like chaff whirled before a storm. And out of their suffering will come sanity, peace, goodwill to men and nations.

This is no dream. Those who scoff misunderstand the mentality of our men. The men of Grade I. can dominate Grade II. and Grade III. The five million fighters are men of will. A will steeled in the furnace of 'Hell' can pierce and master the will created in the soft lounges of Mayfair or the I.L.P. halls of Clapham. The veterans of the American Civil War united, rejuvenated, created the wonderful America of to-day. Our veterans can also rebuild the suffering British Empire. Open out your arms when they do come home. Do not disguise your aims. Speak like Lincoln or Lloyd George. Ask for the truth, and they will deliver it. Kill the fatted calf, and when the feast is done, place the laurels of power upon their brows. They will never deceive you. While they may smash old and useless traditions, they will guard the Flag, respect the Monarchy, and develop the

finest, fairest Democracy this world has ever seen. Far better to have the Democracy of the Trenches than the Anarchy of Trotsky. *For Heaven's sake, be wise!*

Such is the mentality of our brave boys. Fools may fear it, but straight men will rejoice. The Church can take heart, for the university of war has quickened spiritual thought. Blind as many of 'The Boys' are, they are seeking, groping for light. Their eyes are scanning the horizon for the idealism which can heal their sorrows and lighten the daily load. The madness of war is causing them to search for gladness. Old theological tricks will not suffice. A broad-based creed, aided by the finest music and social joys, may capture their souls. Women, too, must figure in the scheme. These men, many of them broken, desire to slip into an ivy-clad cottage where sweet Love shall reign, and the prattle of the child drown the memories of the shambles. From their windows they shall gaze in search of the beauties of the valley, the strength of the hill, and the soothing ripples of the ever-rumbling brook. This is the only cure for the horrors of war. Should you give them the pub. and the music-hall, you will perpetuate the follies of Bacchus and the creed of the courtesan.

All this I have learned in billets, camps, and the stricken field. From the stench of the trenches, the oozing blood of the shambles, and the agonised features of the dead I have plucked a moral and a great philosophy. The vanities have departed. Deceits are unmasked. Mammon is exposed. While horrors have unnerved, even unmanned, me, I have found a new Love—Love of 'The Boys.' It is a wonderful Love. It thrills and holds. It rouses and cheers. The soul is filled with better things. Great visions pass and repass before my eyes. One feels determined to leave the world a little better than one found it. Yea, one becomes resolved to fight, to suffer, be a martyr, if need be, for the men who have fought and won. Great is our opportunity, great our responsibility. We stand at the cross-roads of morality and materialism. Let us consecrate our lives for these brave men.

My heart swells with a bursting affection. My eyes are dimmed as I think of the dead. I am young, yet I feel old. But my soul is cleaner, stronger, greater, through contact with —'The Boys.'

The Brave, Dear Boys!

(*Continued on page 424.*)

THAT BLESSED FOG.

By JOHN S. MARGERISON, Author of *The Sure Shield, Action! The Navy's Way*, &c.

I.

CRACK! The Vickers semi-automatic three-pounder gun perched on the forecastle of His Majesty's armed motor patrol-boat *Chi-Chi* leapt back a foot, and a thin cloud of whitish smoke issued from its muzzle. But no shell splashed into the sea ahead; the barking was but a signal—a graceful intimation—that *Chi-Chi* desired the pleasure of the company of the big cargo-vessel flying the ensign of a neutral country for just so long as it would take to examine her for contrabrand of war.

The routine of examination service was all too familiar to the motor-boat; for months she had done the job—done it daily. The regular practice was to fire a round of blank from the gun, when the hailed ship would politely stop; *Chi-Chi* would then cruise over, and, while three of her crew ran through the ship, searching for things she ought not to carry, Temporary-Lieutenant Roderick Frazer, *Chi-Chi's* owner and commander, would inspect her papers and exchange news and notes with her officers. The thing usually ended in friendly farewells, as the ship—found 'clean'—and the motor-boat parted company, and passed on their lawful occasions.

Accordingly, when the big neutral stopped, Frazer turned his boat, intending to run alongside her. And it was this turning movement that saved *Chi-Chi*.

The neutral had no sooner checked her way than a dozen yards of her false bulwarks dropped, exposing to view three of the latest and most efficient six-inch quick-firing guns, all of which came into immediate action with the intention of lifting the inquisitive patrol-boat well above the scheme of things.

'Oh!' ejaculated Frazer. 'So that's your little game, is it? An armed raider masquerading as an innocent neutral. I've heard of your kind, but never met one of the type before. And now that I have made your acquaintance so suddenly, I'm disposed to like your room better than your company; so, if you've no objections, and I can get away unhit, I'll leave you. Good-bye.'

He nodded to his engineer, who immediately gave *Chi-Chi* her head, and the little craft, remembering sudden calls upon her for speed in the otiose days of motor-boat racing when she had pulled so many critical races out of the fire, put her nose down to it, and literally ate up the sea.

The shells fell all about her as the three six-inch guns spat fire and death as fast as they could be loaded, but her speed and her insignificance rendered her exceedingly difficult to hit, and she came through it all unscathed, though

there were times when Fraser and others of her crew of six felt the wind of the shells, so close was their passage.

Of course, as she ran, she spat back. The Vickers three-pounder crackled sharply—not with blank this time—and the perky brass-jacketed Maxim perched on her stern chattered insolently. But neither weapon could be expected to do much damage; the range was increasing too rapidly as the wild-cat boat sped away from danger. The three-pounder did, however, manage to drop a shell on the steamer's bridge and disable her steering-gear, so that she yawed off her course and gave *Chi-Chi* a breathing-space from those terrible guns.

Petty Officer 'Jumper' Collins, *Chi-Chi's* gun-layer, and the only pukka navy man among her crew of six, all told, spat on his hands, and apostrophised the supposed neutral vividly.

'What rotten shooting!' he concluded. 'You ought to be sent to Whale Island for a proper course. Lumme! if you couldn't shoot better than that, they'd boot you out of the Service.'

Frazer grinned, in spite of his chagrin.

'They don't seem very expert with their big guns, Collins,' he observed.

'Expert!' snorted Collins. 'If they were shooting for coco-nuts they wouldn't get a smell of the whiskers. Now, if only I was behind one of them big pieces, I'd have knocked this hooker into splinters long ago. But Fritz never could shoot anything worth while.'

Frazer looked at the big ship, now silent, though the muzzles of her armament still pointed in *Chi-Chi's* direction. Then his eye swept around his own craft, taking in the three-pounder, the Maxim, and the twin fourteen-inch torpedoes which reposed in the Admiralty-pattern picket-boat dropping-gear cluttering her narrow deck. Suddenly he spoke. 'I'm rather inclined to agree with you, Collins,' he said. 'Also, I'm rather inclined to take another chance at that raider. I don't exactly care about running away from a chap who's been so rude to me. Look here, Jumper; do you think if we were steaming fast towards that hooker you could manage to keep his guns busy?'

'I'm sure of it,' sir,' responded the gun-layer. 'Just give me the chance, that's all.'

'Well,' continued Roderick, 'I'm going to take the boat down upon him at top speed, and, as soon as we get close enough, smack a torpedo off at him. He won't have a great target to fire at if we keep bows on, and if you can manage to slap shells all round those guns you ought to demoralise his aim. See the scheme?'

'As clear as mud, sir,' retorted the gunner.

Jumper spat on his hands once more, and turned to the two men who formed his gun-crew.

'Now, you two lads are really going to see what might be properly called rapid firing,' he said. 'And, also, you're going to earn fully that enormous screw you're paid for your job. I want shells hustled into this weapon as fast as you can hustle 'em; and if I'm kept waiting a single second, I'll have something serious to say to you after the scrap is over. The whole thing depends on us, because if one of those six-inchers catches us a wallop we'll all be hoisted to the edge of a cloud, where we'll sit in our shirts and play banjos for ever and ever. And now, chuck off your chests all the prayers you can remember—and stand by!'

II.

Chi-Chi slewed in her stride and sped off towards the steamer. Frazer, so as to be near his torpedoes, dropped down into the well alongside the engineer; Collins and his trusty helpers swung the gun round and commenced to fire as fast as possible; while the remaining hand passed a cartridge-belt into the Maxim, and stood by to commence operations as soon as such a proceeding became necessary, which was exactly at the moment when the range narrowed down to the extreme distance of flight of his bullets.

The three-pounder, firing faster than ever before in her short life—*Chi-Chi* had drawn her from store only some three months previously, to take the place of one that had been knocked out by an aggressive U-boat—sprayed her tiny shells all along the steamer's three-gun battery; and though the six-inchers recommenced their clamour, the buzzing of the puny hornets around the crews' ears and the fumes thrown off by the shells as they exploded made the raider's shooting far from accurate, and *Chi-Chi* remained unhit.

Right on she dashed, till she was within two thousand yards.

'What about torpedoes, sir?' yelled Collins, without taking his eye from his sight.

'A little nearer first,' responded Frazer. 'I can't afford to risk missing her.'

A thousand yards, and still the gear had not dropped a tin-fish into the water. Frazer, however, deciding that the next minute would offer his opportunity, bent to the firing-lanyard. His eye measured the distance to the steamer, saw that the direction was exactly correct. He bent to make a final adjustment, and then stood up for a last look before pulling the lanyard which would drop the automobile torpedo into the sea, where she would steer a straight course towards the enemy.

But he never fired that torpedo. As he looked for the last second the steamer suddenly disappeared behind a colossal upflung gout of spray; a dull, shuddering explosion followed a vivid tongue of flame. Then the sea fell back, and the steamer listed heavily over to port; while those who had lately belched forth shell from the six-inchers abandoned their posts and fought for places in the rapidly filling boats.

'That's curious,' gasped Roderick. 'That explosion was exactly like that caused by a hitting torpedo; and yet I haven't fired.'

I was just going to compliment you on a good shot, sir,' put in Collins. 'But it appears that somebody 's got there before you, and robbed us of our prey. I wonder who it was.'

'Periscope off the port beam!' The hand by the Maxim pointed towards where, through the sea surface, the pole-like head of a periscope grew momentarily longer and longer.

'There 's something familiar about that thing,' mused Frazer. 'I 've seen it before, I 'm sure.'

'It 's not our navy pattern, anyway,' put in Collins. 'Reload! I 'm going to get a bead on that chap in case he turns out to be a Fritz.'

While the three-pounder waited to bark, the periscope elongated itself, broadened out into a conning-tower—a conning-tower of German pattern, but bearing a British letter and number. Then the hatch was thrown back, and a head appeared—an unmistakably British head—crowned with the laurelled cap of 'The Trade.'

'Hallo, motor-boat!' it called; 'who are you?'

'We 're *Chi-Chi*, for the time being an examination vessel,' responded Frazer. 'May I ask you a similar question?'

The figure laughed, drew itself up to the conning-tower top, and gave certain orders. The submarine turned and cruised slowly towards the motor-boat, utterly ignoring the steamer, which at that second canted her stern to the skies, and slid downwards to the place whither she had intended to send many an innocent non-combatant ship—the sea-bed.

'Take a good look at us,' counselled the submarine officer. 'Surely you 've seen us before?'

'I rather fancy I have,' said Roderick. 'But I can't quite place you.'

The other laughed.

'Well, once upon a time this craft was U 73,' came the reply. 'And, if you 're the one and only *Chi-Chi*, she fell captive to your bow and spear.'

Collins gave vent to a great laugh. 'That 's the chap we had an argument with, sir,' he explained. 'The one the paddle-steamer told us about, and towed home for us. Surely you remember?'

It was Frazer's turn to laugh. 'Well, I 'm blest!' he ejaculated. 'To think that a hooker we 'd taken ourselves should come and torpedo another that we were having an argument with—it sounds like something out of a book! But, old man,' he continued, addressing the submarine, 'I can't say that I exactly thank you for slamming your tin-fish into that steamer. I 'd got a lovely bead on her with one of my own torpedoes, and would have smashed her myself in another minute.'

'I quite agree,' said the submariner. 'But, you see, I happened to have a new type of torpedo-tube built into this ship, and I was anxious to see if it did all they claimed for it. It works very well,' he added. 'Besides, you must remember that if you 'd fired one torpedo at that chap, you 'd have had a very heavy list till you got another to balance you, and you 'd have been exceedingly uncomfortable for several days. I hope you 'll forgive my butting in, anyway.'

'Certainly, old man,' responded Roderick. 'If you can stand tea brewed in an empty petrol-tin, come alongside and have a cup.'

III.

Exactly a week later *Chi-Chi* was feeling her way through the folds of a dense, black sea-fog that had descended with strange suddenness upon the North Sea. She was no longer an examination vessel. Those responsible for varying the jobs of motor-patrols had bestowed upon her the duty of carrying certain mails to outlying submarines—submarines whose wandering proclivities led them to work off the mouth of the Elbe, where occasionally enemy warships might be expected to roam.

'Like trying to look through a blanket,' moaned Frazer, rubbing his smarting eyes. 'At times like this all shipping should be stopped. It 's a positive danger to move about in this sort of fog. Ten knots to *Chi-Chi* is crawling; yet if we go any faster we 're bound to hit something, and split like a sardine-can; and, personally, I 've no relish for a wet shirt to-night.'

'Boat ahoy! Boat ahoy!' The hail came through the fog. Roderick stopped his grumbling and strained his eyes afresh. All hands peered into the fog, trying to discern from whence men were hailing in English. It fell to Collins to find them.

'There, off the port bow,' he called at last. 'A bit of a smudge in the fog.—Ahoy, there!'

'Ahoy!' the hail was repeated, and *Chi-Chi*, now scarcely moving, edged over towards it. Ten minutes sufficed to bring her alongside the smudge, which developed into a tiny folding Berthon boat, such as is carried in submarines, containing seven men and an officer.

'Hallo!' said Frazer, as he surveyed the group. 'This is hardly the sort of weather I should choose for boating in the North Sea, and I can't say that I admire the stoutness of your craft. Who are you?'

The officer turned and peered through the gloom. Frazer, the better to assist sight, risked quite a lot by switching on a small pocket-torch he carried, and shining it upon the upturned face.

'Good Lord!' he exclaimed; 'it 's our pal the submarine chap—the fellow who torpedoed the neutral for us the other day! What the dickens are you doing there? What have you done with my submarine?'

'If you 'll take me and my crowd aboard out of this rotten little boat,' said the lieutenant, 'I 'll explain. But, first of all, allow me to remark that I didn't choose the weather, and that I 'm not floating around here in a tub of tarred canvas for the benefit of my health.'

The eight scrambled aboard the motor-boat,

crowding her already confined space. They huddled in the well with the motors; they dived down the forepeak, where the men lived when off duty; they lay on the upper deck, with the torpedo-dropping gear for company. Frazer led the lieutenant into his own tiny cabin aft, and, setting before him spiritual refreshment, demanded the yarn.

'We were being chased by an enemy torpedo-boat in the fog,' explained the submariner, 'and we couldn't submerge because something had gone wrong with the works. We thought we'd shaken him off, when all at once we went high and dry on the mud-flats off the mouth of the Elbe—just here.' He reached over and indicated a certain spot on the chart. 'There's a big shore battery just above there, and a trawler was nosing round,' continued the lieutenant, 'so I thought it policy to abandon our hooker. But I couldn't quite see making Fritz a present of her, especially as she's chock-a-block with all sorts of tricky little devices that are more or less experimental, but which our Service regards as dead-secrets. I knew that if she lay there when the fog cleared, or if Fritz found her, he'd refloat her and take her into harbour; so, after the last man had gone, I shoved an explosive charge under the motors, fitted a slow match, and, hanging around in the Berthon, waited for the bang.' The speaker reached over and drank deeply of the whisky-and-soda. 'There was no bang!' he snapped angrily. 'That infernal fuse refused to work; and when I found her in the fog again, a blessed Hun trawler was squatting alongside and holding her hand, just to encourage her in case she should be frightened of the dark. And now, to think that this, the first command I've ever had, should fall intact, secrets and all, into the hands of the folks that built her! It's the absolute limit; and they'll shoot me, as sure as eggs.'

'Cheer up!' consoled Roderick. 'I may be able to do something for you, after all. Just show me again where she lies.'

The lieutenant put his finger on the exact spot. Roderick marked it with his fountain-pen, then performed a host of abstruse calculations on the back of an envelope.

'Yes,' he said at last; 'I'll promise you one of two things. Either we'll get her off, if Fritz hasn't shifted her already, or we'll demolish her for you. And now, help yourself to the whisky, but be careful of the soda—it's the last siphon I've got. I'm going to be busy.'

IV.

Two hours later Frazer called down to the tiny cabin. 'I say,' he remarked, 'if you want to see your little hooker again, just hop up here and plant your peepers on her for absolutely the last time.'

The lieutenant hopped up, and through a rift in the fog saw his submarine, lying on a shoal like a stranded whale. And sheer alongside her was the enemy trawler, keeping guard till opportunity should allow of her being refloated. The sight was maddening.

'And now, hang tight,' ordered Frazer.

Chi-Chi slowed and crept on, her motors humming softly. She got to within four hundred yards ere the trawler, sensing danger, switched on a searchlight and tried to pierce the thick vapour. The light was about as effective as if a blanket had screened it, but it served Frazer for a much-needed point of aim.

'Now!' he breathed softly, and bent to the torpedo-dropping gear. He tugged on the lanyard. There was a faint splash overside, then the twitter of a pair of screws revolving at high speed, and the fourteen-inch torpedo steadied itself on a dead course towards the derelict submarine.

There followed a thudding crash, and the fog was rent by a vast tongue of orange flame. The trawler became alarmed, and switched on a second searchlight.

'And, so that we sha'n't be lop-sided through having to carry one torpedo about,' muttered Roderick, 'we'll present it to you, Mr Trawler!'

He aimed at a point exactly between the two redly-burning moons in the fog, and three seconds later both were blotted out by a second flash. The fort on the shore, meanwhile, had got busy, and, although no target could be seen, was firing all its guns at once, perhaps believing that the accursed British were making an attack in force.

Chi-Chi, however, was far beyond reach, having sped off at the second explosion. While His Britannic Majesty's Submarine Q 37—late *Seiner Deutschen Majestäts Unterseeboot 73*—sank in small pieces to the bottom of the sea, accompanied by the trawler who had held her hand in the dark, the lieutenant and *Chi-Chi's* owner-commander pledged each other in the last of the whisky-and-soda, the one using as a tumbler an empty jam-tin, while a cracked mug served the other as a triumphal goblet.

RONDEAU.

'Now there is peace.' Oh hearts that bleed,
Will that suffice—be all your meed?
Who, at the earliest behest,
Gave of your dearest and your best—
Will peace atone for all your need?

No shout of victory you heed;
Still to the past your thoughts recede;
With cypress yet your walls are drest;
'Now there is peace.'

War-wearied nations truce concede.
Hope comes again—a captive freed.
May you who passed the bitter test,
Whose loved, long sleeping, lie at rest,
Have strength to live! For this we plead,
'Now there is peace.'

F. C. L. S.

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By Henry Leach.

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AN assurance has been offered in certain places that, whatever social trouble may befall us in any unhappy turn of events, it is nearly impossible for anything resembling the madness of Bolshevism, as it has raged in Russia, to seize the Western states. Two reasons are given, the first being that in countries like ours the people think more and have better sense than Russian peasants, and the second that the case is such that leaders like Lenin and Trotsky could not be evolved in more enlightened countries or be enabled to impose their will upon masses of the people. Besides circumstances in Russia being calculated to assist their strange development, it is suggested that Lenin and Trotsky themselves are most remarkable human and intellectual phenomena, such as are unlikely to be repeated for long enough. It may be so; civilisation may devoutly trust it is. But though we may have no Lenins and Trotskys budding in our midst—and truly the most rabid of Maximalists west of Russia seem of the innocence of lambs in comparison with those dictators—it is perceived that distant influence and secret missions work effects that indeed are bad enough; that blood is a strong drink, and those who sip it at the start soon change and develop mightily for evil capacity, as has been shown in the persons of Lenin and Trotsky themselves; and, again, that in the last five years the practical value of that word 'impossible' has been much discounted, since many things once rated high in impossibility have happened definitely and with emphasis. Thought and apprehension in these present times continually await the unexpected. But the production of these remarkable Russians, their evolution, has been a curious business, and it might benefit the proletariat of other lands to reflect upon the process as it has occurred. Slight personal sketches, indicating in some measure the nature of the men, the sources whence they have derived their force, and the impulses by which they have applied it, have already been offered. But it is interesting to see how, in the case of Trotsky at all events, the Bolshevist leader has been an evolution, largely as an ingenious opportunist, who, having adapted himself as best he could to new situations and policies as he perceived them, found himself confronted with novel and gigantic situations into which he must make new and desperate plunges, tumbling himself into unknown anarchic depths, trusting always that something would occur to set himself and his own world, as he viewed it, to rights again. That is why, as has been declared, Bolshevism depends for its existence on being dynamic. It must be doing, acting, forcing, horrifying all the time, maintaining itself by its own feverish action. The moment it stands still, ceases to force, to terrify, to attempt to spread abroad the false basis on which it stands, it must collapse. It is held by the most careful and impartial thinkers to be a false and impossible doctrine, the utmost violation of economic principles; and those strange, mysterious, economic principles, based at the bottom on two great laws of the world and life, that men must work and that they must eat, are like natural laws. The laws of economics will, like water, always force their own level.

* * *

Lenin was in some measure the man for the red dawn of Bolshevism. He is narrower in his studies and conceptions than Trotsky; he was the Bolshevist from the beginning of his time, trained himself for the part he was to play, and at the hour took the lead, declaring that it was only by one being the harshest and most imperious dictator, and through civil war and blood and suffering, that social happiness, equality, and right could be achieved. Thus he opened with paradox and contradiction. In his reports he preached the necessity of the single controlling will, an absolute dictatorship. He urged that, for the success of the new Russia and all its works, there should be the strictest unity in the will that guided the common labours of masses of men. So in the industrial world, so in the political. Industries must have their dictators; the State must have its own—himself. The will of thousands must be subordinated to the will of a single being. 'When ideal recognition and discipline on the part of all who are engaged in a common task are in existence,' says Lenin, 'this subordination may somewhat resemble the persuasive leadership of the conductor of an orchestra; when they are not present it may assume the form of a dictatorship. In either case the unquestioning submission to a

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single will is unconditionally necessary for the success of industrial processes organised after the type of a great mechanical industry. The Revolution has just struck off the oldest, strongest, and heaviest fetters with which the masses were bound under the knout. That was yesterday; but now the same Revolution demands, and that in the interests of Socialism, the unquestioning subordination of the masses under the single will of the director of the process.' How grotesque is this contradiction! When Gonzalo set out to imagine his ideal republic, he found that he should make himself 'king of it. So here, when Lenin would carry Socialism, the doctrine of liberty and equality, to its uttermost point, plumb freedom to its farthest depths for the sake of the hopeful proletariat, he is faced by the circumstance that for that glorious consummation he must crush all freedom as never before, and set up the most tyrannical autocracy! Starting thus with a contradiction, a negation of reason, the strange structure which he builds is maintained only by the constant practice of other acts which are negations of life and progress also; and that is how Bolshevism for a time plunges madly in its course of blood and ruin. Everywhere Lenin finds the new paradox demanded. He suppressed the financial and the industrial experts along with the bourgeoisie; but then he found, curiously, that he could not run his State without financial and industrial experts who were not induced to work by the mere threat of punishment. In this case it seemed to Lenin that, unfortunately, the end could not be achieved by shooting them—they were needed. So they had to be paid, and well, or else they would not be sufficiently expert, and the State would lose. In logical consequence Lenin decided that their services must be hired at the highest salaries—twenty-five thousand roubles a year; and if the rouble were what it used to be, that would be between two and three thousand pounds a year. Lenin, musing upon this situation, agreed that it was somewhat reactionary; but it could not be avoided, he said. It would cost much money to obtain these financial and industrial experts such as his country, under its new ideal conditions, needed; perhaps it would cost a hundred millions a year. But the Government must have them—until, perchance, it had trained experts of its own. There Lenin had one of his first encounters with the impossibilities of advanced Socialism, and was worsted. If all men are equal and are to share equally, who then shall be the better—and more expensively—equipped for the most difficult and most intellectual work? And with the equipment and the intellect and the absolute personal necessities that they demand, how then shall such men be sustained upon the allowances made to the drawers of water and the hewers of wood? Lenin cannot answer; he can only proceed with terror. But it is little wonder that peoples' idealists who have prided themselves on being advanced, looking upon this strange spectacle in the east of Europe, feel that shallower levels of Socialism are better for their kind than the majestic depths into which the Bolshevists plunge.

* * *

Now, the evolution from plain but strong democratic thought and tendency—with some action in the way of violent revolutionary protest against Czardom—of Leon Braunstein, the alert, studious, thoughtful journalist-adventurer calling himself Trotsky, has been a very different process. Life in the world has always been just a splendid game for Leon Braunstein Trotsky, and despite its overwhelming magnitude, its terrifying seriousness, one cannot resist the fancy that this Russian tragedy itself is also but a game with him, and not perhaps so monstrous either to one whose taste for adventure has been somewhat dulled by hot experience in many countries as it might have been to others who lead tranquil lives, and whose exhilaration is confined to the political feuds of home. Each successive chapter of Trotsky's career assists to prove the proposition. He was always restless, always seeking trouble, darting amid flying adventure from one country to another, and in the true manner of the adventurer taking all his worldly belongings with him in a small valise—just a few papers, a dark suit, a clean shirt, and some collars, with his night-clothes, and no more. That valise, which the Spanish prison authorities marvelled at so much, makes a suggestion of Trotsky's life and character. Those were his special possessions, his movables, the requisites which attached to him, at so weighty a period of his life. All who are shackled by convention, properties, domiciliary points, houses, business premises, relatives, or even at the least perhaps by a few shelves of favourite books, know that feeling of being attached, bound, enslaved in chains of circumstance to one small spot of earth, and the yearning that sometimes flickers through the mind for a full freedom and unhindered liberty, such as can never be attained. To be free of Governments! To be just a citizen of the world, and with risk and rollick to run in and out from the attempted rule of one to that of another, and laugh at all of them! Trotsky was such a libertine. It happened inevitably that his original affections and enthusiasms for democracy and its enhancement of its situation, his love of the revolutionary attitude, partly because of political conviction and partly for the excitement of it, were increased by much. The man who does his world-wandering with but a valise for property, and has twice tasted Siberia, loves neither aristocrats nor bourgeoisie, but is all for his own freedom. Again, it became a natural habit, a fixed system, for Trotsky always to view life and the world from the outside, almost as a kind of entertainment offered to

him for his pleasure or his edification or instruction. It was a thing in which his part was that of observer and critic. This is the natural disposition of an alert and thoughtful journalist; no man feels himself less a part of grand events than one whose lifelong business it is to watch and criticise. The further result of this again should have been—as evidently it was—to convince him more than ever not only of the rights and the necessities of democracy, as every honest man to some degree must be convinced, but also of human weaknesses and limitations by which the advances of democracy must be restrained.

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Trotsky knew more than Lenin, but in the end he had to do as Lenin did, to co-operate with him, even to vie with him in callous determination and disregard of fearful consequence, or quit the most thrilling adventure of his life. So he proceeded to a quick evolution. But if one follows his affairs in the last four or five years, and examines closely his writings at different periods, the change in them—and these writings are good pieces of work, full of acute thought and reasoning, and evidently sincere—one sees the transformation, and has a glimpse of Trotsky wincing at some sharp spasms of change that came suddenly upon him as he realised the price he was being called upon to pay for his experiences. It is said that on returning home after the preliminary conference with the Germans at Brest-Litovsk with the object of making peace, he was in a state of hysterical collapse, due to the sudden full realisation of what it was to be under the military heel of Germany, where he was depositing his country. So overcome was Trotsky that, half in delirium, he shut himself in a room at Petrograd for an entire fortnight, and refused to see any one. He would not return to Brest-Litovsk; he feared too much those awful German terms. Knavery, ambition, adventure were well enough; but . . . Yet Lenin, the cold, practical realist, recognised the inevitable, and called for the treaty to be signed. Afterwards Trotsky knew that he was committed to the utmost. He steeled himself, stripped from his spirit the last shreds of conscience and pity, and advanced to all the sensations that ruthless authority over the life and death of a whole people could afford. He competed with Lenin in cruelty and in the wildness of political adventure in Bolshevik Russia. When they felt their scheme falling into more serious difficulties than before, Trotsky, with Peters, Radek, and Zinovieff to support him, advocated stronger and more desperate measures. He counselled the continual irritation of the Allies in every way and to the utmost extent, believing that in different fashions it would further the Bolshevist cause and help them to escape from their dilemma; but Lenin was more for conciliatory measures which might lead to a kind of compromise. So sharp was the division of opinion that there was a serious quarrel between Lenin and Trotsky, and there is said to have been a certain distance between them since. Much has been revealed by correspondents and others returning from Russia about the Bolshevist horrors, the fearful sufferings of the people, on the one hand through privation and hunger, and on the other through torture by the tyrants. Probably some of these stories have lost nothing in the telling. There have undoubtedly been many exaggerations of what has been happening in Russia, just as from the beginning there have been stupid minimisations about the degree of success achieved by the Soviet Government, which was always reported to be on the point of collapsing, but somehow kept strangely on. It has not been the business of other peoples to palliate in this affair. But Trotsky himself seems to have been the direct instigator in some cases of the most terrible punishments. Thus one account, which at least seems as reliable as the rest, tells us that ferocious and sanguinary discipline surpassing the methods of Ivan the Terrible was exercised by him in order to restore the shaken discipline of the Red Army, torture and capital punishment being applied in the fullest measure. Flogging took place on a scale unknown even to the serf army of Nicholas. It was the punishment for breach of orders, for neglect of weapons, for supposed anti-Bolshevist tendencies, and for failure to keep up on the march. Peasant soldier-lads were flogged simply in order that they might be sent back to their villages to tell, as a warning and a threat, of what they had suffered. By Trotsky's orders 'Chinese punishment,' a mysterious form of torture, the exact nature of which is unrelated, was employed in order to terrorise. There were Chinese executioners attached to every battalion, and the alleged offender was delivered to them with the simple instruction that they were to do what they pleased with him for three days. He was then dragged by these Chinese fiends into a dark room, and there for those three days they amused themselves with him, so that he was, as it is said, never in a position afterwards to tell what happened to him. For no fewer than twelve kinds of offences was merciless flogging the punishment, one of them being 'unworthy and disrespectful conduct.' Trotsky gave orders that soldiers must spy on one another in order to obtain political convictions, and any man who failed to report anti-Bolshevist manifestations by a comrade rendered himself liable to be shot. To this in little more than a year had Trotsky arrived, the little man with the woolly head of black hair, the small mouth, and the slight moustache—a figure that with a little making up might have been presented as a fair imitation of Charlie Chaplin; the man who had loitered in those Spanish *calles* gazing at the monuments of Spanish kings and generals (who knew something about cruelty, one recalls), had scribbled

his articles in the cafés, and then, for the ease of the Spanish mind, had been marched away to prison.

* * *

See Trotsky again in calmer and better mood as political philosopher and ardent Socialist—revolutionary, yes, but not then so far advanced as now—in New York ere the new madness seized him. He was fierce indeed at that time against the bourgeoisie, yet there was a certain reason in his views. He realised the necessity for the overthrow of Germany and Austria in the war if the world was to be made good for democracy. He yearned for it. But afterwards he was bought with German gold. He wrote that the real objective significance of the war was the break-down of the existing national economic centres, and the substitution for them of a world economy. He said that whichever country won the war would become the World-Power; nations might continue to exist as cultural units, but their economic individuality would disappear. This new state of things would represent the suicide of capitalism. 'All the historic forces,' he wrote, 'whose task it has been to guide the bourgeois society, to speak in its name and to exploit it, have declared their historical bankruptcy by the war. They defended capitalism as a system of human civilisation, and the catastrophe born out of that system is primarily their catastrophe. The first wave of events raised the national governments and armies to unprecedented heights never attained before. For the moment the nations rallied round them. But the more terrible will be the crash of the governments when the people, deafened by the thunder of the cannon, realise the meaning of the events now taking place in all their truth and frightfulness. The revolutionary action of the masses will be all the more powerful the more prodigious the cataclysm which history is now bringing upon them.' He held that Czarism—this was just before the Revolution—had become the indispensable military reservoir for the financial imperialism of France and the conservative colonial power of Britain, Austria-Hungary being the mainstay of Germany's imperialism. He said that while the simpletons and the hypocrites prated of the defence of national freedom and independence, the war was really a life-and-death struggle between Britain and Germany for the economic hegemony of the world. The objective of the revolutionaries in the war must be the break up of Austria-Hungary and Russia, and, with the imperialism of the two major culprits paralysed by the destruction of these sources of assistance, the task of the proletariat would be to create a far more powerful fatherland with far greater power of resistance, the Republican United States of Europe, as the foundation of the United States of the World. Then listen to him further on the point of his attitude towards Germany, the attitude of revolutionary Russia towards imperial Germany- by which later, as it must be recalled, he was bribed. Waiting in New York for the great something to occur, he wrote: 'In our war against Czarism, in which we have never known a "national" truce, we have never looked for help from Hapsburg or Hohenzollern militarism, and we are not looking for it now. We have preserved a sufficiently clear revolutionary vision to know that the idea of destroying Czarism was utterly repugnant to German Imperialism. Yet even if it were otherwise, even if it could be assumed that, in obedience to the logic of military operations, it would deal a destructive blow to Czarism, in defiance of the logic of its own political interests—even in such a highly improbable case we should refuse to regard the Hohenzollerns as an ally by sympathy or even by identity of immediate aims. The fate of the Russian revolution is so inseparably bound up with the fate of European Socialism, and we Russian Socialists stand so firmly on the ground of Internationalism, that we cannot, we must not for a moment, entertain the idea of purchasing the doubtful liberation of Russia by the certain destruction of the liberty of Belgium and France, and—what is more important still—thereby inoculating the German and Austrian proletariat with the virus of Imperialism.' He was all for a French victory in the war. 'Germany's victory over France, a deplorable strategic necessity, according to the German Social Democrats,' he wrote, 'would mean not only the defeat of France's standing army; it would mean primarily the victory of the feudal monarchical State over the democratic Republican State.' Yet this same Trotsky, so well assured, later opened the negotiations leading to the peace which might have brought about that German victory, and almost did so.

* * *

In the far future, when the world may have settled down again and have opportunity and mood for calm and dispassionate study of the abnormal characters of these tremendous times, it will devote close and varied consideration to Trotsky. He and Lenin, with all their crimes about them, will assuredly stand out among the most picturesque figures of a flaming period. In a different way—they are surely not so honest and sincere—they will appear as the figures of an age of blood like Robespierre and Danton in the French Revolution. There will be many readings of their strange characters, as many as of Prince Hamlet. The impulses that moved these extraordinary products of the revolutionary spirit will always be speculated upon. None can estimate them correctly now, but such a view as that presented here is formed from facts and reports upon them which have emanated from several European and other countries over a long period and from authorities of different sympathies. Trotsky is shown as the man capable of serious and lucid

thought, sometimes correct enough, led on by lust of adventure, and turned mad by it. Yet the strength and the determination of him and Lenin are points for a certain qualified admiration in a period when strong men have been so few. One might fantastically try to imagine at some crisis these two being hired, not by Germany, but by the Entente, for the purpose of suppressing the public unrest. Trotsky, at least, might find such a *volte-face* no more difficult than his peace-making with imperial Germany, nor the departure from his principles wider. And he would bring to that problem with which the Entente has been so seriously concerned some striking qualities of imagination, determination, and efficiency. He would assuredly begin by a merciless crushing of the Bolshevists among us; he would apply a remedy quick and stern to strikers. Let those in western Europe who would follow the strange pretensions and proclamations of Trotsky and Lenin think upon the manner of men they are, and contemplate what they have made of the country in their fiendish grip.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXV.

BY a little birch-fringed loch that sleeps near the forest stand the ruins of a chapel, round it many green mounds where generations of the folk of the Glen, laird and crofter, rich and poor, mingle in humanity's ultimate dust; and there the hush of a summer afternoon was broken by the sound of the Lament when his clansmen and neighbours laid Colonel Ewan Forbes beside many another of his name.

Besides my uncle's will (which made me his heir), the solicitors were custodians of a sealed envelope endorsed in his handwriting: '*For my nephew Neil, in the event of my death.*' To my unspeakable relief, it contained the copy of the paper I had sent him from Ubriano, which I feared had been stolen on the night of the burglary. It was evident that my uncle had not kept a duplicate at The Bield, for there was also a memorandum of his which ran: 'I am not at ease with this in the house, and have, therefore, deposited it with my solicitors, with instructions regarding its safe keeping.'

This lifted a load from my mind; and I was further relieved by a message from the watchers up the Pass. Rob Macbain, who had left Finlay there, and was to rejoin him immediately, came to report that neither of them had seen a soul near Sron na Leirg.

Three days passed. There had been numerous meetings with the police and the Procurator-Fiscal (*Anglicè*, the Crown Prosecutor for the district), but all efforts to get nearer the heart of the mystery had failed.

Tony was not himself. His cheerful alertness had disappeared, and I had become accustomed to seeing him sitting in silence, lost in thought. He showed no desire for talk, and complaining of sleeplessness, had consulted Dr Hall, who, to my surprise, told me that he was very highly strung, and was allowing the affair to absorb his thoughts too much. Tony, of all men, with a fit of 'the nerves'!

'Don't let this business worry you, Tony,' I said to him one morning after breakfast.

'My nerves are O.K.,' he replied, briskly enough. 'I dare say I'm concentrating a good deal, but the good doctor forgets that it is my job to concentrate. I'm used to it. Don't worry about me, Neil. I'm all right, and I'm not going to be beaten. And I think,' he continued, lowering his voice, 'that I am nearer laying my hands on "The Searcher" than you think. I believe that he is still near The Bield, skilfully hidden. More I can't and won't say, but I am going to make sure in a couple of days.'

'To make sure!' I said incredulously.

'One way or the other. I may be wrong, but I think I'm right.'

'Can't I be of any use to you?'

'I was just about to ask you to do me a favour. I want you to do nothing, to ask no questions, and to allow me to go my own way.'

I suppose I looked a little puzzled and dissatisfied, for Tony went on: 'I'm sorry if you feel a little "out of it." But the fact is, Neil, that you are not a good actor, and you're inclined to be hasty.'

'You mean that I can't control my face any more than my temper?'

'Rather less, I should say. Let me put it that you are too honest. The practice of dissimulation is not generally admired, but it is sometimes necessary. I want you to rest content, to "mark time," to behave exactly as if you were beaten and sick of the whole affair, and *to say so.* I expect that you'll be of considerable use to me before the finish. But for the present, give me a free hand for a day or two. Don't ask any questions. If I disappear, I'll turn up all right.'

'Chief of the Staff, it is an order! I am in your hands. I'll ask nothing and expect nothing.'

'Therein lies a beatitude! It's good of you to agree. I have my own reasons for asking you. For one thing, I am not dead certain of my man. I am only morally certain (a phrase which I detest, because I have seen so many "moral certainties" result in nothing but disappointment). But I think that I am on the

right track, and that we shall crumple up the plans of a most capable villain. The most trifling circumstance might put him on guard, and then —good-bye to our hopes of seeing him in the dock, and, what is worse, to the prospect of getting his half of the secret paper.'

'You mean that we may collar him with his half of the paper in his possession?'

'I do. I want to prove by his actions that he is the same man who entered the colonel's room.'

'Do you mean to say that he will try again?'

'I propose to give him the chance; and when he appears somewhere up there'—he pointed towards the hills—'it will be a hundred to one that he will have his own part of the paper with him. It will then be our pleasant duty to relieve him of it, and after that a judge and jury will have a comparatively easy job.'

'And how is all this to be done, my friend?'

'I promise you that shortly after midnight to-morrow I shall be more explicit. Meanwhile, this is imperative. You and I are to give out that we have abandoned hope of tracing "The Searcher," and are leaving soon for the South. Tell this to the servants, and to one or two gossipmongers in the neighbourhood. Get it well ventilated all over the place.'

'I don't half like leaving you to "carry on" alone, but you give me no alternative. I'll see that the programme is carried out.'

'Thank you, Neil,' said Tony. 'Your face advertises that you think I have queer methods; but this is a queer case, and, on my soul, I think the scent is breast-high. And now I am going to write a few notes in the library.'

Just at that moment Dr Hall was announced. He entered hurriedly, his thoughtful face unusually animated.

'Phew!' he said, mopping his brow, as he sank, panting, into an arm-chair. 'The car is laid up, and I've raced down. I am glad to find you both in, for I have something of extraordinary importance to tell you. Last evening, about eight o'clock, a man called at my house. I happened to be in the garden when he arrived. He asked to see the doctor. I gave him my name, when he said that he wished to consult me professionally. We went into the house, and I treated him for a badly sprained wrist, which he said he had got through a fall when he was fishing at Loch Afries. His name, he said, was Lee, and he was at the Glen Afries Hotel for a week, trying the hill lochs. Now, perhaps you know there is a short cut from the back of my house through the Afries Wood to the Glen Road. I showed it to him, and saw him out at the wicket-gate. As this gate is kept locked, I took the key with me, and having opened it and seen him off, I locked the gate again.

'This morning, about an hour ago, I was finishing my rounds, and called at the Glen Afries Hotel to see old Clarke, the proprietor. When there I casually referred to my patient of the previous evening, and was surprised to hear that there was no one at the hotel answering to his description, nor had there been any visitor of the name of Lee.'

'What was he like?' Keene-Leslie asked, intense excitement in his voice.

'A clean-shaven, presentable man of medium height, in a blue-serge suit. He spoke and looked like a gentleman. I put him down as a professional man on holiday; but I didn't pay particular attention to his appearance. What electrified me was a discovery on my way home. I took the short cut back from the hotel to my house through the Afries Wood. It had been raining a little last evening, as you know, and the path was soft. I was picking my way through a shallow puddle, when I saw a print of a large foot near the edge. Instantly I stopped dead, for in the centre was the distinct mark of a rough triangle!'

'By Jove! the man has courage,' said Tony. He began to pace the room, his usual composure struck out of his face. 'When did you see the footprint?'

'A quarter of an hour ago. I came here at a run, after I had had a good look at the path, and found that the footprints go from my gate towards the Glen Road. They must be those of the man whom I let out by the gate last night. It has not been opened since.'

'It's now nearly eleven o'clock. He was at your house fifteen hours ago. He can't be far away,' said I.

'He must be in hiding. The prints are visible from the wicket-gate to about three-quarters way along the path. Their owner had then cut into the wood, and although there are some slight traces of him there, I lost sight of the tracks. Better come and have a look at them.'

We hurried out to the path mentioned by the doctor, and there, true enough, found the tell-tale footprints. They were plainly those of the man who had entered The Bield.

The doctor pressed his boot into the soft earth alongside one of the prints. 'He must have a large, unusually broad foot,' said he. 'See!'

The difference between the footprints was marked. The impression of the doctor's long, narrow foot could easily have been put inside the other. We followed suit, and although Tony's feet and mine are by no means on the small side, the stranger's prints dwarfed ours too. We followed the bootmarks along the path to the point where, as the doctor had said, they disappeared in the wood.

The police were telephoned to, and in an hour we were searching the neighbourhood along with them. But again the result was *nil*, and late in the evening we returned empty-handed. I was tired and depressed. Not so Tony. There was a marked change for the better in his

spirits, though he did not say much, but busied himself with his notes in obvious satisfaction and with a smile in his eye. It was late when he ceased work.

'How does this last development square with your notes and your theory of the man in hiding?' I asked him, not without a spice of mischief.

'I 'll tell you to-morrow at midnight or shortly after, Didymus,' he said. 'And now I am going off to bed. I shall sleep well. To-morrow you won't see me until the evening. I am going to disappear and nurse a little scheme of my own.'

Sure enough, next morning he did not appear for breakfast. Janet told me that he had risen early, and was off for a day's fishing. I carried out his instructions, letting it be known to every one that we had given up hope of finding any clue, and were about to leave for the South as soon as possible.

In the forenoon the stalkers again reported that no one had been seen at Sron na Leirg; and as it was raining heavily, I spent a boring day indoors, curbing my impatience until Tony's return in the evening.

A telegram came for him in the late afternoon, but the hours passed and there were no signs of him. Dinner was postponed until I could hold out no longer, and about nine o'clock I sat down to my solitary meal, not without some anxiety regarding Tony's absence.

(*Continued on page 421.*)

A SCIENTIFIC METHOD OF TEACHING.

PART II.

IV.

THE fundamental aim in teaching should be not only to provide the young mind with necessary learning, but to present the acquisition of knowledge in a way which will inspire the pupil with such a love of learning as will induce him afterwards, when the printed form of language has become sufficiently familiar and teaching is no longer available, to seek and find pleasure in independent study. There is a notion with many that a *habit* of study formed under compulsion will be carried into after-life; but profitable study is not a matter of habit, but of strong desire or appetite for what is found to be enjoyable in feeding the mind. I think it will be generally admitted that the drudgery of lesson-learning tends very much in the opposite direction.

After food has entered the stomach, it passes, under normal conditions, altogether beyond our ken or control, through the wonderful laboratory of the alimentary system. Anatomically and chemically it can be traced in all its stages, but the process of digestion and assimilation is carried on with closed doors, and can be judged of only by its general effect. The case is different with mental pabulum. Here neither anatomy nor chemistry throws any light upon assimilation by the mental organism; but in the young its evolution as thought by the mental faculties is very much in evidence. We can, by observation of the talk and chatter and the play of young persons, know very fully what is going on in the mind, and thus judge of the efficacy of teaching. It is not immediately after the lesson that we may look for its manifestation in talk and play. A seed planted in the ground does not immediately burst into leaf and flower; neither does the germ of knowledge at once take on active life. The first effect of good teaching is to set the young mind *thinking*, the various faculties and the associated ideas already existing in the mind being brought to bear upon the new-comers, which are thus fixed in their place in the general mental economy. It may not be until after some hours or a day or two that we find the lesson taking its place in play and talk, thus showing that it has taken root in the brain-cells. Some repetition, with perhaps further illustration and explanation, will tend to promote the process, but any attempt to drag the new ideas into premature action will hinder rather than help. Automatic activity or exercise commences as soon as, but not before, the ideas are organised in the brain.

Without activity of an organism, although vitality may continue, there cannot be development or maintenance of functional power. With the alimentary, sanguinary, nervous, and other vital functions activity is entirely automatic, and, under normal conditions, goes on continuously without any consciousness or concern on the part of the individual; but the muscles and the mind are more or less dependent for action on external conditions, and are under control of the will. Some guiding and controlling influence is, accordingly, necessary to direct the will in accordance with organic conditions and requirements. With the young the whole organism is *in the making*, and responsibility for its completion and full equipment for all requirements of adult life still rests with the Maker. We may be certain, therefore, that full provision for this necessary exercise up to the highest potentiality is to be found in the instinctive promptings of Nature (I use the term in its highest sense and with all reverence) impelling and guiding the will to the required end, with safeguards—as disinclination and fatigue—against injurious excess. Such provision is amply demonstrated by the great and

otherwise purposeless activity of body and mind, which is such a marked and pleasing feature of the spring-time of life; and its complete efficacy for the purpose intended is seen in all cases where it is allowed free scope, as in wild nature. Like a flowing stream, it may be aided and guided to such definite ends as are required, but cannot be forced against natural law.

Organic growth is no less essential to adult strength and stamina than is functional development, and, in the young, demands a certain share of available vital energy, thus putting a limit upon exercise considerably short of actual power at the time. This reserve force is, however, available in case of emergency or upon compulsion to prevent actual injury from overstrain; but if persistently drawn upon, it must be at the expense of growth and ultimate strength. A colt of two years, beyond its capering and frisking in the field, would, if put to it, be capable of a good deal of useful work; but his owner would never think of exacting this, well knowing that he would lose in the value of the horse much more than he would gain from the work of the colt. In certain districts of the country where, in comparatively recent years, the boys were put to hard bodily labour, the men were found to be stunted in growth, of poor physique, and short-lived. The boys did not appear to suffer in health, but had the appearance of *little men*, Nature, as it were, making the best of a bad business by hurriedly finishing off her work to meet present exigencies, and leaving the future to look after itself. There is much in connection with the competitive system for prizes, medals, and bursaries at school, and for Civil Service appointments later, which points in the same direction with regard to overstrain of the young mind. It is run upon very dangerous and, for those who enter at all keenly into the competition, almost certainly injurious lines, which, I hold, should be altogether barred.

V.

How, then, are these complex and mysterious conditions with regard to exercise to be gauged at all times and under all circumstances, and the well-being of all the muscles and of all the obscure and little-understood mental faculties and powers to be promoted and safeguarded? We can conceive of a deep and thorough study of anatomy enabling a gymnast to contrive a system of exercises which would bring every muscle—there are some two hundred of them—into action; but this could give no indication of the functional condition and capacity of any at any given time. Arbitrary dictation and compulsion by any outside authority are, therefore, utterly untrustworthy, and should not be attempted. Nature, on the other hand, acts from within each individual muscle in full cognisance of every condition and requirement, and with power to regulate exercise in strict accordance with such conditions and requirements, in association with a keen sense of pleasure. The effect of this impelling and guiding influence is seen in the young of all the higher animals, where the wanton exuberance of gambol, fun, and frolic, bringing every muscle into action with little or no reference to external conditions, continuous for periods, but with frequent intervals of rest, is the most familiar and pleasing aspect of young life, with the result of full and vigorous development in all cases where such instinctive exercise or play is given full scope. With this supreme and all-wise preceptor within there is need for outside interference only in the way of affording facilities. A gymnasium by all means, but Nature as the master and monitor in charge. Safety will be sufficiently ensured by the instinct of self-preservation, while courage and self-reliance will be inspired by freedom from outside interference.

The same reasoning holds good with regard to the mind; but if there could be degrees of the absolute, our entire dependence on Nature should be here even more pronounced. The muscles are all visible and tangible entities, and their mode of action is easily understood; but no anatomical study of the brain throws any light upon the action of the brain-cells in the evolution of mind. We can judge of the mental powers only by their outward manifestation. We know, however, that they are generated by, and are entirely dependent upon, a certain portion of the brain, any injury, disease, or congenital defect of which has a corresponding effect upon the mind. They are, therefore, subject to all organic conditions, requirements, and limitations. While we cannot differentiate organically between the various mental faculties and powers, we must realise that it is only through the organism, and thus under organic conditions, that they can be dealt with. As with the muscles, they can be developed in the young and kept up to strength in the adult only by exercise regulated in accordance with the vital and organic conditions existing at the time. Without exercise there can be no development and no mind; while action carried beyond the limits of exercise in the young must interfere with growth and ultimate strength and stamina, as we have seen to be the case with the muscles, and as there is much in the results of competitive and otherwise forced school-work to demonstrate.

In conclusion, I would suggest, as a ready means of giving effect to the foregoing principles and, I believe, providing a remedy for many of the ills that school teaching is heir to, the entire elimination of everything in the way of punishments and prizes as incentives to learning. Their only purpose is to drive the educative process on purely arbitrary lines, in total ignorance of the vital and physical conditions which, for safety and success, must rule at all times.

THE END.

THE LONG TRAIL.

By L. B. THOBURN-CLARKE.

I.

'*MAUSH!*' shrieked Chico, as, whirling his whip around his head, he brought the quivering lash with a swish upon the side of a big black dog that sat sullenly in front of the team.

The great brute snarled and showed his sharp white fangs in a savage grin, but did not move. Instead, he glanced with almost a contemptuous air at his companions, who were quarrelling angrily among themselves, in their wild frays mixing up the traces in the utmost confusion. Chico cursed in a *patois* of Indian, French, and English, as he untangled the traces and once more arranged the dogs.

'*Maush!*' again echoed over the silent, ice-bound river, but the great dog still remained sullen and motionless. In vain Chico thrashed, cursed, or entreated; Le Roi sat and snarled.

'Chico!' called a voice, and a tall, yellow-haired man came swiftly out of the gloom of the trees and hurried up. 'What's the matter?'

'Le Roi won't start,' growled Chico sullenly.

'Won't you, old fellow?' and Abe Smith turned and patted the black dog. 'You're a queer mixture, Le Roi. Which are you, dog or demon? Yet you're a faithful animal. I'd rather trust you than half the men I know. I guess you weren't going to start without your boss. Eh, old boy?'

The dog rose, and, wagging his great fluffy tail, drew his trace taut. In a few minutes the loaded sleigh was gliding swiftly over the frozen Paradise River. There was just enough snow upon the gleaming ice to make the going easy.

Abe Smith laughed gaily as he sprang rapidly forward, his snowshoes making a sort of rhythmical echo as they clicked lightly over the snow. It was a clear day, the sky a blue of an indescribable tint that heralds a still day amid the ice-bound regions of Labrador. It was early, the day having hardly more than dawned, and before its short course had been run he hoped to be up amid the forests, miles from his starting-point.

Again he laughed. For years the trappers had tried in vain to solve the mystery of the 'long trail' which began in Labrador and ended at St Johns. It was known only to the Indians, who came and went mysteriously, doing the seven hundred miles in ten days. Nothing would make them divulge the secret. No white man had ever solved it. Some had started, and had never returned to tell the tale. Others had penetrated the long chain of lakes which formed the river for thirty or forty miles (one man had accomplished ninety), but all had had to turn back—except the few, and no one knew where their bones rested.

Again Abe laughed. His laugh had a triumphant ring in it. He was to learn the secret at last. Chico, who had traversed the 'long trail' many times, would be his guide.

His fellow-trappers had warned him in vain of the dangers of the way; talked of Indians who would be jealous of his fathoming their cherished secret, and would probably take care that he never returned to betray it.

But he had laughed as gaily then as he did now, and repeated again and again, 'What an Indian can do, I can.'

'Chico,' he called to the Indian in front, 'what's the hunting like along the Paradise?'

'Plenty good,' replied the Indian stolidly. 'Plenty good all round here.'

'Of course I know what it's like around here,' Abe replied impatiently. 'But up in the mountains?'

'I don't know,' replied the Indian sullenly, glancing furtively about him as he spoke, and flicking a sulking dog with his whip. 'Indians hunt around the islands, and not in the mountains.'

Abe began again: 'Well, I will try next year. Now I'm going to St Johns. But, if the hunting's good, I'm up in the mountains next fall.'

Chico gazed ahead of him solemnly, as if he were debating some knotty point. His face grew sombre.

'No man hunts there,' he said. 'The head-waters of the Paradise are no good, and the mountains are bad—much bad.'

'What's the matter with them?' Abe asked; but Chico would only answer gloomily, 'Much bad.'

At last Abe grew tired of asking, and scanned the broad river for signs of game. The air was so clear that, except where the wooded islands obscured the view, they could see for miles. Suddenly a herd of caribou scudded past at a marvellous rate, but they were too far off for Abe to shoot.

Mile after mile was traversed until the wide lakes which composed the lower reaches of the Paradise ended and the river lay like a frozen torrent between high cliffs.

Chico paused, and called to the dogs to halt. They sank on their haunches, eyeing him expectantly.

'We'd better camp here to-night,' he said, pointing to a recess a few feet up the face of the cliff.

The dogs were fed and unharnessed. They disappeared to forage for themselves, but Le Roi sidled up to Abe's side and crouched

patiently while he gathered together sufficient drift-wood to light the fire.

'Well, old chap,' said Abe, laying a caressing hand on the dog's black coat, 'you're fond of me, and no mistake. Will you and I go hunting up among the mountains? Up where no white man has ever trod?'

The dog solemnly wagged his tail and watched his master prepare the simple supper, while Chico collected a pile of wood to keep up a roaring fire during the long winter night.

After eating their supper they rolled themselves in fur rugs and lay cosily under the sheltering roof of the cavern, screened by the fire beyond its mouth. The Indian smoked stolidly, but Abe soon dropped to sleep. Le Roi crouched beside him, half-sleeping, half-waking. Away in the pine forest the wolves drearily howled their hunting-cry.

The night passed slowly. Every now and then Chico rose and piled the wood high upon the fire. At times he listened, as if expecting to hear something.

At intervals the crouching dogs howled weirdly in answer to the distant wolves. Abe slept on unheedingly.

II.

Day after day passed in the weary ascent of the frozen river. Sometimes the stages were long, sometimes short, for Chico insisted on camping in spots where probably his race had camped for generations.

Instead of being situated as usual under the wide heavens, with a skin rug between two stakes for a break-wind, and a great fire in front, these camps were always in a recess under a cliff, or close in the lee of some rocks, which formed, with the great fire in front, a secure retreat, cutting off the outside world and the denizens of the forest.

Great pines towered on both sides of the river, and the tangled brushwood looked as if it had never been disturbed by man.

Abe scanned the snow to see if he could detect any trails. Occasionally on the broad frozen surface of the river the tracks of a sleigh or the prints of snowshoes were to be seen. Yet these never penetrated the primeval forest beyond the margin of drift-wood that marked the height of the spring floods.

The footprints of fox and other wild game were plentiful, and the animals were very tame. Several times Abe shot a fox quite close at hand. In spite of his wishes, Chico would not pause to set traps.

'It's not good,' he said. 'Not good. No Indian ever stay. No one ever hunt. It bad—mighty bad.'

He emphasised his words with a curse, and lashed at the dogs. For hours he maintained a sullen silence, broken only by the cry of '*Hu!*' or '*Chau!*' as he directed the team.

At last they reached the head of the river, and the trail branched off through the great pines, which looked as if they had stood, hoar and grim, since the days of the Flood. Underneath their shade a twilight lingered, and Abe felt awed by the sombre silence of the scene. Chico never spoke, beyond commands to the dogs. Even these were uttered in a low tone, as he urged them to their utmost speed. Every now and then he would pause and peer anxiously into the dim, twilight shadows, as if dreading something; then he would hurry the dogs on again.

Abe grew impatient under the sullen bearing of his guide, and purposely lingered behind, heeding not Chico's urgent injunctions to quicken his pace.

'We must make the Todaustock to-night,' Chico said anxiously. 'If not'—— He shrugged his shoulders, and made the sign of the cross.

The trail wound in and out of the giant trees. The tracks of game were plentiful, and Abe, cross at Chico's silence, determined to make a stand.

'I'm going to camp here for a few days and trap,' he said with decision. 'You can talk as much as you like, Chico. Here I stay.'

Chico eyed him angrily. 'No, no,' he said, glancing fearfully around. 'No, no; come on!'

'Why shouldn't I stay?'

The Indian did not answer for a few minutes. He stood as if turned to stone. To Abe's astonishment, the brown face wore a terrified look.

Away in the distance something crashed.

'There!' cried Chico in a tone of anguish.

'Well, what of that?'

The Indian did not answer, but, turning his dogs, fled madly back along the trail, leaving Abe gazing in astonishment after the fleeing form.

While he looked Le Roi came trotting back, the gnawed trace trailing behind him.

Abe laughed in his usual light-hearted fashion at the sight of the dog. Yet, though he felt no fear, he was glad of the company of the great 'huskie,' who was big and strong enough to pull down a large wolf.

'We're not frightened, old boy, are we?' said Abe, patting the dog. Then he examined his rifle.

Suddenly across the silence swept the sound of another crash, as if a tree had fallen. The air was so still that the sound echoed weirdly.

Abe walked some distance off the trail, but could see nothing. Here the forest was so dense that he could hardly make out objects a few yards distant. The sun was sinking fast, and the lengthening shadows warned him that unless he wished to be bushed he must regain the trail before darkness set in.

Even as it was, he had only just reached it when the sudden night came on. All around

the ground was strewn with giant trunks of trees which had hindered his progress during the search for the cause of the Indian's alarm. He piled up a mass of wood against a huge log, and setting fire to it, sat within the radius of its warmth, Le Roi crouching beside him.

Suddenly from all around came the crashing of timber. It appeared as if some giant beings were rending branches and tearing up trees in every direction. Even Abe began to grow alarmed, while Le Roi cowered shiveringly beside him.

There was not a sound to be heard for a moment, not even the tread of the softest foot-fall. Then the echoes would resound with the sudden wild crashing of trees and the swish of branches as they struck the earth.

It seemed for a few minutes as if unseen hands were wantonly destroying the forest. The succeeding silence was that of the grave. The wolves, which had haunted their steps for days and waked the echoes with their howls, were silent. Nothing broke the stillness but the weird, awe-inspiring crash of falling trees.

Abe felt his hair standing on end, and he piled on the firewood until the mounting flames cast strange fantastic shadows upon the snow around and lighted up the grim tree-trunks.

In vain he peered into the darkness—there was nothing to be seen. He could only hear the mysterious, ominous sounds. Sometimes these receded into the distance, then appeared to be close at hand. Once he fancied the firelight gleamed upon something white that reflected the ruddy glow; but in a second it had vanished, and he thought he had imagined it all.

The time passed like a nightmare, fraught with horror and unspeakable terror; but at last the grey dawn crept up over the trees and the weird crashings ceased. Worn out with the night's watching, Abe replenished the fire, and burying his face in his hands, dropped asleep. Le Roi crouched with head laid upon his paws, and half-slept, half-watched the awakening forest.

III.

The day had hardly dawned when Chico came hurrying along the trail, driving his team at a gallop. He paused in astonishment as he caught sight of the sleeping Abe.

'What!' he asked; 'he not get you?'

'No!' said Abe crossly. 'No thanks to you, Chico. Why did you run away?'

'No Indian live here. He die.'

'Nonsense!'

'No nonsense. He catch him. He crush him to death. Quite flat.'

'Who would?'

'He. All same *le Diable*. He live here.'

The terror upon Chico's face was very real, and Abe was, in the face of his own experience of the night before, fain to believe that there must be something to account for the man's fear.

'Look here, Chico; it's all moonshine your talking like this.'

'No moonshine,' returned the Indian stolidly. 'He here. He here every night. If Indian camp, he trample him to death.'

'Have you seen him?'

The Indian shook his head, glancing around him in terror. 'No one seen him.'

'Well, Chico, I heard "him," as you call the thing, last night, and I'm going to pick up his trail. I'll take Le Roi with me, and three of the fiercest of the team. You go back to the last camping-place, and I shall join you before it gets dark.'

Chico groaned, but silently bent and loosed three of the traces, which he handed to Abe. Then he piled some more logs on the fire, and seated himself with folded arms in front of it.

'I stay here two hours,' he said.

Abe walked rapidly away, turning once to gaze at Chico. He looked like an image cast in bronze, so stolid was his attitude.

The dogs trotted beside Abe fast enough, and he soon reached the spot where he thought he had seen the glimmer of white the night before. Nothing but rotting, frozen trunks of trees met his gaze—tree-trunks that had lain decaying for generations. He strode rapidly through the undergrowth until he had penetrated far into the forest. Suddenly the dogs shrank cowering back, and growled fiercely.

On the soft surface of a plain patch of snow was distinctly marked a huge footprint. It was so large that Abe gazed for minutes at it in awed astonishment. No animal that he knew could make a track like this. At first he thought it must be the trail of some monster bird, but he soon saw that, like all four-footed animals that walk through snow, this one had carefully placed its hindfeet in the tracks made by the forefeet.

Abe sat down on a log and viewed the prints, half-afraid to proceed, half-anxious to solve the mystery. He felt sure the creature that had left the tracks was close at hand, though he could neither hear nor see anything.

The dogs cowered close to him, whining miserably. He knew that the traces alone prevented them from fleeing back towards Chico, probably never to rest until they had returned to their kennels at the mouth of the river.

The indescribable sensation of being watched made Abe glance uneasily around.

'It's all imagination,' he asserted firmly, but all the same he peered into the forest with straining eyes. Setting his teeth and holding his rifle ready, he sprang from the log and strode forward.

An immense windfall of shattered pines, piled high by some fierce tornado, barred his way. He scrambled over the huge trunks.

Suddenly he saw a gleam of white. A vast unwieldy form confronted him—what, he could

hardly make out, for it vanished instantly. He heard a sound behind, and turned—to see looming up before him a great hairy monster. He was too astonished to do more than gaze up at the creature towering above him. His hands dropped nervelessly to his sides. Instinctively he still gripped his rifle, but the traces that held the dogs slipped from his fingers.

In an instant, with a wild, terrified howl, they dashed madly away, the forest echoing with their cries. Le Roi alone remained.

As if suddenly awakened to activity, the forest appeared to be peopled with hundreds of the enormous monsters. In every direction branches and undergrowth crashed as if torn by gigantic hands.

What happened Abe could hardly tell. Two wicked eyes gleamed angrily. Something white flashed backwards and forwards. Automatically he raised his rifle and fired. The great object shook its head furiously, and then something long, dark, and sinewy swept out and wound quiveringly around him.

It grew tighter. He fought frantically with both hands to loosen the great trunk that was crushing him in its strong embrace. All was in vain. Above him a red, open mouth yawned, and he was jerked against immense tusks on both sides.

Was the monster going to eat him? he wondered, even in that moment of awful terror remembering that elephants usually throw human beings with a crash away from them. But was this an elephant—this awful thing, covered with long hair that brushed his face?

He tried to reach the tomahawk he carried in his belt, but the animal's trunk was too firmly wound around him to permit him to get at the handle.

He was swayed roughly to and fro. Soon he felt he would be hurtling through space, to be dashed against the great pines that towered around him. In frantic despair, he tried to crush the trunk with his hands, but apparently the monster cared nothing for his puny efforts.

The long sweep of the trunk grew wider and wider. His eyes swam and his brain reeled with the wild movement. Suddenly Le Roi uttered a fierce cry of utter despair, and sprang furiously at the trunk that imprisoned his master. The sharp, wolf-like jaws closed upon the end of the trunk and snapped to like a trap.

The monster gave a snort of pain, and dropping Abe, turned on the dog. The force of the impetus threw Abe into the recesses of the windfall. He was bruised and shaken, but unhurt, and quickly scrambled under the sheltering logs. Fortunately they were large enough to form some protection against the fury of the animal.

Le Roi had his work cut out, for the monster thrashed around in wild rage, endeavouring in his unwieldy way to catch the dog, who edged nearer and nearer to where Abe lay hidden.

Suddenly, with a final snarl, Le Roi retreated, tail first, into the hollow under the windfall, and, still growling, crouched down beside his master.

The huge animal attempted to reach them, trying vainly to pull aside the giant logs which formed their hiding-place. Every time the trunk came near enough Le Roi buried his teeth in its sinewy length, until, snorting with rage, the animal rushed madly from the scene.

Abe could hear the whole herd crashing wildly through the undergrowth. Then all was silent.

He waited for a while in case they should reappear; but, finding that they had apparently stampeded, he crept out, bruised and weak from the conflict.

With many a backward glance he hurried to where Chico still sat, like a stolid bronze statue, beside the burning fire.

Chico looked up with dim, terrified eyes when Abe came up. 'You saw *him*?' he asked.

'Saw him, felt him,' muttered Abe; 'and you can go for all you're worth. The sooner we're off this darned trail the better I'll be pleased. Why didn't you tell me your *le Diable* was a great woolly elephant with curly tusks?'

But Chico only groaned and harnessed up the team. 'I never see him,' he said softly.

. . . . . .

Abe's tale was laughed at by men who knew better than to believe that the mammoth still lived. The trappers and the Indians, however, believed his tale, for haven't they seen the tracks and heard the crashing? But, they add, *le Diable* takes many forms. And Abe cannot convince them that the monster he met was a living animal.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SCREW PLUGS FOR PLASTER WALLS.

MOST of us at one time or another have been 'up against' the difficulty of hanging heavy pictures safely on a plaster wall, or of fixing thereto shelves which can be relied upon to carry any considerable weight of books. It is true that large holes can be made and plugged with wood to take the nails or the screws, but unless the work is very carefully done the result cannot be depended upon, while the wall is often disfigured. To overcome this difficulty plugs of stiffened fibre have been invented, which are driven into holes in the plaster. It is essential that a clean hole of the correct size should be made, and for this purpose a spoon bit or

a bullet-nosed bit is recommended. The plug should be gently tapped in, and it is then ready for the screw. A small hole is provided for the screw, which, as it goes in, expands the fibre, and causes the plug to take a firm hold of the wall. For fixing thin articles, such as name-plates, it is advisable to open out the screw-holes in the plugs with a gimlet; otherwise the plugs may be split by the thicker plain parts of the screws as they enter, and the edges of the holes in the plaster chipped away. These plugs are also suitable for fixing articles to brick walls or for taking pins to hold down carpets on stone or tile floors.

ANOTHER FIRELESS COOKER.

New fuelless cookers, which work on the principle of the now well-known hay-box, still continue to make their appearance on the market, and it is evident that this idea, which was imported from Scandinavia, has come to stay. One of the most recent of these cookers is known as the 'British Queen.' It is made of tinplate throughout, with a myrtle-green hard stove-enamelled outer shell. It is cylindrical in form, and the smallest size—suitable for a household of three or four persons—measures externally eleven and a half inches in both diameter and depth. A space of about two inches between the outer shell and the inner container is filled with material specially selected for its heat-retaining qualities, while the top is closed by a push-in lid constructed in a similar way. An extra refinement not found in other fireless cookers is a cork disc, of the same diameter as the lid, which is sewn up between two discs of unbleached calico, the latter extending a couple of inches beyond the cork. This contrivance is laid over the mouth of the cooker, and the lid is pushed down over it, with the result that the cork disc gives extra heat insulation, while the edge of the calico makes an airtight joint between the lid and the container. Two four-pint saucepans and a six-pint porridge-pot are supplied for use with this size of cooker. A deeper model of the same diameter is made, also a double cooker with two inner containers side by side in one outer shell.

A NEW KNIFE-SHARPENER.

Many devices other than the well-known steel or carborundum rod have been invented for the purpose of sharpening the domestic knife, the object, of course, being to produce a tool that will do the work quickly, while demanding a minimum of skill from the operator. Of these devices perhaps the most successful is that which consists of two or three hardened steel discs, mounted upon two spindles so that their edges slightly overlap, the discs of one set being interposed between those of the other. The action on the knife-edge when it is passed across between the discs partakes more of the nature of *rubbing* than of *cutting*; hence the appliance soon ceases to be effective. An improved adaptation of this principle is found in the 'Sharpquik' knife-sharpener, in which only two discs are employed. The edges of these overlap, as in the multiple disc device, but do not touch, being about one-sixteenth of an inch apart. By passing the knife across at a small angle the sharp corners of the discs are brought into play, and actually cut the steel. The discs turn stiffly, and may be moved round occasionally to give fresh cutting-edges.

SALVED PARTS MAKE ONE WHOLE SHIP.

The cutting in two and joining together again of a steel ship offers no difficulty; nor is the vessel weakened by the process, being as strong after the operation as it was before. Many ships have been cut in two and lengthened by putting a piece into the middle, the most noteworthy example being one of the Union Castle liners; while during the war ships were so urgently needed that many of the steamers plying upon the great lakes of North America, which are practically identical with ocean-going vessels, were cut in two to allow of their being brought through the Welland Canal to the Atlantic seaboard. Here they were joined up again, and despatched to Allied ports, loaded with food or war material. Astonishing as is the feat of joining together two halves of the same vessel, a still more extraordinary operation was carried out during the war—that of patching the bow half of one ship on to the stern half of another. The British Navy at one time contained the two destroyers *Zulu* and *Nubian*, which were almost identical ships. Both were unfortunate enough to strike mines, with the result that the bow of the former and the stern of the latter were blown to pieces. Owing to the strength of the water-tight bulkheads, however, neither vessel sank, and both were eventually towed to the same dockyard. Here the salved portions were docked in their correct positions and joined together, the result being known as H.M.S. *Zubian*—a happy combination of the two original names.

BREEDING FISH TO EXTERMINATE MOSQUITOES.

That the larvæ of mosquitoes breed in water is now common knowledge, as well as the fact that these insects are responsible for the spread of malaria. It is most important, therefore, that they should be reduced in numbers, even if their total extermination cannot be effected. Until recently the only method (apart from drainage) of keeping down the mosquito pest was to pour paraffin into the pools of water in which they breed, a very small quantity being sufficient for the purpose, as it spreads in a thin film over a large surface, and prevents the development of the larvæ. Unfortunately neither of these preventive measures can be applied to many waters for obvious reasons, but it has been found that

certain species of fish, by feeding on the larvæ, are most helpful in combating the scourge. According to its last annual report, the United States Bureau of Fisheries, co-operating with the Public Health Service in protecting soldiers from malaria, made every effort to encourage the growth of top minnows (Gambusia) in the waters of the district, it having been fully demonstrated that this species was most effective in destroying the mosquito larvæ under certain conditions. These conditions, which include the presence of various plant-growths, rise and fall in water-level, wave-action, and other factors, are being made the subject of further investigation.

NEW HEAT-RESISTING ALLOY.

Most people are aware that the frequent placing of a poker in the fire until it is red-hot leads to a wasting of the poker. This wasting is due to oxidation, or what we should call rust if the poker were cold, and it goes on very quickly under the influence of heat. In fact, if the poker be heated up to a bright yellow, actual flakes of rust will appear when it cools. Again, the poker when red-hot is very easily bent, which means that iron and steel lose their rigidity at high temperatures. Hitherto all the commoner metals and alloys have been affected by heat in these directions, and only some very costly alloys of steel retain their rigidity and resist oxidation at high temperatures. Platinum, of course, withstands almost any temperature; but as it costs more than gold, its commercial uses are limited to small crucibles for chemical laboratories, and to the connections through the glass in electric glow-lamps. Recently a new alloy has been introduced which retains its rigidity at high temperatures and is hardly oxidised at all. According to the *Scientific American*, it contains about 60 per cent. nickel and 14 per cent. chromium, the remainder being chiefly iron. It can be cast easily, and is tough at high temperatures, the latter fact being often demonstrated by the makers on a three-quarter-inch plate, which is made red-hot and struck in the middle with a twenty-pound sledge-hammer when supported only at the ends. Under these conditions the metal shows stubborn resistance to bending. At temperatures of eighteen hundred to two thousand degrees Fahrenheit a bar of the new alloy one inch square can be pulled in two only by a strain of thirty thousand pounds; when cold its tensile strength is increased to from forty-five to fifty thousand pounds. It melts at two thousand eight hundred degrees Fahrenheit (a dazzling white-heat). Many uses can be found for an alloy with these qualities—for example, in the construction of exhaust-valves in motors for cars and aeroplanes, and of the corresponding parts in large oil-engines, which at present are made of iron or steel, and have to be continuously cooled by circulating water through and around them. Boxes for containing small parts to be annealed in furnaces might also be made of it, the fact that it does not waste allowing of thinner and lighter containers than are ordinarily employed. The makers of the new alloy utilise it in the construction of the chain necessary for carrying wire slowly through the annealing-furnace. Last, but not least, experiments have indicated the possibility of using the alloy in place of plumbago in the manufacture of crucibles for melting brass, copper, and other alloys and metals.

A NEW MILK SAUCEPAN.

The ordinary milk saucepan has retained its present form of an inner pan fitting into an outer container for so many years that one might be excused for assuming that it was incapable of improvement. Such, however, is by no means the case, an improved utensil for boiling milk, known as the 'Melton Milk-Boiler,' having lately been put on the market. Instead of the inner and outer pans being separate, they are permanently fixed together. The outer pan is cylindrical, and is fitted with a lid and a handle. The inner pan fits the outer at the top, where the two are soldered together; but it becomes smaller towards its bottom, which is rounded to facilitate cleaning. Owing to the fact that the inner pan is not so deep as the outer pan, while the former is in the shape of an inverted cone, a considerable space for water is left between them. When the saucepan is held by the handle, a pipe will be found on the right-hand side, which springs from the side near the bottom and rises upwards to a little above the lid. This pipe somewhat resembles the spout of a watering-can, but as it rises nearly straight upwards, the joint extends almost to the top of the pan. At the bottom of this pipe is a hole into the outer pan for allowing water to be poured in, while near the top a smaller hole lets out the air. When the saucepan is tipped over to the left to pour out the boiling milk, the water cannot escape, as the filling-pipe is uppermost; but if it is desired to empty out the water, the boiler can be tipped towards the right. This utensil is made of stout, heavily tinned plate, and can be obtained in several sizes.

CONSCIOUS INSENSIBILITY.

The local application of cocaine is a well-known device for deadening the pain of minor operations, and many readers of this Journal must have experienced the beneficial effects of such treatment when having their teeth attended to by a dentist. Some years ago this process was carried a stage farther by the injection of cocaine or some similar drug into the spinal column, whereby all sensibility was removed from the lower limbs. Dr Le Fillatre, a French surgeon, has lately discovered a method of rendering the whole body insensible to pain,

while leaving the patient fully conscious. A puncture is made with an injection-needle at the lower end of the spinal column while the patient is seated upon a table with his legs stretched out before him. The liquid surrounding the spinal cord begins to issue from the puncture, and when a sufficient amount has flowed, depending on the degree of insensibility which it is required to produce, says the *Scientific American*, the surgeon applies the syringe with the cocaine or other solution and pushes in the contents. This action is repeated until the requisite mixture of cocaine and spinal fluid is obtained. Almost any kind of surgical operation can then be performed on the patient without his feeling any pain, although he retains full consciousness.

MOTOR-SPIRIT FROM PEAT.

Various uses for peat and the products to be obtained from it have been alluded to in these notes on several occasions. One of the most recent of peat derivatives is alcohol, which is largely used in Sweden for motor-cars and motor-boats. According to the *Svensk Handelstidning*, a little over one and a half gallons of alcohol can be obtained from two hundredweights of dried peat, a yield which differs little from that secured from potatoes. The treatment consists in boiling the peat with sulphuric acid under pressure, thus producing a sugar solution, which is transformed into alcohol after lime has been introduced to neutralise the acid. The solid matter left over is utilised as fuel in the form of briquettes. This process having proved successful experimentally, a factory is to be built for working it, and the Swedish Government has conceded to the shareholders the right to buy the alcohol for their motor-boats and cars without reference to Government prohibitions and maximum prices.

THE EQUIVALENT OF A TWENTY-SIX-THOUSAND-MILE RUN WITHOUT MOVING.

A run of many thousands of miles by a motor-car, either on the road or on a prepared track, in order to test its powers of endurance, can be carried out only at a high cost; while little publicity accrues from a trial of this character. With a view to reducing the cost of such a test, and at the same time securing a considerable amount of public attention, some Boston manufacturers of motor-cars recently hit upon the plan of testing a car by making the back-wheels drive a dynamo instead of carrying the car forward. This test was carried out in a large show-room fronting upon a busy street, and attracted large crowds. The back-wheels were provided with flat rims for a belt in place of the usual tires, and all the wheels were, of course, packed up clear of the ground. The power required to drive the dynamo was equal to that needed on the road when the car was climbing a 10½ per cent. gradient at about twenty-two miles an hour. The test undergone was much more severe than actual work on the road, where a car is often coasting downhill or using only a very small amount of power on a good level road. The trial was continued without a stop until the total number of revolutions corresponded with a distance of over twenty-six thousand miles, the consumption of petrol being one thousand one hundred and sixty-three gallons, or almost twenty-two and a half miles to the gallon. A record was also kept of the quantity of lubricating oil used, which amounted to twenty-seven and a half gallons. A considerable monetary saving is effected by this form of endurance trial as compared with one on the road, as the chauffeur need not be in constant attendance, and no additional expense is incurred owing to his absence from home. Moreover, the electric current generated can often be utilised for providing light and power in the showroom or factory, thus effecting a saving in another direction.

THE GERM OF YELLOW-FEVER.

The medical correspondent of *The Times* has recently drawn attention to the description given by Professor Noguchi of a germ discovered by him which he believes to be the cause of yellow-fever. This organism belongs to the class known as spirochaetes, of which the spirochaete of syphilis and that of relapsing fever are other members. 'If the discovery is confirmed,' the correspondent goes on to say, 'it will add another link to the wonderful chain of discoveries forged in connection with this disease. The fever was first described in Barbados in 1647. Its dreadful virulence soon earned for it an evil reputation, and became a matter of world-wide concern when in the so-called "great period" of the fever it visited Cadiz in five epidemics, Malaga, Lisbon, Seville, Barcelona, Palma, Gibraltar, and other European towns. At Lisbon in 1857 some six thousand persons died in a few weeks. The fever remained a mystery up till 1881, when Dr Charles Finlay, of Havana, propounded the idea that mosquitoes carried the infection. The view found small support at first, but later Sir Ronald Ross's work on malaria reawakened interest in it. Then came the Spanish-American war, and the appointment of a commission by the American Government to investigate Finlay's theory. The workers began by collecting the suspected mosquitoes, allowing them to feed on yellow-fever patients, and then submitting themselves to the bites. Their labours were crowned with immediate success, though lives of great value were heroically sacrificed. It was proved that the mosquito *Stegomyia fasciata* is the agent of infection, that the virus of the disease is present in the blood during the first days of infection, and that "the germ is so small that it can pass through a Chamberland filter." In-

fection could not be produced till after several days from the time when the mosquito had bitten the yellow-fever patient, so that it was evident that the germ underwent some change in the body of its insect host. This work furnished the material of the wonderful campaign by which Gorgas cleansed the Panamá Canal zone of yellow-fever, and so made possible the completion of that work. Gorgas came to Panamá from Havana, from which he had driven the scourge in about a year, though the place was a famous hotbed of this dread disease. His method was to attack the mosquito in its breeding-places, and to exclude it, so far as was possible, from contact with fever cases. Professor Noguchi's work on "filter-passing germs" is well known. It is also a matter of common knowledge that from time to time the suggestion has been offered that the spirochaetes pass through two stages of development, one of these stages being of an extremely minute type. Whether or not this view will receive confirmation through the new discovery remains to be seen. In all matters bacteriological it is necessary to keep an open mind until proof of an absolute kind has been forthcoming.'

THE REMOVAL OF LARGE BUILDINGS INTACT.

The Americans have always been noted for the movement intact from one site to another of buildings which other nations would pull to pieces and reconstruct. Not only is this operation carried out on land, but also across water, the structures being floated on pontoons and towed to their destinations by powerful tugs. A recent enterprise of this nature was the removal of one of the San Francisco World's Fair buildings from the Exposition grounds twenty-three miles down San Francisco Bay to San Carlos. This structure weighs over one thousand tons, and measures one hundred and thirty feet in length, is forty-five feet high, and eighty feet wide. It was towed to its new site by two tugs, and placed in position on shore, where it is to serve as a clubhouse, the task being performed without injury to the building. Another interesting American removal was that of a complete railway-station brick building measuring over two hundred feet in length, but with a width of only thirty-three feet. The *modus operandi* was to lay a massive wood and steel frame below the bottom of the foundations, this part of the work being done in short sections, so that only very small lengths of wall were left unsupported at one time. Jacks were then used to raise the building up to ground-level, where it was placed on steel rollers and moved along on a prepared track to a site fifty yards away. Pulley-blocks and windlasses worked by hand-power were used to haul the structure along, and the removal proceeded at the rate of about thirty feet an hour. The operations were handicapped by adjacent buildings, the existence of which involved slewing round the station to obtain a straight course.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

MARTHA.

A BUSY soul was Mrs Brown;
She tidied up, she tidied down.
Never more vigilant a warder
Challenged the forces of disorder.

Her swift, exploratory broom
Ravaged the corners of the room;
She scrubbed and scoured, she swept and polished,
Till dirt was glad to be abolished.

Her homing husband she would greet
With, 'Are you *sure* you wiped your feet?'
She cleaned in spring, she cleaned in autumn;
She squashed the beetles when she caught 'em.

The famished cockroach fled the hall,
Where no neglected crumb could fall;
The spider sighed, and took his rigging
Away to some securer digging.

The sunshine always caused her pain—
It made the motes so very plain;
And what's the use of woman's working
When microscopic foes are lurking?

The country, to this critic's eye,
Lacked tidiness and symmetry;
She very much preferred the city
As being, on the whole, less gritty.

The fields, there was much cause to fear,
Had not been swept for many a year.
The cow was an uncleanly critter.
And why were woods in such a litter?

So, in the end, it broke her heart:
She died, still true to Martha's part,
Renouncing, at the age of thirty,
A world that's obstinately dirty.

And now—just think of her disgust
If she but knew!—she, too, is dust;
And, stultified in their last slumber,
Her ashes swell the great world's lumber.

R. B.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

PETITE SIMUNDE.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles; Mr Craighouse of New York, Satirist;* &c.

PART I.

I.

THREE hundred miles north of Toronto, the Cobalt mining country surrenders its daily toll of silver to the world. In that region there is mostly rock. Where woods exist, the trees are gaunt and defiant, as though resentful of the approach of man; in winter they stand like white-shrouded ghosts, and the wind howls dismally through them until in the little settlements across Lake Timiskaming men draw closer to the fire, and women croon comfort to frightened children, yet half-believe, themselves, the Indian legend that another soul is on its way to the Great Unknown.

Five miles north of Cobalt the town of Haileybury straggles down a hill to the lake, on the other side of which can be seen the blue shores of Pontiac, Quebec, where lies the sleepy little hamlet known as Ville Marie, possessed of its church, its wayside public-house, 'Les Voyageurs,' and a few vagabond frame buildings. The ring of the blacksmith's anvil can be heard throughout the day, for there is little else to drown the noise. But when the lumber-jacks come in from the woods, or the river-runners from their convoys of logs, there is always the sound of a noisy chorus from 'Les Voyageurs,' led (in the times we write of) by Pierre Generaud, who knew that singing a constant fortissimo stimulates thirst in participants and auditors alike. On Sunday there is the sound of the organ, and the villagers walk about in ill-fitting garments of respectability: a simple God-fearing community, knowing no world but their own, and finding their joy of life in mere existence.

It was gathering dusk, one summer evening in the year 1914, when the figure of a young officer wended its way towards 'Les Voyageurs.'

He had crossed from Haileybury on the afternoon boat, causing not a little comment by the uniform he wore. All in the mining country knew him as 'Dug' Campbell, manager of the Curran Lake Mine—they were hardly prepared for the sudden transition from his usual costume of riding-breeches, brown shirt, and lumberman's boots to the trappings of a British officer. He was a young man of big stature, with broad, restless shoulders that seemed to chafe under the bondage of a tunic, and he had a long, loose-limbed stride oddly at variance with the common conception of military bearing. His eyes were light blue, his hair an unruly brown that flirted with red—and his name was Campbell. Such men do not wait for the second call when there is war.

Wherever civilisation is forcing her right of way, wherever she is fighting for her existence, the descendants of Scotland will be found. When a new railroad struggles over unnamed rivers and through untrodden forests, somewhere ahead there is always a son or a grandson of old Scotia, whose eyes are a humorous blue and whose hair has more than a tinge of red. There is no part of the world to which the Scot is a stranger, but he rises to his best in a new country where waterfalls must be harnessed to give power, where great rocks must be blasted from age-old foundations, where rebellious nature in her primeval state must be taught that the world was made for man.

On that August evening in that most fateful of years, the figure of Captain Douglas Campbell, tall and somewhat rugged, like one of the northern trees, might have served as a sculptor's model for the spirit of Scotland confirming and strengthening the purpose of young Canada.

Rich in tradition as she is, what glory of her past can Scotland have that is greater than this—that, strong in the manhood which seems to spring from the soil of the country, she sent her sons to every corner of the world; and when the shadow of war fell upon her—they came back? Sons, grandsons, those to whom their Scottish blood was little more than a family legend, *they came back.*

Scotland needs no other monument than those three words.

II.

Nearing 'Les Voyageurs' the young officer paused at a sudden burst of sound that came from the inn. In place of the usual chorus, one voice, a slovenly but powerful one, was bellowing forth a ribald song, remarkable only for its noisy coarseness. Reaching the hostelry, Campbell hammered at the door, which was opened by mine host himself.

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'Ah!' he gesticulated eloquently; 'Monsieur Cam-pell!' (Pierre Generaud, like other French-Canadians, invariably reversed his accents on English words). 'For why you come, eh?'

'My dear Generaud, must I give a reason for visiting the famous "Les Voyageurs"?'

'Ah! By gosh, no!' Generaud beamed welcome from every pore—then struck an attitude of despair. 'You come, is it not, as an *officier*, perhaps no—yes?'

'Yes. I want to speak just for a minute to the men inside.'

'Oh, *mais non!*' The good host's gesture was a masterpiece, even among a race of gesticulators. 'Not to-night, monsieur.'

'And why not?'

'By Gar! Who you theenk is inside now? Listen—she sing!'

Campbell was too well acquainted with the universal French-Canadian use of the feminine pronoun to express any surprise when 'she' proved to be the possessor of the aforesaid raucous, bass voice, which had broken into some song anent the passion of a sailor for a Portuguese young lady of great charm but doubtful modesty.

'Who is our friend?' asked the officer.

'What! you know not? She is the terrible Des Rosiers!'

'Well, I don't like Mr Des Rosiers's voice.'

'You nevair hear her name, monsieur? Sometime she is call "Jacque Noir." *Mon Dieu!*—she sleep with *le diable*.'

The landlord's eyes grew wide with horror; his shoulders contracted until they touched his ears.

'Look here, my friend,' said Campbell, with a touch of impatience, 'Jacque Noir or Jacque Rouge or Jacque Blanc is not going to keep me out here.'

'But, monsieur, once she *keel* a man.'

'My dear fellow'——

'One winter a man has insult Des Rosiers, and—*voilà!* Jacque Noir *burn* her house—*keel* her family—*murdair* her'——

With a laugh, the newly created officer thrust the little man aside and entered the sacred precincts of 'Les Voyageurs.' A big, dirty, bearded fellow, of about thirty years of age, was leaning against the counter, waving a mug and bellowing a song. He looked formidable enough, but hardly justified the diabolical qualities attributed to him by Pierre Generaud. In spite of his unshaven face with its bloodshot, inebriated eyes, there was something not unpleasing about the man, and when his lips parted they disclosed teeth that were gleaming white.

A group of villagers sat in open-mouthed admiration beneath the singer, for Des Rosiers's reputation had gathered velocity like a snowball rolling down the side of a hill, gaining in size every time it came into contact with the drifts of rumour, until it had become almost a legend of wickedness. His audience felt a timid pride in the event. It was almost as if his Satanic Majesty himself had condescended to appear from below and sing comic songs for their benefit.

On the entrance of the officer the song ceased, and all eyes were turned to the new-comer.

'*Hola!*' said Des Rosiers, with extraordinary resonance. 'You drink by me, *eh bien?*'

'No, thanks. I must only stay a minute.'

'You no drink?' roared the lumber-jack, whose hospitality was not unlike the forcefulness of the muscular Christian in 'Androcles and the Lion.' 'You drink, or, by Gar! I brak your neck.'

A hum of admiration rose from the villagers. They bore no possible malice towards the officer, but it was gratifying to find Jacque Noir living up to his reputation.

'*Messieurs*,' said Campbell, ignoring the gentleman in question, 'there is a war. *La belle France* fights for her life, and Canada must help. She needs you—and you—and you.'

With their meagre knowledge of English, he was forced to a simplicity of language that depended for effect almost entirely on the personal appeal. 'Come with me to the war. We pay you one dollar ten a day, and your wife and *garçons* get money too.'

Mr Des Rosiers laughed, scornfully and sonorously. 'I laugh,' he said. 'You theenk we go to war, and you English, by Gar! no leave Canada, but steal all we leave behind. The French-Canadian—he go; the English-Canadian, *non*.' He roared a vile oath, and laid his hand on Campbell's shoulder. 'I brak your neck,' he said comfortingly.

In a moment Campbell's tunic was off and he was facing Jacque Noir. 'You are a liar, Des Rosiers,' he said. 'You are the greatest liar and the worst singer in the province of Quebec.'

The Frenchman tore the red kerchief from his neck and hurled his mug to the floor, where it broke into a hundred pieces. 'By gosh, me!' he bellowed in a voice that would have terrified a bull; 'I *keel* you!'

He advanced in windmill fashion, but his opponent, who had been the best boxer of his year at Toronto 'Varsity, stopped him with a blow known technically as a 'straight left to the jaw.' Des Rosiers paused to collect his thoughts. He was wondering whether to kick with one foot or with both, when something happened, and oblivion settled over him like the curtain on the last act of a melodrama. Campbell had stepped forward, and, putting his shoulder behind it, had delivered a blow on the lower part of the jaw with force enough to fell an ox. For Des Rosiers the rest was silence.

Concluding his recruiting speech to the dazed villagers, Campbell put on his tunic and strode quietly down the street. . . . But the fall of Mr Pecksniff in the eyes of Tom Pinch was not more complete than the collapse of their idol, Jacque Noir, in the eyes of the inhabitants of Ville Marie.

III.

A sky that was hung with stars looked down upon the shimmering roof-tops of Haileybury. The streets were deserted, except the main thoroughfare, where a group of men were seated in an irregular line, their pipes glowing in the darkness. They had been there since dusk.

Midnight passed, and the shadowy line grew longer as each hour struck. Men with heavy packs; men with the mud of the northern wilderness still on their boots; men who had walked for sixty miles; men whose beardless chins bespoke the schoolboy of a year before; men whose faces would have looked coarse and cruel in any light but that of the stars; one by one or in pairs they came. For each there was a yell of welcome, a ribald jest or two—then silence once more, and the glowing pipes. The first glimmering streaks of dawn showed the queue in all its picturesque grotesqueness. The man in front was leaning against a frame store that bore the placard, 'Recruiting Office.

Some three thousand miles away, a Hohenzollern Emperor had said that the British Empire would crumble into disintegration at the first sound of war. And through the forests of the north and over weary trails men were staggering on, mile after mile, fearful of only one thing—that they might be too late to answer the call which had come from across the Atlantic, speeding over forests, cities, prairies, lakes, and mountains, until echo answered from the shores of the Pacific coast.

The early boat from Ville Marie discharged its half-dozen passengers. A powerfully built French-Canadian strode up the hill, and stopped at the crowd of men. With a worried contraction of his heavy eyebrows he surveyed the formidable length of the line.

'Godam!' said he.

Heedless of the jests and the comments of the mob, he went slowly down the line, carefully scrutinising each man, until he stopped at a half-breed Indian. For a moment only they argued in French; then he produced a roll of dollar notes in one hand, and brandished the other hand threateningly in the half-breed's face. The combined arguments proved too much; when the enrolment of recruits took place, number eighteen was Jacque Des Rosiers, sworn to serve His Majesty the King for the duration of the war and six months afterwards—in witness whereof he had drawn an inky cross after his name.

It would be difficult to give the exact motive for his action. He probably had never heard of Belgium, but—well, take horns and tail from the devil, and what is left?

Three weeks later the company of amateur soldiers were warned to proceed to the concentration camp. Willing, but puzzled by the infliction of army discipline, they had struggled past the first pitfalls of recruitship. For the sake of Captain Douglas Campbell, their 'boss,' they suppressed their grumbling and submitted to the rites and ceremonies of military routine, arguing that, inexplicable as it was, it had some connection, however remote, with the ultimate goal of warfare. The afternoon before their departure Campbell addressed them for exactly five minutes. His hair looked redder and his eyes seemed bluer than before. With his powerfully built shoulders and the rhythm of his muscles that lent a grace to his entire body, despite its ruggedness, he recalled the Athenian age of physical perfection.

'Look here, you fellows,' he said, 'you signed up to fight—so did I. We will fight, too; but Kitchener can't use us until we're ready. You wonder what all this drill is about. Well, here's my idea about it. There isn't a coward in this crowd; there isn't a man who wouldn't go down a shaft after a pal, even if the chances were a hundred to one against his coming back. But you're not ready for the front. You've got the heart, but your bodies must have training and discipline. Watch me with this cigarette. In flicking the ash I burn my finger; the next time I want to touch the ash, my finger avoids it by a quarter of an inch. I laugh and try again. You all know what I mean. I am not afraid of the cigarette, but my finger is. If you've ever been kicked in the leg by a horse, the next time that horse kicks, which of your legs is drawn back first? In some strange way your body has instincts of its own, and though you might have a heart like a bull, your muscles and nerves—your body—might fail you when you needed them most. As I understand the army system, it is to train you to obey, not only mentally, but physically. Eight months from now we may be lying half-dead, with the enemy's guns playing hell all around us. We may want to quit, we may be "all in," but if the order comes to advance, we'll go forward, because our bodies will be disciplined to obey.

'Be patient then, men, and just smile when things go wrong. I would gladly have gone with you in the ranks, and there are lots of you chaps better able to lead than I, but a commission was given to me, and I'm out to do my best with the finest company of men in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. I'm learning all the time—as you are. You will have bad times, and so shall I; but let's help each other to grin and make the best of it, for, after all, we're just great big children playing a mighty big game. . . . And when we reach France, we'll show them all that the old Cobalt gang is afraid of nothing in this world or the next.'

They cheered—and the man who shouted loudest was Jacque Des Rosiers. . . . And somewhere in the speech *esprit de corps* had been born.

(*Continued on page 442.*)

THE GROWTH OF TROUT.

By A. T. JOHNSON.

ALTHOUGH romance has invested the trout with a reputation for living upon flies, thus elevating it to a plane which is as far removed as can be from that of the unclean, grovelling chub and his tribe, practical anglers know full well that the trout is at heart a 'bottom-fisher.' His tastes may be rather more refined than those of the eel, his instincts superior to those of the chub; but the fact remains that flies form a comparatively small part of the trout's daily fare. True, the coming of the March Brown to our more northerly streams, and the Mayfly's appearance on the more idle waters of the south, may synchronise with the periods at which trout in those areas reach the zenith of their condition. And we cannot deny that fish which have the good fortune to stuff themselves to the gills with Green Drakes and Spent Gnats are rendered more fat and lusty thereby. But these feasts are things of a day. That which is the prime factor in promoting the welfare of the trout must be looked for below the waters.

Most anglers are well aware that, whilst the trout of some little brook which wanders slowly through meadow-land are frequently plump and hearty in March, or even earlier, those in the rapid waters of the adjacent hillside are often thin and not worth taking at the end of April. The determining factor here in the quality of the fish is undoubtedly bottom-feeding. Slow-running streams naturally provide more aquatic insect life than streams with rocky beds. Not only do they afford more congenial breeding-haunts and homes for the innumerable little water creatures which constitute the bulk of the trout's bill of fare, but they usually flow through land which is richer in vegetation and in terrestrial insects. When mountain trout are poor and flabby, it indicates that they are the victims of spare diet. 'It is,' as the late Mr Andrew Lang used to say, 'the *grub* that tells.' Or, to quote another good and witty sportsman and writer, Mr G. S. Marryat, 'while floating food (that is, flies) is *caviare*, sunk or mid-water food is *beef* to the fish.'

It will, however, be necessary, before going into the question of how we can provide our ill-conditioned trout with a more generous living, to make clearer what its present food actually is. The trout's larder is the river-bed. There the staple diet of the fish consists of caddis, the larvæ of ephemeridæ, perlidæ (the Stone-fly of the north), and of numerous other water-bred insects, fresh-water shrimps, water-fleas, shell-fish, molluscs, and many such lowly forms of life. Now, most of these creatures require, for some part of their career at least, rather deep, quiet waters in which to live. If such places possess a bottom of muddy sediment in addition to vegetation, living and decayed, aquatic and otherwise, so much the more numerous will be the 'small game' which provide dinner for the prince of sporting fishes.

This bottom-feeding has so great an influence upon the growth of trout that some of the best authorities contend that, while a six-year-old fish which is well fed will often weigh three pounds, another in poorer water may scale only a few ounces. Food of this class, moreover, has an immense effect upon the quality of the flesh. It appears probable, for example, that fresh-water shrimps are influential in producing that pink or salmon tint in the flesh of trout which is the hall-mark of a well-conditioned fish.

It is obvious, therefore, that if this bottom-feed is the main influence in determining the weight and the quality of trout, it is for the angler or the owner of fishing-waters to encourage the development of that feed by every means in his power. This may be done in various ways. A comparatively simple expedient would be that of slowing-down shallow, rapid waters by making rough dams of boulders or other débris at favourable intervals. In large and powerful streams such efforts would often be short-lived; but I am here speaking not so much of rivers of that character as of those smaller hillside tributaries which are now the haunt of so many anglers, and which, with comparatively little trouble, might be made productive of far better sport and much more nutritious food.

The presence of pools, even if these were of only temporary duration, would materially assist in the successful oviposition of many insects (the parents of the pupal and larval creatures of the river-bed) whose eggs must in rapid currents be swept away in millions ere they can find a resting-place.

Next comes the question of maintaining these 'water-babies' upon which the trout feed, for here, in the underworld of the waters, the rule of life is much as it is on earth; that is to say, the beast which is greatest eats the beast which is less, that which is less devours that which is lesser, the lesser eats that which is least, and the least fares as best it may. We must feed the prey of the trout before the trout itself can prosper, and, since many of the larvæ and other aquatic creatures mentioned exist upon still lowlier forms of organic life, which here we may group together under the general title of infusoria, it follows that it is to the culture of these teeming legions that the fisherman must turn his attention if he would improve the condition of his fish.

Experiments have proved that where weighted bundles of vegetable matter, such as bracken or hedge-brushings, have been submerged, both in natural pools and where the water has been slowed-down by the method suggested, the trout invariably improve in condition. Here the effect of the infusoria, which are propagated by the sunken vegetation, is obviously an indirect one, in so far as the trout are concerned. Yet by catering for the creatures upon which the fish live, by providing them with a diet of organisms still lowlier than themselves, we are actually enriching the waters somewhat after the manner in which the farmer fertilises his land by fostering the development of soil bacteria upon which crops so largely exist.

A striking instance came under my notice a few years ago, demonstrating the extraordinary effect of submerged vegetation in the feeding of trout. The water of a rocky mountain tarn, in which the fish were invariably poor, was raised by damming, thus causing the tarn to overflow a considerable area of grass and heather along its banks. Less than two years after this was done there was a remarkable improvement noticeable in the trout. They not only lost much of their black hue, common in fish in such tarns, assuming a more golden, silvery, and dappled tint, but they increased rapidly in size and quality, and came into seasonable condition several weeks earlier than they had been wont to do. That this result was brought about by the agency of under-water vegetation, serving as a propagating-bed for the production of bottom-feed, there can be no possible doubt.

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE footprints of the man who had lied to the doctor stamped him as 'The Searcher.' True, his description was different from the one with which we had become familiar, but it was highly probable—almost certain—that he had shaved his beard, and was still lurking about, as likely as not, bent on further mischief. His injured wrist had tempted him to take the risk of consulting the doctor.

Such thoughts kept running through my mind as I dined in lonely state. I grew more uneasy as the night wore on, and at half-past eleven I went to the hall door to see if there were any signs of Tony. To my relief, just as I opened the door, I heard his steps, and he appeared with rod and creel.

'Sorry I'm late, Neil!' said he; then, without waiting for a reply, 'Is there a telegram for me?'

The anxiety in his face and voice was apparent. I handed him the waiting telegram, and watched him devour its contents. Then his curiously wide-open eyes sought mine, and in them I read strange matters.

'I don't think I ever received more welcome news. It is in cipher, but I'll decode it for you afterwards and explain. Just now I can think of nothing but food.'

Some cold odds and ends were laid out for him, and these he attacked with the silent concentration of a hungry man. I went to the Laird's Room, and by the time he joined me there it was almost midnight.

'Your face is a note of interrogation,' said Tony, as he drew his chair to the fire. 'But, except for the receipt of the telegram, my chronicle of the day isn't exciting. If you want to know how I spent most of the time, look into my creel, and you'll find nine pounds of excellent trout, which I pulled out of Loch Ruie.'

'The deuce you did!'

'Yes. I wanted to be alone. Fishing suits me when I am thinking hard. Besides, had I been here, I should have been on tenter-hooks until the telegram arrived. I fished until evening, when I walked over to the inn at Ardruie. Then the rain came down hard. I waited on the chance of its stopping, but it didn't, so I tramped back the ten miles in the dark.'

I looked at the clock. It was on the stroke of midnight. I was on the point of reminding him of his promise, when it struck me that he was listening intently for something, and the feeling grew upon me until it became uncomfortable. Next moment the sound of stealthy tapping at the window lifted me to my feet in a gust of suspicion and alarm.

'Compose yourself, Neil,' said Tony, smiling. 'I am expecting a visitor. The hour is a little unconventional, but you have met him before. I'll be back in a moment with him.'

He left the room, and I heard the hall door open and close again. In a few seconds he reappeared, along with him a man in toil-stained clothes and muddy boots. His hands were grimy, his face was unshaven, and he wore a wisp of a loose cravat in place of a collar. Manual labour was written all over him.

Tony locked the door after him and drew the curtains closer, the man meanwhile regarding me with respectful curiosity, turning his cap slowly round in his hands.

'Well, how goes the work?' asked Tony, with an amused glance at me.

'I'm getting used to it, but it's the devil and all for a man's back if he is new to it.'

I thought I knew the voice.

'Come into the light,' I said.

He grinned, and came forward out of the

shadow. '"Where shall I drive you, sir?"' he quoted. 'Do you remember?'

Instantly I recognised him.

'Sparke, by all that's wonderful!' For the manual labourer was none other than the excellent Sparke of the C.I.D.

'Yes, Mr Forbes,' said he, as we shook hands heartily, 'here we are again!'

'Sparke has, for a day or two,' announced Tony, 'torn himself away from London and automobiles. He is now, at twenty-two shillings a week, engaged in lumber-work in the Forest of Rothie. In his leisure hours he continues to study the habits of the criminal classes.'

'He is helping us?'

'That's it,' said Sparke. 'Mr Keene-Leslie asked me to join him, and he worked the oracle with the "heads" of the Yard. I'm very glad to be here, for ever since we met I have been anxious to rope in the beauties who bolted from No. 9 Duff Avenue. I've got a room near the village, and go to my work early in the morning; but I have my evenings to myself.'

'Which,' interjected Tony, 'have been most excellently employed.'

'Glad you think so. Did you get the telegram, Mr Keene-Leslie?' he asked.

'I did. Here it is. Wonderfully lucky, isn't it?'

Sparke read it, and his face lit up with the joy of an artist.

'Call it lucky if you like; but there's more than luck in it. You're wasted—absolutely wasted. You ought to be with us, Mr Keene-Leslie,' he said, regarding Tony with reverence.

'You could not have paid me a higher compliment, Sparke,' said Tony, well pleased.

Sparke produced a pocket-book and tore out a leaf, which he handed to Tony.

'I have brought you a few notes. You can read 'em over after I leave. Beyond these, I don't think I have anything to add to what I told you to-day.'

'I met Sparke this afternoon, on my way to the loch,' explained Tony.

'Accidentally, by appointment,' added the detective. 'Now, I have something to do to-night yet, and my plans won't give me another minute.'

'I know. Now, let me see. This is Tuesday. Can you turn up here on Thursday morning early—say at seven o'clock?'

Sparke nodded.

'Good! Meanwhile "carry on," and we'll have everything ready, bar accidents, for the setting of the rat-trap by Thursday morning.'

Tony went with him to the hall door, leaving me in a fever of curiosity. When he came back his face was very grave, and there were harder lines than I had ever seen in it. The telegram was in his hand. He looked from it to me, and his first words left me dumbfounded.

'Neil, "The Searcher" and the red-haired man in Edinburgh are one and the same,' he said. 'His finger-prints are identical with those on the blood-stained front of the shirt you wore that night.'

I was too amazed to speak.

'This telegram proves it,' he went on. 'It is from my friend of the Habitual Criminals' Register at Scotland Yard. It is in code, but, interpreted, runs: "Prints beyond doubt same as Nos. 213177B and 213178B." These are the prints of the right thumb and right index-finger of your terror-stricken red-haired clerk. But I hold you to your promise—in your own words—"to ask nothing and expect nothing." I can say no more; but, take my word, you and I are to meet him soon, Neil.'

Most unjustly, for a minute or two I suspected Tony of posing, of weaving unnecessary mystery for the sake of gratifying a hidden streak of vanity—a desire to have all the *kudos*, or at best of pandering to a secret melodramatic hanker for a good 'curtain.' But I had given him my promise, and therefore I bridled my tongue.

Nettled and disappointed, 'Very well. As you wish,' was all I said; and if there was a hint of sulkiness in the reply, he forbore to make any comment on it. Soon his cool and level voice, sketching his scheme—'the rat-trap,' as he called it—for outwitting 'The Searcher,' drove everything from my mind except one thought, the perfecting of the plan. If he kept me—as I think—too much in the dark, he did so for what seemed to him good and sufficient reasons. Let a man's acumen and resource be judged by the results. Tony's bold and ingenious scheme justified its inception, and, among other things, made me agree unreservedly with the verdict he gave after dinner on the eventful foggy night in Edinburgh: 'I have found man-hunts more interesting than searching for beasts or jewels, and I have chased all three.'

After he had indicated the general plan, he produced his notes, a lot of careless-looking jottings in pencil.

'The details and the mechanism are as important for the carrying out of this business as the laying of the fuse to a mine. First of all,' said he, 'give me the names of some places near the summit of the Pass; places with well-known distinctive names and characters—not too near Sron na Leirg—spots which can be easily watched.'

A map of the hills was brought out, and half-a-dozen names discussed in turn. In the end we fixed on Coire an t-Oranaiche (the Chanter Corrie), a wild *cul-de-sac* in the solitudes of Braeriach.

'So be it! "The Searcher" shall be lured to the Chanter Corrie, and we shall be there to receive him. This is part of my little scheme,' he continued as he produced a copy of our half of the secret paper. 'In this writing the only mention of a place-name, apart from the Larig itself, is Sron na Leirg. Now, we'll substitute the words "The Chanter Corrie" for

"Sron na Leirg" in a "cooked" facsimile of our paper, and give our friend an opportunity of stealing it or copying it. He will read this "cooked" half along with his own genuine one, and his heart will rejoice, for he will, to all appearances, have in his possession the thing he has schemed and sweated and sinned over—the completed guide to Father Hamilton's grave. Of course, it will be nothing of the sort. He may hunt the Chanter Corrie till the crack of doom and be none the wiser; but the main point is that he will be drawn to the Corrie like a bit of steel-filing to a magnet. He will have his own half of the paper with him, and it will be our business to relieve him of it."

'And how are you to throw the fly over him?'

'I want you to have some business which will take you from home to-morrow, say to Castleton, for most of the day. I think that when you return the initial trap will have been set, and in all probability the bait been nibbled at. After that we must pretend to leave for the South. In reality we shall be in hiding in the Chanter Corrie. When he thinks the coast is clear, "The Searcher" will find his way there at once. And now let's think out some plans for the expedition on the assumption that he takes the fly.'

These plans included arrangements for sending the keepers and the stalkers, all armed, to watch the Pass near the Chanter Corrie until our arrival; the selection of observation-posts for them and us; a pretended start by us in the South train, and a swift doubling back on our tracks. Possible tactics for the encounter up the Pass were discussed; a time-table was drawn up; nothing was left to chance. The dawn, stealing through the curtains, found us still busy at the details, and the cocks were crowing long before we thought of sleep.

(*Continued on page 436.*)

CHARING CROSS TO CALCUTTA OR CAPE TOWN.

IT may sound like a fairy-tale to suggest travelling by rail from Charing Cross to Calcutta, and it may seem altogether impossible to reach Cape Town by the same method. Yet if, looking forward, we indulge in speculation as to some of the railway developments that are likely to take place during the first few decades succeeding the declaration of peace, such suggestions will be found anything but pure fantasy.

The Bagdad Railway, for instance, is destined, under Allied auspices, to form a link between the progress and civilisation of the West and the mysteries of the Orient.

The controversy which raged for many years over the Channel Tunnel is ended, owing to the changed conditions which now obtain. A rival scheme was that of the Channel Ferry. This was one of the favourite projects of the late Sir John Fowler, of Forth Bridge fame. He advocated the building of a covered-in water station at Dover Harbour, wherein trains from London were to be run bodily on to specially designed boats of high speed and, for those days, great size. A similar station on the French coast was to receive the steamboat, whence the train would be landed on the soil of France, the passengers resuming their railway journey in but little over an hour from the time of their arrival at Dover. No leaving of seats, no exposure to cold or rain, and comparative immunity from *mal-de-mer* were among the allurements held out by the promoters. The scheme, of course, was perfectly feasible, as similar train-ferries were in existence both in Denmark and in the States. The mechanical details were fully worked out, but need not detain us here.

It is interesting to note that, under the stress of war-time conditions, the cross-Channel ferry became an accomplished fact. From Richborough, in Kent, trucks loaded up with munitions and stores were run on to a low-built ferry and transferred bodily to the French side. It is possible that this may become a permanent factor of cross-Channel traffic in the future. Fortunately the standard gauges of Great Britain and France are almost identical. The difference between the 4 feet 8½ inches of the one and the 1·44 metres of the other is less than one-sixth of an inch, which is quite negligible in practice.

The traveller would now follow the familiar route through France and Switzerland into Italy, and so on to Brindisi. Here would be found another ferry to convey the entire train across the Strait of Otranto, a distance of about sixty miles. The journey would then be resumed to Salonica and Constantinople. The distance across the Bosphorus is here about a mile, and a bridge similar to the Tay Bridge or the Forth Bridge would meet the case.

We now proceed by the Anatolian Railway to Konia, where we enter upon the Bagdad Railway. No serious physical obstacle is encountered till we reach the Taurus Mountain range, through which over ten miles of tunnelling have had to be bored. For the greater part of the seven hundred miles between Aleppo and Bagdad the railway has been laid, and from the latter important commercial centre, and city of Eastern romance, it has been practically completed to Basra, a port with good access to the Persian Gulf, as an urgent strategic necessity during the war.

From Basra to Karachi is a long stretch of over twelve hundred miles of wild and inhospitable country, which is likely to be the last link to be forged in our railway to the East. It is certain

to follow when through rail communication reaches the Persian Gulf, as the Indian military authorities are fully alive to the advantage of having overland transport in addition to that by sea.

We are now entered upon the railway system of India, with its thirty to forty thousand miles of open line, and a run of fifteen hundred miles brings us to Calcutta, one of the largest cities in the world, and the terminus of our long journey of over seven thousand miles from London. It is not, of course, to be supposed that goods will ever make much through use of this important highway, nor will the Anglo-Indian traveller elect to traverse the burning plains of Persia and Beluchistan during the summer months. On the other hand, the mails will come this way, and commercial and official India will welcome the acceleration. From the strategic standpoint, also, it is impossible to over-estimate the value of this direct route between India and the capital of the Empire.

Returning now to Aleppo, in the north of Syria, we find a line running south to Damascus, and thence continued under the name of the Hedjaz Railway to Medina, its present terminus. It will no doubt before many years reach Mecca, its real objective, and may possibly be continued to Aden.

It is interesting to reflect that an outcome of our Palestine Expedition, the strategic railway connecting Cairo with Jerusalem, is destined to become in the not far-distant future an extremely important line, whether regarded from the political or from the commercial point of view. It unites the continent of Asia with the continent of Africa; and, what is of more immediate interest to ourselves, it joins up London with the Cape to Cairo Railway.

In order correctly to appraise the significance and value of the Cape to Cairo Railway, it is necessary to bear in mind that branch-lines running from the centre of the African continent east and west to the coast are of vastly greater importance than any through line of communication can ever be. It is such branch-lines that open up the country to trade and civilisation, and afford the necessary means of cheap transport whereby the calicoes and the metals of Manchester and Birmingham respectively can be exchanged for the tropical products of Central Africa. These lateral branches require some means of intercommunication, and also a backbone for the whole system, and this is the chief justification that can be urged on behalf of the Cape to Cairo Railway scheme.

The total distance between these terminals is about six thousand miles, and it will come as a surprise to many to learn that seven years ago the rails had actually been laid over more than two-thirds of this distance.

Another point which is not usually appreciated is the enormous development of inland water communications which has recently taken place in conjunction with the various African railway systems. The facilities provided by such magnificent water-ways as the Nile, the Congo, and the Central African lakes have all been zealously exploited. So much is this the case that, with the completion of one or two missing links, amounting to less than five hundred miles in all, there would be through rail and river communication between Cape Town and Cairo to-day. There is at the present moment a through route from the Cape to Boma, at the mouth of the Congo, first by rail to Bukama, the present northern terminus of the line from the south, and thence either by steamer on the Congo, or by stretches of railway that have been built along the river at points where navigation is obstructed by cataracts.

An interesting link in Central Africa is the line running east to Albertville on Lake Tanganyika from Kabalo on the Lualaba branch of the Congo, a distance of one hundred and sixty-five miles. This line was built during the war, and afforded the only means by which Allied armed steamboats could be placed on the lake. These very soon justified their existence by driving the German flag from this inland sea. Thanks to this short railway, a through rail and steamboat route is now open between Cape Town and Dar-es-Salaam on the east coast, near Zanzibar.

Such is the present position on this great trunk-line traversing the African continent from end to end. There can be no doubt that its completion will not be long deferred. One of its most important branches is that under construction from Benguela on the west coast to Katanga in the southern Congo, where are the largest copper-mines in the world. This branch will bring northern Rhodesia some two thousand miles nearer to London than by the Cape route.

JOHN BROWN.

By R. W. CAMPBELL, Author of *Private Spud Tamson; Dorothy, V.A.D.; Snooker Tam;* &c.

CHAPTER XX.—A JOLLY RAG.

WHEN all had returned from leave, Dame Rumour got busy. Some of the lads had been going it, and their exploits had got abroad. Even Billy, the padre, was in the gossip-market, and Ginger was alleged to have been seen in a two-seater with the famous beauty from the hotel. As for Tosher, it was said he had been doing the heavy with the ladies of Glasgow.

To amuse ourselves, we called a secret meeting and decided to hold a court-martial, Nobby being elected president. The following notice was posted up in the hut:

COURT-MARTIAL.
A Court-Martial will assemble in the Hut
on Friday Evening for the Trial of
BILLY GREENS,
GINGER THOMSON,
and
TOSHER JOHNSON.
All witnesses are warned to attend.
JOHN BROWN, Adjutant.

There was a great rush on the 'early doors.' At 7 P.M. Nobby appeared, dressed up as a stout colonel, with a moustache like Ole Bill. He looked most impressive, and roused a cheer. The members of the court followed. All took their seats, and Billy Greens was ushered in by the court-martial orderly.

'Before proceeding,' said Nobby, 'I should like to know if the accused has any objection, either to me, as president, or to any member of the court.'

'Yes, sir; I object to you,' answered Billy.

'Why?'

'You 're a rotten old Radical and—a lawyer.'

'Your objection is out of order. This is a military court, and politics do not enter into the matter. If I am a lawyer, I can assure you there will be no charges. I mean—no six-and-eight.'

'Question!' shouted Ginger.

'Please bludgeon that Imperialist,' commanded the president.

Ginger was gagged. The case was proceeded with.

'Corporal Billy Greens, No. 1 Company of the —th Cadet Battalion, you are charged with (1) Giddiness on leave; (2) Appearing in public with a formidable female; (3) Holding her hand in a tram-car; (4) Acting the goat in a taxi-cab.'

'Do you plead guilty, or not guilty?'

'Not guilty.'

'Evidence, please,' ordered the president.

Beefy stepped forward with a ponderous-looking document like the Magna Carta. It was really one of Harrods' voluminous catalogues. Opening it up, he commenced: 'Sir, the accused, who is a gentleman in holy orders, but meantime a soldier, has hitherto borne an excellent character. But we have received reports from the Platoon Secret Service men stating that on his last leave he has been "going it." Apparently he went to a small town near London, and commenced to pay attention to a lady of blameless character, but of formidable appearance, and inclined to be frisky and sentimental when receiving the attention of man.'

'Keep to the point, Mr Jones. Please deal with the first charge, remarked the president.

'I 'm just coming to that, sir,' replied Beefy, turning over the pages of Harrods' catalogue. The first charge is, "Giddiness." Our agents state the accused was wearing a field-marshal's trousers—an offence punishable by death, according to the Manual of Military Law. He also wore bright-yellow shoes and white socks, ornamented with yellow flowers, which I contend betrays a shockingly frivolous mind. Above the neck of his tunic appeared a white india-rubber collar, and sticking out from under his tunic-sleeves were white cuffs, ornamented with a balance-sheet of his holiday expenses. He also carried an enormous malacca cane studded with brass knobs, of the type used by lion-tamers and wealthy Jews. In fact, his whole appearance was of the Bank 'Oliday kind. Instead of looking like a harmless and shuffling cadet, he really resembled Ole Bill on the burst. So startling was his appearance that a terrier dog fell off a tram-car, and an ancient cab-horse jumped into an egg-merchant's window. To save further calamity, the local police had to hide Corporal Greens in a furniture-van, and remove him to his lodgings.

'The second charge is, "Appearing in public with a formidable female." The lady in question is of uncertain age, but of great stature—six feet high, three feet broad, and built in proportion.'

'Weight and style, I presume,' said the president.

'Yes, sir. I also understand she is the commandant of a V.A.D. Hospital. Prior to the war she was a suffragette who achieved fame by burning down the local bishop's bathroom.'

'Has the bishop used Pears' since that event?' inquired a member.

'No, sir. I understand he uses the wash-house. But to resume. When she appeared in public with the accused (she being of massive mould, and he being of bantam measurements), the contrast was striking. In fact, the difference in height was so great that it is stated she carried a small portable telephone to carry on the conversation. He called her "Gertie," and she called him "Pickles." While attempting to enter a very narrow gate in the public park the lady got wedged, and it is alleged she shouted, "Push me—push me, Pickles." The corporal nobly responded, and relieved the lady from an embarrassing position.'

'Was the gate damaged?' asked the president.

'Slightly bent, sir.—Now for the third charge. The lady, who has been trying to "get off" for quite a number of years, was apparently so bucked with her capture that she aired him on every public occasion. They were always riding in tram-cars. On one occasion a local alderman, who has a reputation for "picking up" unattached females, entered the car they were travelling in. The lady, persumably nervous about getting the glad eye from this civic Lothario, muttered, "Hold my hand, Pickles—hold my hand." Like a brave man, he did so. In this simple and trusting manner they completed their journey, to the amusement of all.

'The final charge is, "Acting the goat in a taxi-cab." Apparently the dear old girl had been overhearing some of the younger V.A.D.'s, her

subordinates, relating thrilling experiences of taxi-cabs. She decided to try the experiment, and Pickles drew a pound note from the Penny Savings Bank for that purpose. To avoid observation, they ordered the taxi to meet them in a quiet thoroughfare. But a local press photographer witnessed the amusing struggle of the lady to get inside.

'"Pickles!" she shouted.

'"Yes, dear," he replied.

'"The door is too small. Push me."

'Pickles pushed again, and the lady fell inside. At that moment the camera clicked. Here is the photo, sir;' and Beefy handed over a charcoal drawing of Billy heaving an enormous lady into a vehicle.

Loud laughter in court.

'The taxi man then received secret instructions from the accused to drive ten times round the park —DEAD SLOW. During this performance several of the local special constables saw the lady with the accused in her arms. At intervals they kissed each other. When they alighted from the cab, our Secret Service men discovered a hair-switch and an upper set of false teeth among the cushions. This, sir, is, I think, complete evidence of frivolous conduct.'

'I see! I see!' muttered the president, tugging his false moustache. 'Now, Mr Jones, have you any evidence as to how the accused met this lady? Was he introduced, or was it what we in the army term a "pick-up"?'

'So far as I know, they were properly introduced. Some years ago, when the accused was a student, he saw the lady bathing in a crimson dress with lace-curtain frillings. He secured an intro. by the aid of a member of a local Dorcas Society.'

'What about his character?'

'Hitherto most respectable; but I imagine his association with my friends Messrs. Ginger Thomson and John Brown has, unfortunately, caused him to fall from grace. That's all, sir,' concluded Beefy.

'What have you got to say, my man?' said Nobby, with the air of a Lord Chief-Justice.

'Nothing, sir.'

'Nothing! My dear old Pieface, this is a serious business. You go on leave; you wear a field-marshal's trousers, a padre's white shirt, shop-assistant's yellow shoes, and you carry a ship-pole for a walking-stick. You cause an innocent dog to fall off a tram-car, and a hitherto respectable horse to jump into an egg-merchant's window, and yet you say, "Nothing." Worse: you try to outdo Charlie Chaplin in a tram-car, and Ole Bill in a taxi. This, from a future officer, an ordained padre, and a Tory gentleman, will *not* do. It is preposterous! You *must* be shot! *Must* be shot!' roared Nobby with dramatic fervour, which reminded us of the old com. on the bench.

'You're a silly old ass, Nobby!' said Billy.

'That's contempt of court.'

'You're a rotten old Radical!'

'That means execution.'

'And here goes your bench,' shouted Billy, making a running jump at Nobby's table, and kicking it up in the air, sending ink, pens, paper, books, &c. flying right and left.

'Remanded! Remanded!' shouted Nobby, brandishing a poker.

The prisoner was seized and put in 'quod,' or, in other words, let go. His ragging was over.

(*Continued on page 446.*)

MY OLD GREEK COINS.

By EDWIN WOOTON.

IT has been well said by a great authority that the chief value of ancient Grecian coins is in their being original works of art, and in their recording the successive phases and the local varieties of Greek art.

The designs found in the coinage of classical Greece exceed numerically those of any other country or empire within a given range of centuries. This is a direct consequence of the fact that minting, instead of being confined to one town, or even to a few, was a privilege possessed by some hundreds of localities. For example, Sicily had at least fifty minting centres.

There are coin-collectors whose aim is to form a complete series, whether of a dynasty or a locality; and if one looks to ultimate monetary value, it will be wise to proceed on this principle. But to the student of humanity an appeal will be made not so much by perfection of series, rarity of specimens, and excellence of preservation as by the knowledge that the collected coins have been worn by the hands and in the marts of a once pulsing civilisation.

Upon the table at which I write lie two score of my treasures. Sold at auction, each would realise only from a few pence to a few shillings; but to the lover of antiquity they are priceless eloquent.

The first I take up has a bee on one side, and on the other a stag. This was a coin of Ephesus, and had been minted some five hundred years when Paul wrote his epistle. Another piece of money bears a scallop-shell and a dolphin. This is a yet older specimen, and was struck in Sicily. The crested head of Pallas Athene and a winged horse point to Syracuse or to Corinth. The coinage of Syracuse resembled that of Corinth. This was a compliment paid to Corinth in return for the Corinthians having liberated Syracuse from the tyranny of the Dionysian dynasty.

These five pieces are intruders. They were purchased in a wrongly classified lot. They belong to the later Greek—that is, the Byzantine—Empire. We observe on all coins of Byzantium some indication of the Christian faith. On many it is a cross; on some the bust of the Virgin, with the Holy Child; and on a few the head of our Lord.

Look at these two specimens. The surfaces are green, yet unlike the green of verdigris. The coins have the appearance of having been enamelled. This green is called *patina*, and as it results from the prolonged deposition of copper, bronze, or brass coins in special soils, it is regarded as a proof of genuineness. Patina is most difficult to imitate successfully, and in the case of cheap coins success would not be worth the trouble.

Of the specimens on the table we note that those free from patina are (1) of common brass, or (2) of reddish copper, or (3) have a colour closely resembling that of well-worn modern 'bronze' coinage, or (4) are distinctly yellow, like gold.

This brings us to the metallurgy of the samples. Most of the reddish coins are very crudely designed. They are of unalloyed copper, and probably were made of that metal alone because of the scarcity of tin and similar alloys. The browner specimens do contain an alloy. If you look very carefully at the surface of some, you may notice how in the course of the twenty-three or twenty-four centuries that have elapsed since their minting the alloy has separated wholly or in part; and if you hold a specimen by pincers over an incandescent gas-flame, you may presently see the alloy sweat out, forming globules.

The yellow coins are of a peculiar bronze—a mixture of copper and silver known as *billon*.* Here we have no example of debased currency. The purchasing value of billon coins was low; but they were very beautiful, and are evidence of the beauty-loving soul of the people that made them.

He who begins to collect old Greek coins must look beyond the geography of the Greek Empire. I once witnessed a verbal battle between an expert in numismatics and a Greek historian who knew nothing of coins. The collector produced a specimen, and vaunted it as having been made in Gaul in the fourth century B.C.

The historian scoffed. 'Gaul!' quoth he. 'The Greek Empire did not embrace Gaul. Your coin must be an impudent forgery.'

But it was not a forgery, although it would puzzle a college of antiquarians to decide whether it should have been called Greek. Not in Gaul only, but scattered widely over districts far outside the imperial confines, were towns that had dealings with Greek traders. These traders paid in Greek money, and local mints in the regions dealt with imitated the money, not fraudulently, but for the legitimate currency. In some cases the imitation was faithful in result; in others the features of the Greek coinage became reduced to absurd, meaningless marks.

Here is a very beautiful coin of the Empire, showing a galley and tiers of rowers. Here is another coin minted in a barbarous town of what is now Spain. It has lettering identical with that of the imperial coin, but the galley and the rowers have been beyond the skill of the die-sinker to reproduce, so they have become a series of more or less crooked lines.

When one confronts the historic splendours of a race unexcelled in philosophy, sculpture, and the cult of personal beauty, one must search for the inspiring soul; and if we do this, we shall find that the Greeks transcended all races in raising humanism to the height of positivism. Qualities desirable became personified, not as the grotesque hybrids of Egypt, but as the divine human. The Greek took all he knew of psychology, of ethics, of physical science, and of art, and moulded each into the likeness of his highest concept.

And these old Greeks believed in the powers beyond. Until the time of Alexander the Great (inclusive), they would have shuddered at placing a king's head upon the coinage. It would have seemed a presumptuous challenge to the gods. Whenever a coin bore a head, it was that of a deity.

Of all the gods, Apollo seems to have been the favourite. Usually he is laurel-crowned. Now and again one sees him at full length and undraped. Sometimes he carries a lyre and is robed, being then termed Apollo Musagetes—the leader of the muses. Apollo is always youthful. Zeus (Jupiter) appears to be somewhere between thirty and forty-five. He nearly always wears a beard, and is wreathed with laurel or olive. Jupiter Ammon is Jupiter with ram's horns. This head is common on coins of Cyrene. Serapis, an Egyptian deity of the Ptolemaic age, is very like Zeus, but his head is surmounted by a lofty *modius*—a measure for corn.

The sun-god, Helios, is known by the rays which encircle his head. Poseidon (Neptune) resembles Zeus, but is without a laurel-wreath, and his hair falls in dank masses. Often he is seen on horseback, when he is called Poseidon Hippios. Dionysus (Bacchus) is sometimes mistaken for Apollo—a blunder that would have made an old Greek blush. Dionysus, even when beardless, looks the debauchee. The wreath he wears is one of ivy. Hermes may be mistaken for Apollo. Hermes is youthful, but he wears a closely fitting head-covering, called a *petasus*, which frequently, but by no means always, is adorned with two miniature wings.

As all the world knows, there are three chief periods in Greek art—that of the evolution, from about 700 to 400 B.C.; that of the finest art,

* The term *billon* has been wrongly applied to debased silver coins.

from about 400 to 336 B.C.; and after that, the period of decadence. For only some sixty-four years did Greek art remain at its zenith. This period is contemporary with Philip of Macedon.

Dates are not found on coins before the time of Alexander the Great. Even subsequently they are of rare occurrence. Dates are indicated by Greek letters, some standing for hundreds, some for tens, and some for units. Far more common was it for the local great folk—the magistracy—to impress their names on the coinage.

In handling these old coins I reach over the dead centuries to a once living people, for I hold what they held—the reward of labour, that which secured them the common things of life.

THE 'TWINS' OF BRYAN BROADWATER.

By Mrs W. F. IRVINE BELL, Author of *The Forester's Girl*, &c.

I.

WHEN Dad Junior was born he was so precisely the 'spit and image' of Dad Senior that Sir Gilbert Greatree—who, having less than twenty years before stood sponsor for the father, now assumed ghostly responsibility for the son—dubbed them 'The Twins.' The nickname stuck—unwarrantably, declared Dad Senior; but we shall see.

The marriage of Dad Senior, or, to give him his proper name and title, Sir Eric Bryan of Bryan Broadwater, with Lucy Templeton, an Anglo-American orphan and heiress, had been one of those boy-and-girl plunges into matrimony which cause wise heads to shake ominously, and are the despair of guardians and trustees. Eric, vowed all and sundry of those interested in the lad, had ruined his career and his prospects by marrying at nineteen—his 'career' in prospective being a military one, and his 'prospects' the inheritance of a fine estate and the 'wherewithal,' if meanwhile he should walk warily in ways prescribed by a devoted but dictatorial godfather.

As to Lucy—clad in a very short skirt, and with waist-long ringlets falling like a golden cascade on the shoulder of her legal guardian, she had perched on the arm of his great leather chair and made good her case not only to be allowed to marry forthwith 'that boy,' but to have a 'real wedding.'

'Yes, I *know* I'm only sixteen, Punkie dear,' she had urged, impressing a kiss on the baldest bit of Mr Horace Punk, Q.C.'s very bald head;' 'but aren't you always telling me how much more serious-minded and sensible were our grandmothers, who married lots younger than that, and had rows and rows of little children carved around their tombs?'

So Lucy bundled up her shining curls for the first time, to crown them with orange-blossoms; only, however, to let them fall free again so soon as she and her 'boy' arrived to 'honeymoon' at beautiful Broadwater Hall, lent for the occasion by Sir Gilbert Greatree to those 'ridiculous children,' as he sardonically described the bride and groom.

Sir Gilbert had been very angry with his godson, or, rather, he cherished the conviction that he *ought* to be angry; but when Lucy, with her great violet eyes, hair like tendrils of spun gold, and cheeks which a hedge-rose might envy, floated up the Abbey aisle in her bridal white, he lost his heart to the lovely child, and promptly forgave the youthful bridegroom. Moreover, when it was presently divulged that Lucy's fabulously rich American mother had bequeathed a fortune for her daughter's disposition when she should be twenty-one years of age, or on the day of her marriage, it seemed scarcely worth while to alter his own will to the exclusion of Eric, notwithstanding that the latter had disappointed his hopes of military name and fame; for that Eric should leave Woolwich had been the sole condition for which Lucy's guardian, the estimable Horace Punk, Q.C., had held out. 'If I permit you to marry that child, your business will be to stay at home and take care of her and of her property. Some other man can fight for her if needs be.' Such was his ultimatum.

So they bought a charming little place marching with the wide acres of Broadwater, and called the house 'Bryan Towers' because of its clustering turrets. Upon one of these, some months later, a flag flapped merrily, while the bells pealed in Broadwater church, and Dad Senior, white as a ghost, bare-headed, breathless, but bursting with pride, rushed into the library of Sir Gilbert Greatree, and announced to him the birth of Dad Junior. That shortly the flag would fly at half-mast, the church bell toll, and Dad Junior, with a pathetic little black bow on his wee cap, receive the names of Gilbert Eric Templeton beside the coffin of his child-mother never crossed the mind of Dad Senior that fair May morning. Yet so it befell, and Dad Senior, barely out of his 'teens,' found himself staring with tear-swollen, incredulous eyes at the scrap of humanity which was all that survived of his married life and of Lucy.

II.

Straightway flowed to Bryan Towers a steady stream of sympathetic sisters, cousins, and aunts, intent, tacitly of course, upon rescuing the motherless babe from a too youthful father and a big

household of irresponsible servants. One and all, however, departed discomfited and minus the baby. Dad Senior was duly grateful, but—determined. 'Junior' was Lucy's child. Lucy was not there to mother him. Therefore he—Dad Senior—must be mother and father in one.

From the cottage in a neighbouring village where she was spending the residue of her days, comfortably pensioned, but lonely, his own old 'Nanny' was uprooted, and, to her great joy, installed in the nursery of Bryan Towers, there to reign supreme in spite of the baby's female relatives, who prophesied the complete spoiling of the child until, at all events, the advent of an inevitable step-mother. This prediction, however, entirely failed of fulfilment. Not only did old Nanny's rule prove as wise as kind, but all aspirants (and there were not a few) to Lucy's place at Bryan Towers were doomed to disappointment. In the meantime, while Dad Junior successfully passed through the first of the 'seven stages,' his father won a recognised place as an ideal country squire, with the result that when the boy was ready for an Eton jacket and 'topper,' his home was filled with all manner of cups and trophies, the owner thereof being J.P., M.F., golf champion, and best shot of the county; and Sir Gilbert Greatree, the day having come when he must take a long, last leave of Broadwater Hall, did so with a mind quite satisfied as to his godson filling his place.

Up to this time the 'Twins' had never been separated, all of Dad Senior's spare hours being devoted to his offspring, who, in consequence of this close companionship, rapidly developed. From the start the 'Twins' were the best of 'pals,' one fact alone disturbing the perfect balance between Dad Senior and Dad Junior—namely, that the former, try as he might, could never contrive to look old enough to be the duly accredited father of his own boy! Of fair complexion, fair hair, and a round, boyish face, Eric Bryan had always appeared years younger than he was. At twelve he passed for nine; at sixteen, well-disposed parents of First Form boys patted him on the shoulder; and when, at the mature age of nineteen, he aspired to enter the holy bonds of matrimony, nothing less than his birth certificate availed to prove that he was not annexing several years to those to which he was entitled. Add to all this, smallness of stature, a quiet country life, with abundance of friends, sports, and money, and, last but not least, the daily assumption of an infantile rôle, playing 'bear,' circus, soldiers, cricket, according to the progressive demands of Dad Junior, and it need not be deemed altogether improbable that it taxed the credulity of strangers to believe that the two were not brothers, but parent and child.

Presently, too, Dad Junior, taking after his mother's family, began to shoot upward so rapidly that Dad Senior felt the race between them was no longer an even thing; he grew positively shy of visiting his son at Eton, and nearly tore his hair (still fair and plentiful) when a slim young undergraduate, with a dark, downy shadow already on his upper lip, came to Bryan Broadwater for the 'long.'

III.

Dad Junior was still the 'spit and image' of Dad Senior—only, he looked *older!*—when war was declared. Dad Junior nearly fell over himself in his haste to enlist; but when, a few months later, he bade his father good-bye at Waterloo, he exclaimed fervently, 'Thank God, Dad dear, you 're too old to fight!'

Now, any other parent than Dad Senior, who all his life had suffered from the gift of apparent eternal youth, might have winced under this implication. Not so, however, Dad Senior. No sooner had Junior's train pulled out than he called a taxi and bolted to the nearest recruiting-office. 'For once in my life,' he muttered viciously, glaring at his reflection in the taxi mirror, 'my silly, infantile expression shall do me a good turn. I 'll camouflage the weight of my years' (he was just forty-two), 'enlist, and turn up in a trench alongside of the boy. No use my going down to Broadwater,' he continued ruminating as the taxi buzzed along. 'Those beastly volunteers would run me to earth; and there isn't a soul down there who doesn't know the dates of me and my entire family a jolly sight better than those of the kings and queens of England.'

And somehow he managed it so successfully that he completed his training, got sent 'out,' distinguished himself, was badly wounded, and back in a London hospital almost more quickly than it takes to tell. Thence, with a decoration and a very game leg, he was despatched to Lady Stratton's Convalescent Home, with nothing to do but rest or wander about the beautiful lawns and gardens; and it was then that poor Dad Senior got into the first real trouble of his life.

Lucy's death had been a terrible grief to him; his son being suddenly torn from his side, to be peppered day and night with shot and shell in those awful trenches, was a trial the possible outcome of which he could not face; but neither of these things could will or word of his own have availed to prevent or help. But the trouble which now all at once confronted him, and shook his soul, was, so he kept telling himself, wholly of his own making. Dad Senior had fallen in love.

Among the glorious, glowing masses of Lady Stratton's rhododendrons he limped up and down, endeavouring to diagnose the symptoms of a malady from which he had suffered only once in his life, and had never expected to suffer again. At first he was incredulous. Then, as the certainty was forced upon him by an increasing dread of the approaching day when he must leave Stratton Park, he sank in an abyss of self-reproach, because, at a time when, more than ever before, his

thoughts ought to be full of Lucy and her son, they were centred upon another woman. Even in the contemplation of a second marriage after the war he found little relief, as the vision intruded itself of a third party coming between Dad Junior and himself just when the former, his education completed, would be free for that unbroken companionship to which both had always looked forward—to travel together; to hunt, fish, shoot together. No, such a step was impossible. Later on, by-and-by, the boy himself would marry, and then—— Dad Senior heaved a sigh. By *that* time, doubtless, Sybil Asche would also be married. She was, of course, years younger than himself—young enough to be his daughter.

So ran his thoughts in merciless analysis, until, all at once, he caught sight of his reflection (vivid with the bright-blue garments and red tie of a convalescent hero) in the still, clear waters of a lily-pond, to the edge of which he had wandered. Halting abruptly, he studied, for the first time in his life with undisguised satisfaction, the boyish physiognomy looking back at him from among the lily-pads. '*You!*' he exclaimed, pointing a severely judicial finger at his watery self; '*you*—old enough to be Sybil Asche's father! Ha! ha!' and he flung back his head, laughing loud and long, while in a certain spot between the curve of his pleasant mouth and his nicely rounded chin twinkled a fatuous dimple, which only a beard of Jove-like proportions could have hidden.

'Good-morning, papa!' rang out a clear, sweet voice. 'You seem to be in splendid health and spirits to-day. We shall be giving you your discharge in favour of some *real* invalid if you go on improving like this.' And Dad Senior, reddening violently, and looking for all the world like a schoolboy caught stealing apples, found himself face to face with Sister Sybil (in pre-war days the Honourable Sybil Cicely Asche), rosy and radiant as the rhododendrons from among which she emerged, fresh and sweet in her nurse's uniform. 'I'm dreadfully sorry,' she continued, mischief and manners contending in the tones of her voice, while pure fun danced in the frank brown eyes with which she regarded her quondam patient, confused and speechless, 'but I simply couldn't *help* hearing you take my name in vain. And, in any case, why *should* you be old enough to be my father? A *boy* like *you!*'

Dad Senior suddenly felt inconsequently, idiotically elated and happy, but, before he could recover himself, he heard her call, 'Bye-bye!' and her footsteps rapidly retreating around a bend in the path. Eagerly he essayed to follow, but crutch and crippled leg were, alas! no match for her flying feet; so, perforce giving up the chase, he sank, baffled and breathless, upon a garden bench, and cudgelled his brains as to why she had thus taken flight, at one moment his heart thumping hard over the conviction that she had guessed his secret, and perhaps reciprocated his feelings; at the next, upbraiding himself as a conceited ass to imagine such a thing.

IV.

One fact, however, was now indisputably clear to his mind. He really *did* love Sybil Asche—could not brook the thought of never winning her; and as for Junior, if he were made of the stuff his father believed him to be, he, Dad Senior, would soon make it all right with *him*. At all events, he would—he simply *must*—speak to her at the first opportunity, perhaps in the afternoon, when she would bring him his tea beneath a great elm where once in a while he had contrived to detain her for a little chat in her least busy hour—the hour towards and from which he had unconsciously grown to watch the progress of the hands of the clock.

But to-day when the time came, and with it fragrant tea, cream, bread-and-butter, cakes, and all the other delicious things which eagerly unselfish civilians denied themselves in order to lavish them upon their heroic soldiers, Dad Senior, sitting disconsolate under his favourite tree, left the dainties all untouched. A strange nurse, swarthy and capable, but in his disappointed eyes as earth to heaven compared with the expected one, set down the tray; reflected that he seemed to be a gloomy, ungenial sort of man; and when, some half-hour later, she passed by and observed the meal untasted and an extraordinary number of cigarette-ends thrown about, at once reported to the matron that So-and-so didn't seem well. Followed such anxious inquiries from the matron that Dad Senior had to pull himself together sharply; explained, laughing, that he had perhaps over-exercised his crutch; and when she departed, cursed himself for an imbecile because he had been utterly unable to make his vocal cords frame the trifling question, 'Where is Sister Sybil this afternoon?'

It was not until the following day that he learned (inadvertently, for he could not bring himself to ask) that she had gone to some other hospital, where she felt she could be of more use, but in which direction of the compass he did not gather. Needless to add, he proceeded to torment himself with the iterated question: Why had she not told him? They had been such good friends; and although he had not revealed to her his identity as the squire of Bryan Broadwater, she, of course, had quickly divined that his rôle as Tommy Atkins was one assumed for reasons best known to himself. And now she had slipped away without even a word of good-bye! To discover her address would, of course, be an easy matter; but—well, it seemed as though she had intentionally hidden herself, and perhaps, after all, it were best for him to think the whole matter out.

He *did*. Returning home a few days later, he put in four miserable weeks trying his best

to feel contented and satisfied in the old lonely life, and buoying himself up with the anticipation of a complete reunion with his son when the nightmare of war and of waiting for a dreaded telegram were things of the past. But it was no use. Nor time nor place could make any difference—in his thoughts Sybil Asche had come to stay. And so at length Dad Senior succumbed. At his desk, in the centre of which for a score and more of years the photograph of Lucy in her wedding-dress and veil had stood, to be gradually flanked, year by year, with pictures of her son, he seated himself to write to the girl who, at long last, bade fair to succeed her.

Then—a knock at the door, and his servant with the long-expected telegram. Nerving himself to open it, he read: 'Severely wounded.'

'Thank God, not *killed!*' exclaimed Sir Eric, and ten minutes later was on his way to London.

v.

Dad Junior, a very ghost of his former self, but head shorn and chin shaven once more, and some of his bandages removed, grinned broadly from among his pillows, and in a limp but eager grasp seized the hand of Dad Senior, who looked scarcely less haggard than himself. The 'Twins' had passed through some terrible weeks, but of the two the elder had perhaps suffered the more; for, while Junior, more or less unconscious, was enduring bodily anguish, Senior, his mind and every nerve on the stretch with sickening dread as to what the next moment might bring forth, seemed to have lived years since the arrival of that momentous telegram. Across his smooth forehead fine lines had at last begun to furrow their way, an anxious fold appeared between his eyes, while any one who searched diligently might perhaps have discovered traces of silver here and there among the crisp, fair waves of his hair. Had the Fates decreed that during that nerve-racking time he should be at the bedside of his boy, the mental torment would have been lessened; but wires from France had kept him daily expecting the arrival of the invalid in London, and no sooner was he, in sheer desperation, on the point of starting than another message deterred him. At long last, however, here Junior was—the dear fellow—getting stronger every day, although (to his father's infinite relief) the doctors declared he would need at least three months' sick-leave before he would be 'fit,' and then probably only for 'light duty' for some time to come.

Dad Senior's mind was already careering joyfully forward in glad anticipation of having Dad Junior all to himself in the seclusion of Bryan Broadwater, when his thoughts suddenly collided with the image of Sybil Asche. Impatiently he thrust her away, despised himself for thinking of her, then equally despised himself for *not* thinking of her, and presently became acutely aware of an intangible, shadowy something, which seemed to lie between himself and his boy. The latter was just as affectionate, just as keen for his father's company, just as eager to get home again and to 'do the same old things in the same old way,' as he expressed it. Perhaps it was only weakness, or a haunting remembrance of recent fearful experiences, but without doubt, noted Dad Senior regretfully, Dad Junior seemed preoccupied and detached as he had never been before. That the boy was himself covertly studying his father, and trying to account for a certain unwonted air of abstraction and gravity completely foreign to him, never entered Sir Eric's mind; but it made Dad Junior all the more reluctant to reveal a very special Something, with a big capital S, which had weighed on his conscience ever since his return to England. Dad and he had always been such chums—Dad was such an altogether top-hole sort of chap—that it seemed somehow to be not quite playing the game to let anybody else—even *Her*—fill a place in his thoughts without sharing the secret with Dad.

The pair were still longing to break the thin sheet of ice which seemed mysteriously to have formed between them, yet were fearful of doing so, when the invalid was pronounced well enough to go home to convalesce (one *did* go home to convalesce in those first years of the war).

Bryan Broadwater was now at the height of its midsummer beauty and prodigality, affording everything, one would suppose, that the heart of a young man could desire, from early peaches to a new litter of pointer puppies! But although for a few days Dad Junior seemed to be happy and content, his father soon detected signs of restlessness and even of slight irritability; while, on the other hand, the son kept asking himself impatiently, 'What the dickens has got into Dad that he looks so glum?' The simple truth was that, whereas Dad Junior was fretting his soul because *She* did not write to him as he had begged her to do, Dad Senior was equally fretting because he could not make up his mind to write to *Her*, without first taking the 'boy' into his confidence.

An opportunity was offered, but weakly allowed to slip, when, during the twilight of a rather heavily long day, as the 'Twins' paced slowly up and down in the yew-hedge garden, Dad Junior suddenly burst out, 'How damned *still* it is down here, Dad—not a soul except our two selves to speak to!' Dad Senior, instantly taking alarm lest the boy had overtired himself, laid his hand on his shoulder and said gently but cheerily, 'I fancy you are still missing your *nurse*, my dear boy.'

'*My nurse!* Missing my *nurse!* Why, how the deuce di-d-d *you* know?' he stammered, blushing furiously and hastily searching for his cigarette-case.

'Eh? *What?*' queried Dad Senior in incredulous staccato, a ray of light suddenly

illuminating his mind and simultaneously lifting a strange weight from his heart. But before Dad Junior could answer, the dressing-gong boomed through the still air, and Dad Junior, seized with sudden panic, fled precipitately. Dad Senior would not force his son's confidence; so, although they played billiards violently all the evening, they parted for the night with the intangible ice wall between them a trifle thicker.

VI.

'The post, sir,' said Dad Junior's servant the next morning, presenting the tray and covertly noting the look of sharp disappointment on his master's face as he glanced over a pile of dull-looking envelopes. 'Here, Dudley; take *The Times* to Sir Eric,' he said, and tore open a letter, censored and minus a stamp, which, though it was not *from* Her, might perhaps contain news *of* Her; for it was from Hugh Stafford, his particular friend 'out there,' who had been wounded in the same attack, laid up in the same hospital, but not considered bad enough to be sent home.

Dad Junior's eyes ran rapidly over the first page or two of inquiries, of envyings of his luck at being home, of news, sad, glad, bad and good, of the regiment; and then he came to this: 'I have one bit of news, old thing, which, judging from certain signs while you were in hospital—signs I couldn't help observing out of the tail of my eye, so to speak—you won't especially relish. That awfully pretty, jolly nurse who looked after you is engaged to the big Highlander who was in the cot next to yours. The affair, it appears, was a very old one; but although she wouldn't have him until he had won his spurs, she contrived to get sent out here on the bare chance that if he were wounded she might be at hand to nurse him! Of course, he'll be sent home now, and perhaps her people will wangle a cushy job for him—if he's that sort, though somehow I don't think he is. At any rate, they're going to be married as soon as he can hop about, so you had better begin saving up for a wedding-present! Never mind, old boy. Don't be down-hearted. There are lots more nurses,' &c., &c.

But Dad Junior read no further. Deathly pale, and with a strange numb feeling all through him, he sat for a time staring at the letter; then suddenly a quiver ran over his face, and a deep flush, while below his breath he exclaimed, 'Thank Heaven, I didn't worry *Dad* about it!'

Reaching for his hat, he dashed out of doors, and making his way to the kennels, extracted a not wholly unwilling pointer from the onslaught of her voracious progeny, with set intent, for probably the first time on record, of avoiding his father by losing himself in the copse.

No need, however, was there for him to be at such pains. Alone in the library, the key turned, sat Dad Senior, thinking hard, and utterly heedless of the passing hours. Beside him lay a sheet of *The Times*, in one of whose columns appeared the following announcement: 'A marriage has been arranged, and will shortly take place, between Captain Alistair Gilfillan of Heath House, Aberdeenshire, and the Hon. Sybil Cicely Asche, youngest daughter of Lord Stratton and of Lady Stratton of Stratton Park, Kent.' At last, as the clock struck noon, Dad Senior roused himself, and, folding the news paper, might have been heard fervently ejaculating, 'What a providence that I had said nothing about it to the *boy!*'

A moment later, as, through the long, ivy-framed window, he saw Dad Junior sauntering towards the house, alone, and looking unmistakably white and weary, a sudden most contradictory sense of relief took possession of him. Stepping out on to the terrace, redolent of late roses and of newly mown grass, he held out the paper towards Dad Junior, and, with a display of as much indifference as he could muster, said gaily, 'Another war engagement, Junior: the Honourable Sybil Asche—Lord Stratton's daughter, you know—and some Hielan' chap. Suppose I must send her a wedding-present. She was my nurse at Stratton Park.'

'Sybil Asche was *your nurse*, Dad!' exclaimed Dad Junior, turning violently red, and steadily regarding Dad Senior's too tell-tale countenance. 'Good Lord, *she was mine too!*'

For the space of a second father and son looked each other in the eyes; then, 'Come along to the kennels, Dad, and let's pick out the best puppy. There is just time before lunch,' quoth Dad Junior heartily, linking his arm in Dad Senior's. Together the 'Twins' trotted away.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

THE mystic stillness of the evening tide
Has hushed to silence nature's every breath,
And all creation's splendour, vast and wide,
Is wrapped in quietness, calm as peaceful death.

A lonely sea-bird, swift, on tireless wing,
Still skims the dark'ning sea with graceful sweep—
The music of the water's murmuring
Is all that breaks the quiet of the deep.

The colours of the sunset, one by one,
Are deep'ning as they slowly fade from sight,
Till all the fiery splendour of the sun
Has yielded to the dusky shades of night.

The evening star, the herald of the night,
Whose timid beams the earth sought to embrace,
Is lost amid the million points of light
That deck the wondrous realms of endless space.

And so the night wears on, till with the morn
The twinkling stars fade slowly from the view,
And nature's thousand voices greet the dawn,
And this our wondrous earth is born anew.

F. O. B.

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SEVENTH SERIES

A FALLACY IN TACTICS.

By R. P. HUGHES.

In an entrenched position the ability to repulse the enemy does not depend on the number of men in the trenches before the bombardment begins, but on the amount of fire that can be delivered against the enemy when the barrage lifts, and his infantry advances.—Extract from *Notes on Recent Operations in the Field.*

I.

WHEN the 'Iron' Brigade came to Mound Top they found themselves in possession of the one eminent feature in an otherwise very flat Flemish landscape: a gentle roll or fold in the ground, roughly a kilometre from end to end, in the shape of a crescent moon with the horns towards the enemy. The British trenches were dug along the top of this ridge. Parallel to them, in No Man's Land, a rusty causeway of wire, twenty to thirty feet in width, snaked its devious course. Beyond, a quarter of a mile distant, a broken brown line, which disappeared gradually to the north and the south, indicated the German front trench.

In days gone by the Boche had been wont to grudge us our possession of Mound Top, and had made vigorous use of his mailed fist to lend weight to his protest. Savage Bavarians, employing the fearsome saw-bayonet, hurled themselves repeatedly in bloody assaults against the crest, then in the hands of some battered, hard-eyed remnants of the grim 'Old Contempt-ibles.' The story of each effort, with its price, emerged only by degrees from captured documents and prisoners' statements. They form a significant and sufficient explanation why we were allowed to retain our hold of Mound Top unchallenged for the next two years.

Our presence there must have sent the German High Command into a paroxysm of rage each time it pored over the maps of that sector. Conceive the indignity of having miles and miles of one's back-areas under the daily surveillance of keen-eyed hostile gunners. During the day-time not a single fly-like dot of a transport-wagon crawled along a single road between the British front-line and the distant German horizon but its progress was observed by some gunner subaltern in his O.P. On rare red-letter days a dust-whirling staff-car might be caught racing along a far-off bit of road. The telephone to the gun-pits hung handy to the watcher's mouth, and the flying car rarely outstripped the message that kindled quick gun-flashes amongst the trees at the other end of the wire. On one memorable occasion a British shell actually exploded on a vanishing gray hood!

The 'Irons' filed up the devious communication-trenches leading to Mound Top in late June. Before July was half over the regular monotonous round of trench routine held them in full thrall. Trenches were re-revetted and deepened, and fresh duck-boards laid down. The belt of wire in front swelled nightly to more and more formidable dimensions. Patrols crawled in all directions, seeking whom they might devour. And already a big raid on the enemy lines was being secretly and carefully planned. The brigade was feeling at home in its new quarters.

It was on a hot, oppressive day towards the end of the month that one of the battalion commanders, a cigarette between his lips, was taking his morning constitutional along the front-line. In a musing moment he paused to regard a tall, blackened tree-trunk that rose out of the German parapet opposite. He stared pensively a while at the dead, denuded skeleton, picturing it in its green and lusty days, when it towered nobly against the sky, a thing of beauty and utility, providing shelter for bird and beast, of all objects in the world the least likely, one would have thought, to fall a victim to war's blasts.

Suddenly, as the colonel gazed, his features changed, and an exclamation of mingled astonishment and incredulity fell from his lips. His hands went with a quick movement to his binoculars. He directed them, staring long and earnestly, towards the tree. When he had stared his fill he replaced the glasses and wiped his forehead, looking about in a half-bewildered way for a seat. He sat on the fire-step, and out of his tunic-pocket took a field-service pocket-book, in which he began to write.

II.

The brigadier, who had just finished lunch, was smoking one of his friend the R.A. colonel's excellent cigars, and listening with an expression of good-natured tolerance to the battalion commander's amazing tale. The R.A. person, with his belt comfortably slack, leaned back in his chair, and placing together the tips of his well-

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kept fingers, nodded now and again as if in confirmation of the other's points.

'It was by sheer good luck, sir,' the colonel was saying, 'that I happened to be looking at the tree from that particular angle, and the sun, shining almost directly overhead, just struck one gleam from the eye-piece of the periscope. Even when I turned my glasses on to it, I confess I could hardly believe my eyes.'

The R.A. colonel took up the tale, and discoursed, from an artilleryman's standpoint, interestingly and at some length on the subject.

'A most ingenious dodge, sir; and I must say, to give the blighters their due, they display wonderful ingenuity in making the dummy tree as like as two peas to the original. Their pioneers are the beggars who do it. They 'll go up to the trench, make a drawing of the tree they want to reproduce, take the necessary measurements, and then, one night, the pukka tree comes down, and the hollow one takes its place. An observer crawls within, places his periscope against an aperture at the top—and there you are!

''Twouldn't surprise me in the least, after what Cholmondeley has been telling us, to find that brother Boche has been studying our system and back-areas for months past. You may depend upon it, if he 's got one camouflage tree, he 's got a dozen of 'em, erected against all points of our front.'

The brigadier puffed thoughtfully at his cigar, staring in silence out of the dug-out window. After a while he rose briskly to his feet, and called for the staff captain.

'We 'll go up to the line,' he announced to the other two, 'and have a look around for the rest of these queer things.'

The little party returned in the evening in a somewhat chastened mood, having 'bagged'—to use the R.A.'s expression—'seven of the spying blighters.'

That night a howitzer battery received instructions from Group H.Q. that caused the officers concerned to gaze questioningly at one another, and then bend over their trench-maps with eager eyes. The subalterns at dinner added zest to the occasion by preparing a sweepstake to cover the event.

Towards noon next day the German casualty totals received an unexpected fillip in the addition of seven extraordinary cases, and, incidentally, the German Intelligence Department lost an equal number of perfectly good camouflage 'trees.' The lucky battery added to its laurels a new record for fine shooting.

The process of immolation, breathlessly observed, sent a deep and satisfying thrill throughout Mound Top. Even moist and inexpressibly grimy cooks were not above struggling for places at loopholes whence to drink in the dramatic spectacle.

III.

Following swiftly upon the heels of the first came a second diversion for the brigade. The general, after a hurriedly summoned conference of all senior officers, suddenly converted his entire command into two great working-parties. It was an admirable piece of organisation. Without any further warning the blaspheming 'Irons' found themselves strenuously digging dug-outs of unprecedented depth in every part of the line. Picks and shovels rang nightly in all directions. The brigadier, accompanied by engineer officers and machine-gun officers equipped with compasses and maps, would proceed to a spot, hold there what had the appearance of a brief funeral service—and the next arrivals in the vicinity came armed with the implements of the occasion, spat upon their hands, and, full of strange oaths, forthwith commenced to dig.

They dug—perhaps harder than their forebears dug at Torres Vedras, with the harryings of fiery-headed Masséna to lend strength to their elbows—for a month; and at the end of that period, thanks to the galvanic energy imparted by the brigadier to all ranks, the entire system of Mound Top found itself turned completely upside-down and made out afresh. For the general was unable to dissociate in his mind camouflage 'trees' from a sure promise of Teutonic unpleasantness.

Strung in echelon fashion across the whole brigade frontage, a system of twenty-foot dug-outs had sprung into being, immensely strengthened at their entrances with facings of solid concrete, six feet thick.

Into these subterranean fortresses descended machine-gunners with their ordnance, and commenced to pile up about them, in belts and boxes, and even loose in sandbags, stacks of ammunition. Such portents could not escape observation. Faint electric currents began to invade and charge the atmosphere of the sector. 'Old soldiers' with experienced olfactory organs sniffed the air, and declared that they scented symptoms of a coming 'stunt.'

One day, like a bolt out of the blue, came a chit to H.Q., revealing in terse, grave phraseology the imminence of a powerful Boche attack against the position. 'It is intended that the assault shall be no less sudden than crushing.' Guns in unguessed numbers (it seems) had quietly been assembled against the front, and already carefully chosen units of *sturmtruppen* lay behind the German lines, in readiness 'to do the dirty' on Mound Top.

The brigadier was a proud person when he received that message. In his eyes was the glad light of a man who had been able to see a day ahead of his fellows, and to read correctly what he saw.

'Let 'em do their dam'dest,' he exclaimed,

pitching the chit to the staff captain; 'we're ready when they are.'

In the candle-lit depths of the twenty-foot dug-outs news of the warning administered a final fillip to the energies of the toiling occupants. Guns were generously oiled and overhauled. Ball ammunition was cleaned and burnished, and stacked carefully in belts and boxes and bandoliers.

IV.

The attack opened as suddenly as a lightning-flash. It came at midnight, on the stroke. One moment the night was still and windless, faintly starlit, disturbed by hardly more than a distant murmur of gun-fire from the south; the next, a violent, sustained tremor ran through the earth, accompanied by deep, muffled reports. In an instant the starry sky was alive with trailing red sparks travelling in curved lines towards the British trenches.

It was not upon the expectant front-line that the force of that terrific bombardment fell, but upon the wire. With earthquake explosions and volcanic flamings the great barbed belt was ripped and torn asunder like so many skeins of wool. Yard by yard it was blown and shattered out of existence, and the way made clear, with Teutonic thoroughness, for the passage of the waiting *sturmtruppen*.

Next morning a misty red sun rising behind the German lines revealed to the deafened garrison of Mound Top how completely in one night the most formidable wire entanglements may succumb to heavy minenwerfers, timed to burst on impact. Of all that splendid obstacle scarcely a strand remained. In its place appeared a black, twisting line of yawning craters.

'To-night,' said the brigadier, surveying the mess with hard eyes, 'the devils will attack.'

In their deep dug-outs the machine-gunners oiled the frictional parts of their weapons lovingly for the last time—and lit cigarettes.

Exactly half-an-hour after midnight the watching double-sentries in the British front-line yelled at the top of their voices for every one to 'stand-to,' and then crouched to a man beneath the parapet. They had seen the whole of the dark skyline in front of them silently stabbed by a multitude of red flashes. They waited breathlessly for three seconds, and then, rushing down out of the black heavens to the accompaniment of a swelling, deafening hurricane roar, came the first German shells. Beneath the force of that terrific impact Mound Top shook from end to end, and a flash of ruddy light leapt wildly skywards. The trenches in an instant filled with an infernal, winking glow, a fantastic glancing and dancing, like the shimmer, as it were, of a brimstone lake in spate! Shrapnel flashed crimson, blinding the stars; while white searing flames leapt and spouted savagely in every direction. The torn earth diabolically bubbled fire. The ground quivered as if alive, writhing in torment; it flew apart in violent disruption, reviving ancient foulnesses. Geysers of dirt and débris soared in dark columns. Heavy 'minnies,' piercing the tenebrous depths, exploded far below, and rent the bowels of the earth with volcanic violence. Puffs of hot air, commingling the stink of cordite with the odour of forgotten burial-places, impinged with incessant soft blows against the bodies of the few breathless soldiers surviving above-ground. It was as if the quiet starry night had suddenly gone mad—frantically, screaming mad—with some primordial terror. Without a pause the roaring orchestra of battle-sounds shook the skies, the whistling rush of shells blending furiously with the crash and din of explosions.

Regarded dispassionately, as a demonstration of war conducted on scientific principles, it left nothing to be desired. It was a perfect example of what on the morrow would be dismissed in one line of print as 'an outburst of enemy artillery activity.'

V.

For four hours Mound Top was drenched with fire. At the end of that period the barrage lifted with the precision of a drop-scene, and descended on to the back-areas to stem any rush of reinforcements into the hapless front-line; and the Boche climbed out of his trenches. It was the first peep of day. A few dazed and shaken sentries, raising their singing heads over the remains of the British parapet, saw the gray hordes moving leisurely towards them across No Man's Land. For a second they stared, and then disappeared. The Boche came forward without haste, bayonet in hand, picking his way through the shell-holes, marching with aplomb to take possession of his prize. . . . .

Something moved in the British trenches; something glinted stealthily; here and there amidst the smoking wreckage a white face showed for an instant, and vanished.

On marched the Germans, each man jostling the next, grunting guttural jokes, their non-commissioned officers continually running out in front to preserve the dressing of the line.

Overhead continued the steady roar of shells rushing furiously through the air; below, the ground trembled to the volcanic crashings and eruptions of the missiles bursting in the British support-trenches. Smoke mingled wildly with flame, rolling and angrily spouting in every direction.

Suddenly, with the speed and directness of lightning, two startling things happened. Low over the British parapet swept a shrieking tornado of steel, a withering blast of shrapnel that burst full in the faces of the advancing Boche. At the same instant the snarling rattle of machine-guns leapt out.

These machine-guns were trained so that each

fired diagonally to its front. Where one blazed to the right, the other blazed to the left. All lines of fire converged upon one another, and meeting about the centre of No Man's Land, formed a whistling belt of death.

As the first of that wicked blast caught them, the leading gray lines swayed limply, and stumbled, then fell forward on their faces, and lay still.

The battle had opened!

The second wave, fifty yards or so to the rear of the first, following a moment's involuntary start that sent a perceptible ripple through the ranks, came on grimly to take their fallen comrades' places. They did not reach so far, for the hail of bullets caught them almost at once, and fiercely mowed them down *to a man*. The third wave followed in short, stumbling rushes, and the fourth, and the fifth. . . . .

Fresh droves climbed out of their trenches and swarmed forward, trampling the dead and the dying underfoot. They came blindly on, rushing frantically towards the shelter of the British lines, heads bent instinctively to the singing blast, arms flung impotently out. Sometimes an ashen, distorted face would be raised wildly to the skies, and a piercing shriek mingle with the growing tumult. But most died without knowledge of the fact.

VI.

It is a common fact, known to all machine-gunners, that their weapon is capable of sustained fire for a limited period only. Beyond that point the barrel grows overheated, and by its expansion puts the gun out of action. It then requires, in most cases, half-an-hour in which to cool down to its normal condition. In their desperate resolve to carry their objective the German High Command conceived a brilliant notion. They thoughtfully committed themselves to supplying human targets for the enemy machine-gunners in such vast numbers as to bring about this fatal overheating of the guns in the quickest possible time. Unfortunately for the fruition of so original a scheme, the possibility of it had been vaguely present for some time in the mind of the brigade machine-gun officer, and he had provided against the contingency by instructing his teams to fire in relays, allowing one set of guns to cool while another 'carried on.'

For an hour the Germans held to their bloody idea. Then the battle suddenly came to an end. The human margin was exhausted, and with it went a generous overlapping from ill-starred reserve units. The ecstatic British machine-gunners got no more targets; the murderous shrapnel madly lashed the ground and all its gray litter for a little further space, and ceased. A grim silence fell on both sides, the exhausted silence of a dog that licks its wounds. . . . .

Later the skies broke, and emptied themselves in torrential downpour on to the battlefield. Straight and thick as Norman arrows the rain fell, darting down savagely on the sprawling gray heaps that lay between the lines, drenching them in a moment, then forming slowly in stained, glistening pools about them.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN the morning we agreed that the bogus copy of our half of the paper (with the words 'Chanter Corrie' substituted in it for 'Sron na Leirg') should be in my handwriting, and in the Laird's Room I wrote it out and gave it to Tony. In a corner of the room was a little escritoire, which I unlocked at his request. There was nothing in it except two or three bundles of receipts and some household account-books. Tony overhauled it, opened and shut the lid several times, locked and unlocked it twice or thrice, and carefully examined the key. Then he folded the faked paper and put it in an open envelope, which he deposited in a little drawer inside the escritoire.

'"With your kind permission," as the conjurers say, I shall keep the key to-day, Neil,' he said, as he shut down the lid. 'Nothing further can be done until your return from Castleton.' It was important, he emphasised, that I should make a point of not turning up until the evening.

I left him busy in the writing-room making a rough sketch map of the lie of the ground near the summit of the Pass.

While I was pacing the platform awaiting the train, a rough-looking lumberman asked me civilly for a match, and, as he returned the box, whispered, 'Tell Mr Keene-Leslie that all goes well.'

At Castleton I lunched with the Chief Constable and the Procurator-Fiscal, who read me various reports and their private notes. They were still hopeful, but their tone lacked conviction; and I passed the rest of a dull day in the club, spinning all sorts of theories concerning Tony's scheme, and counting the minutes till train-time. It was close upon seven o'clock when I got back to The Bield, to find Tony stretched in a deck-chair in the garden, placidly enjoying a cigar.

'Behold me on great good terms with myself! I am at peace with nearly all the world. Smooth the wrinkles from your brow, my lad,' was his airy greeting, but under it I suspected a current of suppressed excitement. 'The scheme has

prospered amazingly. Il Signor Searcher is, I think, in a cleft stick. Come with me.' He swung his long legs out of the chair, and I followed him into the house.

'By the way,' I said, as we entered the Laird's Room, 'a toil-stained lumberman, otherwise friend Sparke, contrived a word with me at the station this morning. He sends a message that all is well.'

'Good! Sparke will require two days' sleep after this business. He has been working overtime.'

Tony locked the door, and then went to the escritoire in the corner of the room.

'I want you to examine the lid of this desk without touching it,' he said.

I looked carefully at its dark mahogany surface.

'I can see nothing,' I told him.

'Nor can I. I didn't expect to. I left the key, carelessly enough, lying here.' He pointed to a little bookshelf which ran along the wall behind the desk.

'And it is still where you left it.'

'Not quite. Take this lens and examine the surface of the woodwork near it.' He handed me a powerful lens, and I bent over the shelf.

'See anything?' he asked.

'A few scratches and a little faint bluish line.'

'Just so! The scratches are old. The line is new. I pencilled it there this forenoon. Then I laid the key exactly on the top of it, and *I have not touched it since.* Therefore, some one has been in the room and has handled it. Observe that it is now lying at least a couple of inches away from the line.'

I took up the lens again. It was as he said.

'But whoever touched it must have had precise knowledge of its whereabouts. How did he get that knowledge?' I asked, mystified.

'I helped him considerably,' was the unexpected reply. 'Now I am going to try to reconstruct the scene.'

He unlocked the escritoire and opened the lid of the desk. This done, he slowly and carefully pulled out the little drawer inside, and from it took the open envelope containing the bogus paper. It was lying in the place where I had last seen it in the morning.

'Everything as I left it, Neil?'

'Um—er—apparently.'

'You are becoming cautious. But you are right. It has only "apparently" been untouched. Watch!'

He took the envelope to a table by the window, and holding it in the horizontal position in which he had found it in the drawer, opened it and drew out the paper, which he unfolded. Then he carefully shook both envelope and paper above the dark surface of the table. I was looking over his shoulder.

'Did you see anything fall out of either envelope or paper?'

'Nothing. That I'll swear to. I was watching most attentively.'

'Excellent! The paper has been tampered with.'

'Are you *sure?*'

'I don't often use the word "sure." But I am as sure that the desk has been opened as I am sure that you and I are alive. The little drawer has also been opened. So has the envelope, and the paper has been taken out and replaced.'

I drew a long breath. We had struck the trail.

'And I am going to prove all this,' Tony went on, a confident ring in his voice. 'After you left this morning I made some experiments with the lid of the escritoire and the drawer inside it. After half-an-hour of these, I put two little specks of blotting-paper, not much bigger than pin-heads, inside the paper in such a position that they would inevitably fall out if anybody unfolded it. Similarly, I put other two below the drawer, just at the edge, and on the lid of the desk (which, as you see, opens upwards) I laid three other specks of paper coloured in exact imitation of the dark brown of the mahogany. Lying on the lid, they were practically invisible. Now!'

He crossed the room and pointed to the floor near the escritoire. There I saw two little specks of reddish blotting-paper, no bigger than ladybirds.

'If you pick these up, I think you will find them marked. The paper was taken out and opened where we stand.'

I picked up the specks, and, sure enough, on each was a pencilled dot.

'Call me Didymus no longer,' I said, staring at them.

'Now for the escritoire. Before I opened it just now there ought to have been three little dark brown specks of paper on the lid. I put them near the edge. They were no longer there—you will find them now on the flat surface close to the hinges.'

Again it was as he said.

'The lid had been opened, and the specks, of course, ran down its slope. The displacement might have happened through a draught of air or a housemaid's dusting, but inside the desk'—he opened the lid—'were the two specks which I put below the little drawer. They are unmarked. See!'

Lying at the bottom of the desk, just below the drawer, were two more specks of paper. He lifted them out and handed them to me.

'My only fear was that I had overdone it—that I had "planted" too many of the tell-tale specks, and that "The Searcher," an abnormally cunning and intelligent scoundrel, would spot them and suspect a trap. But evidently he didn't.'

'He has read the bogus paper?'

'No doubt. And he has probably taken a copy of it.'

'Then he may have started already for the Pass.'

'I don't think so. Sparke is watching him. I have a record of his movements for some days; and if he starts, I shall be told instantly. But I fancy that he won't start so long as he thinks we are here.'

'So the sooner we pretend to take our departure for the South the better?'

'Yes. This is Wednesday evening. We want a day to solder up the plans we sketched last night.'

'We can start on Friday. To-morrow I shall bring the keepers and the stalkers here quietly, and explain what is wanted. They will be as keen as beagles, and they will hold their tongues. No one can gabble like a Highlander if he chooses; but if he doesn't choose, a Trappist monk is a chatterbox by comparison.'

'The men can't come with us on our pretended start South, of course. They must be sent on before us.'

'The stalkers are on the watch already, as you know,' said I. 'Angus and the two keepers can steal up the Pass and join them. That would make five allies in their places before we come on the scene.'

'Are they good shots?'

'Ross and the two stalkers are excellent. The other two are above the average with either rifle or shot-gun.'

'Good! You and I can run the revolver department.'

The time-table and the map were consulted, and finally we decided to take our pretended departure for the South by the afternoon train on Friday. At Ardgarry, about forty miles down the great curve of the Highland line, we were to leave the train, double back up Glen Tilt by motor-car as far as we could, and thereafter push on with all speed from the south end of the wild Larig.

I undertook that a motor-car and chauffeur would meet us at Ardgarry. As we wished to be at the Chanter Corrie by daybreak, part of the climb would be by night, and although the weather promised well, a good guide was desirable. I knew one—Malcolm Cameron, an experienced and tireless mountaineer—who lived near Ardgarry. A guide is not indispensable, but he saves time and is a stand-by in case of accidents. Many a climber has rued having started without one, for the Larig, even in June daylight, let alone after sunset, can be a place of moods, of blinding mists or black roaring tempests.

(*Continued on page 452.*)

MORE SCOTTISH STREET NAMES.

By G. M. FRASER, Librarian, Aberdeen Public Library.

IN a previous article (*Chambers's Journal* for May 1918) I opened the ground a little on this subject. To judge from many letters received since then—kind and most interesting letters—there is need to deal with the matter a little further, for, although certain difficulties in our street nomenclature have already been discussed, many points of interest had to be passed over for want of space, and to some of these my attention has been drawn by correspondents in widely different parts of the country.

For example, correspondents in London, Lancashire, Pittenweem, Newport (Fife), and Hawick offer particular examples of street names containing the expression 'gate,' with the inquiry if such come under the rule formerly stated with regard to this term—namely, that in Scotland (and northern England) in a street name it represents the old Anglian *gate* (spelt *gait* in Scotland later, from about the fifteenth century), meaning a road or way, and not an entrance gate to a burgh, which was invariably spoken of as *port* (French *la porte*, the gate). Such names in question are the Deansgate in Manchester; the Kirkgate of Leeds and other English towns; the Howegate of Hawick; Marygate, near the old abbey of Pittenweem; and so forth.

Now, as to all such cases two things have to be said. In the first place, the rule is invariable, so far as I have found, that 'gate' in a street name in Scotland and northern England means, not an entrance gate, but 'road' or 'way,' the Seagate of Dundee meaning the Sea Road; the Trongate of Glasgow, the road to the tron; the Sandgate of Ayr and of Berwick, the road to the sands or beach; the Stonegate of York and other English towns, the paved street; the Marketgate (now the High Street) and the Wellgate of Dundee, the market street and the road to the (Lady) well respectively. In the case of entrance gates to a burgh, on the other hand, we have these designated *port* in plenty of burghs whose ancient streets are known—or were formerly known—as *gates*. An admirable example is found in Peebles, with its streets the Northgait and the Briggait, and its four entrance ports, the East, West, North, and Briggait Ports. We have the same thing in Edinburgh, and other towns that need not be specified.

The other point to be kept in view is that only careful research on the spot can elucidate very difficult local cases of unusual street names, for you must have regard not merely to the

philology of the name, but to all the personal and historical associations of the road and the town.

The Deansgates are all of the same type, and conform to the above rule. The Deansgate was the dean's road, usually the road where the dean had his residence. We have in Scotland the Canongate of Edinburgh, and the same in Jedburgh, meaning the 'gait,' or road, where the canons of the abbey dwelt. In 'Old' Aberdeen, near St Machar's Cathedral—the only granite cathedral in Europe, I think—the name takes the form of the 'Chanonry,' nearer the French form of *chanoine*, a canon. Aberdeen likes to cling to the old French form in certain of these designations. It is the only town in Scotland that spells 'bailie,' a magistrate, with double 'l'—Old French, *baillif;* and in Aberdeen alone are what are called solicitors in England styled 'advocates'—a usage which probably came to Scotland through the French *avocat* (primarily, of course, L. *advocatus*), when the Court of Session was formed on the Parisian model. Sir Walter Scott was well aware of the practice, and liked to tell the story of Lord Elibank, who put down an eminent English lawyer who thought that at the Union English law should have been extended to Scotland, by observing grimly, 'If that had been so, it would have settled your business, for by this time the Aberdeen advocates would have possessed themselves of all the business in Westminster Hall.'

But take the interesting instance of the Howegate of Hawick. It has been supposed there to mean the site of an ancient gateway. In that case, however, it would have been the 'Howe Port,' or something of that kind, like the East Port of Dunfermline, or the West Port of Cupar, or the Seagate Port of Dundee—still standing, one is glad to say, although in a somewhat neglected state for what is, perhaps, the most interesting historical relic in that city. And as historical research would show that the Moat is in the region of the Howegate, the idea of a 'port' there is scarcely valid. It is evident that the Howegate of Hawick, like the Howegate of Kilwinning, is really the Howe Road (the road of the hollow), and is properly treated at the present day, in the numbering of the houses there, as an ordinary 'gait' or street.

Another curious name at Hawick—more of a place-name than a street name—is the 'Vertish,' the meaning and the derivation of which have so far eluded local research. It may be helpful to try the comparative method of inquiry. In Aberdeen, the designation of the Green-gait in the old Latin charters was *Vicus Viridis*—the road of the green; and examination of the feu charters of Hawick would probably reveal this to be the origin of the corrupt vernacular form 'Vertish.'

Again let it be said, however, that in all this matter, as in the equally fascinating study of place-names, one must never allow one's self to be misled by apparent similarity in names or expressions. Guessing is inadmissible—it has been the bane of place-name studies in Scotland—and only painstaking inquiry into individual names, tedious although it often is, will help in this instructive but neglected field of research. A few years ago, in the delightfully quaint, historical town of Hexham, I was interested to come on the street named 'Gilligate.' It looked, at the first glance, like our Scottish 'Gallowgate,' which always led to the Gallows Hill, but it is really St Giles's Gait, the road to St Giles's Hospital. That is well enough known in Hexham; but even there they have never solved convincingly the name of 'Priestpopple,' their fine old High Street—as we should call it—and they probably never will solve it.

Sometimes one is asked if an apparently difficult street name may not be Gaelic. Here, too, there is a sound and invariable rule for our guidance. There is not in Scotland—nor in England either, so far as I know—a single street name derived directly from the Gaelic in the times when street names grew up naturally, and were significant. Like Roman bridges (which are popularly supposed to be found in almost every district), Gaelic street names—that is, names directly and significantly derived from the Gaelic—are non-existent in this country. The reason is historically of interest. We have plenty of Gaelic place-names, right down from Celtic times—they are all over Lowland Scotland; and when competently handled they are most enlightening as to the ancient Celtic culture of the country. But the Celtic hamlets must have been, at the best, mere collections of huts, and only with the coming in of the Anglian immigrants, with their dialect—the dialect, in the main, of Lowland Scotland still—their names, their customs, their trade, and their business ways, were 'burghs' formed, with regular streets, and consequently with Anglian street designations. The remarkable fact that our ancient street names in Scotland are, without exception, English, as far back as our written history goes, is helpful not merely in getting at the meaning of these street designations, but in our moving towards a solution of the problem of our origin as a race. We have in Scotland plenty of street names that have been taken from the Gaelic, but these have all been applied since the middle of the eighteenth century, when the formal naming of streets began, and have no significance. They have been taken from some adjoining place-name, or river-name, or some pre-existing designation of that kind, the proper Gaelic meaning of which—or even the fact that it was Gaelic—probably nobody then knew.

In my former article I mentioned that every historical town in Scotland had its High Street or an equivalent—with one notable exception,

Aberdeen. Two correspondents have written to me from Stirling pointing out that there is no High Street—or Main Street—in that ancient burgh, and one of them enclosed a cutting from a Stirling newspaper, the editor of which, in a kind notice of the said article, remarks: 'What about Stirling, perhaps the most historical of all Scottish towns? It has no High Street, nor ever had.'

Unfortunately my correspondents are right as to the present; but they are wrong as to the past. I say 'unfortunately,' because it shows that the ancient street names of Stirling are being allowed to pass away, or are being modernised, to the detriment of the historical interests of that most fascinating burgh. Stirling *had* a High Street. It was at the head of the High Street that, in the thirties of last century, the ruins of 'Mar's Work,' that curious palace, were still to be seen, and in the middle of the High Street then stood the town-house of the burgh. In Stirling the authorities might do worse than carry out a suggestion once made in Brechin that the ancient, as well as the modern, names of the streets should be painted up to keep them in remembrance. As all visitors to the old towns of Belgium know, duplicate names of streets were often shown there—in modern French and in the old Walloon dialect; and they added to the interest and the charm of these ancient places, over the fate of which we mourn so much to-day. I am not sure that Brechin ever, in any instance, carried out its own suggestion—I have never seen duplicate names of streets in that little town—but the visitor can easily see that Brechin has not modernised all its ancient and suggestive street names. Like Elgin, it still has its Maison Dieu Lane—although not quite correctly painted up (it reads Maisondieu)—to remind us of the kindly hearts there in the old days as well as now:

> A record which together binds
> Past deeds and offices of charity
> Else unremembered.

An incidental reference in my last article to the ancient Bowl-gate, or Bowl Road, of Edinburgh has brought me not only letters but visits from esteemed friends—gentlemen from the capital who concern themselves with the historic past of the city—to whom the old Bowl Road was unknown. I have been asked so often for my authority for the existence of a Bowl Road in Edinburgh—the road leading to the public bowling-greens—that it seems in order to state that authority here. In Robert Chambers's delightful little volume, *Reekiana*, published in 1833, will be found a reproduction of Edgar's Plan of the City and Castle of Edinburgh, 1742, with the bowling-greens marked; and in John Spalding's *History of the Troubles*—all editions, but particularly the Spalding Club edition of 1850–51—reference is made repeatedly to the 'Bool-rod' of Edinburgh. Spalding was a quaint but an accurate historian, even in the matter of obscure street names.

I refrained in the earlier article from dealing with the designation 'wynd,' so common in the older burghs, but now disappearing with the straightening and the widening of streets, and I did so because I considered that the meaning of the term was fairly obvious. But there is evidently a desire to know something definite with regard to it. The derivation of 'wynd' is obscure, but there is little doubt it is the Middle English *winden*, to turn round, to twist, applied substantively to a narrow, crooked street. The strange thing is that in our best English dictionaries—they are very limited in number—the expression is always put down as 'Scottish,' and as meaning an alley in a (Scottish) town. Nowadays, indeed, its use is mainly confined to Scottish towns, but the expression came from England, and, as a glance at Dr Joseph Wright's English Dialect Dictionary shows, it is still in use as a street designation in the northern English counties.

In the older burghs the use of 'wynd' as a street designation takes us as far back as the beginning of our written history. It is always accompanied by some modifying expression. This may indicate situation, as in the Upper and the Nether Wynds of Brechin and Cupar, the Back Wynds of Glasgow and Aberdeen, the Castle Wynd of Stirling, or the Lossie Wynd of Elgin; it may imply the character of the street—for instance, the Windy Wynd of Aberdeen; often it is a feuar's name—for example, Downie's Wynd, Annan, and Bell's Wynd, Glasgow. The Mary Wynd of Pittenweem, St Mary's Wynd of Stirling, the Kirk Wynd of Hawick and other towns are all found in the region of the church, and are all ancient descriptive designations.

The most curious street name of this group that I know of is the Bobber Wynd of Cupar. It is an old descriptive name—spelt 'Bober' sometimes in the ancient titles, but there is no significance in that. 'Bobbery' is an old English expression denoting a noisy disturbance, and as the entrance to the Tolbooth and prison of Cupar is from the Bobber Wynd, this may be the origin of the name. Cupar is distinguished among ancient Scottish burghs for the retention of its historical street names. Its longest and finest street is the Bonnygate—the Beautiful Road; and the next best is the Crossgate—the 'gait' or road of the (Market) Cross, which stands at the head of the street.

The most puzzling street name in Scotland—perhaps in England as well—is Rotten Row. It occurred in many of the old burghs. We had Rotten Row in Aberdeen—often, as elsewhere, spelt Rattoun Raw and Rattenraw—well into the nineteenth century. Glasgow had the same; and I have notes of Rotten Row as a street name in Arbroath, Menteith, Ochterlony

(Forfarshire), Pittenweem, Sanquhar, Jedburgh, and as far as Somerset. The Rotten Row of London is the aristocrat of the family, famous all the world over.

Many explanations of the name have been offered, but none has been convincing. Mr Johnston of Falkirk, in his admirable and interesting, but not invariably accurate, *Place-Names of Scotland*, derives it from French *routine*, rendered 'common highway or thoroughfare.' This derivation is open, I hold, to instant and fatal objections. The name Rotten Row was common in the north of England, and is always associated with the Anglo-Saxon *Raw*. I know of no single case in which it was the 'common highway' in the sense of the main street; and, besides, that use of *routine* would be most unusual, I think, even in France. Often the suggestion has been made that it may be the *Route du Roi*, the King's Way; but, while that might answer for Hyde Park, it would hardly explain the Rotten Row of Sanquhar, or Pittenweem, or the east end of Glasgow. The German *reiten*, to ride, has been suggested, plausibly; but again we have to face the historical fact that these — with one great exception—were all little 'slum' streets, not more suited, or used, for riding purposes than the 'vennels' they resembled and adjoined.

Not every Scots town had a Trongate, although in the old days every one of them had a 'tron' of one kind or another, where goods were weighed for town's or other dues. Tron—from the Old French *trone*, a weighing-machine—was a public weigh-house, and the Trongate was the 'gait,' or road, of the weigh-house. In Aberdeen, although from the days of Bruce we had a tron (where actual stone weights were used till 1625, when iron weights from Flanders were substituted), we had no Tron-gate, for the tron was situated in a large space near the harbour, which took the name of Weigh-House Square. Glasgow and Edinburgh, as we all know, not only had a Tron-gait —the Tron Street—but in each case took from the tron the designation of a parish.

The street names of Glasgow offer a most tempting theme for discussion, but one or two typical examples must suffice.

I suppose the best-known street of Glasgow is Sauchiehall Street, the name of which embodies a curious error—not confined to Glasgow. When it was formed through the lands of Blythswood, in the later years of the eighteenth century, it was known as the 'Sauchyha' Road'—meaning the road to the haugh, or hollow, of the sauchs (willows); and the same idea is found in the name of the residence there, Willow Bank Gardens, of William Harley, the successful weaver, the first, I think, to develop that part of the city. Sauchieha' Street, then, is really Sauchiehaugh Street. In Aberdeen, one of our finest west-end streets is Fountainhall Road, formed near the Fountain-ha', the haugh, that is, where the town's water-cisterns were situated in the second half of the eighteenth century. Here, too, the error is permissible; at all events, it has to be accepted.

The only other Glasgow name I can discuss is the Candleriggs—properly, and formerly, the Candlerig. It is a good example of a supposed Scottish expression turning out to be really English. In Glasgow plans of the early years of last century this thoroughfare was set down as 'Candlerigg Street;' and we find, away still farther back, in 1668, that the town council determined to take down a tenement at the fleshmarket so that 'ane fair and commodious entrie be made ther to the Candlerig.' It was the 'rig,' or path (Anglo-Saxon, *hrycg*), where the candle-works began. The name was not applied; it grew up in the old natural descriptive way, like the Candlemaker Row of Edinburgh, and the less ancient, but still fairly venerable, 'Cannel Close' of Aberdeen (near the candle-works), over the closing up of which the town council of this northern city had recently to face a strong popular movement of opposition.

All the street names mentioned hitherto have been names within towns, and it was my object to deal with such only when I began these papers. But we must not forget that many of our country roads and lanes have names, or designations, that are also enlightening as to former historical conditions. Indeed, a 'street' need not be within a town at all. Many readers of these lines must have walked, or cycled, along part of Watling Street, or the 'Stanegate' in the north of England, where you are properly on a 'street'—a paved road, the *strata via* that gave us the very name—but where you may not be within sight of a town or a village for miles. There is a 'Hardgate' in many a county, English as well as Scottish, and it always tells of the hard, or 'made,' road, the highway, in many cases maintained for purposes of traffic by special enactments. Sometimes these country roads and lanes have personal designations, of interest to the locality only, as a rule. But there are exceptions. An old road in the moor of Arbirlot, Arbroath, is known as Heckenbois Path, a meaningless designation until you know that Hector Boece, the historian, the first Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, was born in that region four hundred and fifty years ago. Then you understand how living and permanent is the interest that attaches to our streets and roads and bridges, of which we have so many distinctive examples in this old historical country.

PETITE SIMUNDE.

PART II.

IV.

FOUR winters came and went.

France lay in the warmth of a late spring evening, like a stricken deer that has thrown off its pursuers momentarily, but is bleeding from a hundred wounds. Month after month she had endured the invader, and the cycle of years, instead of freeing her, had only deepened her agony. What had she left? The next attack might see Arras and her remaining coal-fields gone, the Channel ports captured, and then . . . Paris? . . . Paris?

Unperturbed, however, by any such thoughts, Petite Simunde—no one thought of her by any other name—was driving four cows home from pasture. The setting sun shed a kindly hue on her gingham garment that was neither a frock nor an apron, yet served as both. Nor was the mellowing sunlight unkind to her face, for the racial sallowness of her cheeks, accentuated by too constant exposure to the elements, was softened and shaded into a gentle brown. Her shoes, which were far too large, were in the final stages of disrepair. About the brow her hair was braided with a simplicity that was by no means devoid of charm. Her eyes—but there she was really French. Simunde had never been farther from the village of Le Curois than the neighbouring town of Avesnes Le Comte (unless one counts the momentous occasion, a year after her birth, when she was taken to Arras for exhibition before an esteemed and wealthy relative, who was so little impressed that he bequeathed his entire estate, consisting of eight thousand francs, to a manufacturer of tombstones); but a French woman does not acquire coquetry—she is born with it. Even in church Simunde would cast such languishing yet mischievous eyes upon the curé himself that the poor little man, who had never liked Latin at any time, used to stammer and mumble his orisons like an over-conscientious penitent at confessional.

When her two brothers went to war, Simunde, who was then sixteen, assumed their tasks in addition to her own, in all of which she had the able direction of 'madame,' her mother. Between them they performed a day's work that would have exhausted two husky labourers. As is the custom in most of northern France, their home was not on the farm, but in the village, for one of the first essentials of existence to a Frenchman is companionship. On the outskirts of Le Curois, just on the hill, there was a great château, beautifully, gloomily aloof; but in the one street of the village itself pigs, cows, hens, and their offspring wallowed in mud and accumulated filth.

It is difficult to know which is the more striking—the French peasant's stoicism in the presence of war, or his indifference to dirt.

On this particular evening in May of 1913 Simunde was frankly regretting the absence of men. Not that she had ever been in love or known the rapture of wandering in the moonlight with a man (France is almost the only civilised country remaining that has not relegated chaperons to the realm of fiction); but she wanted to use her eyes on something more susceptible than a cow or a curé. It was spring, and she felt pretty, and when a woman is conscious of her own charm she seldom wishes to prove miserly with it.

She had just run across the road to convince a cow of its loss of the sense of direction, when she heard the neighing of a horse. Glancing behind her, she looked directly into the eyes of a mounted British officer, whereupon that gentleman brought his steed to a standstill.

'*Bon soir, mademoiselle,*' said he.

'*Bon soir, monsieur,*' she answered demurely. Her eyes were lowered shyly, and her fingers played over the stick she was carrying, like a flute-player caressing his instrument. The officer bowed slightly and tried to recall his French vocabulary, though it must be admitted he was never loquacious in any tongue when conversing with a daughter of Eve. As for her, since it is a woman's rôle, she waited. Would he speak again, or would he pass on, leaving the memory of yet one more meeting with a gentleman of adventure—one more roadside drama in which the dialogue consisted only of an exchange of salutations? Most men who have returned from France will recall for years to come how, a few kilometres back from Hell, they often caught a glimpse of two dark eyes and a tender smile. Just that and—

'*Bon soir, mademoiselle.*'

'*Bon soir, monsieur.*'

Commonplace, perhaps, in the telling, but in France it was the commonplace that became romance.

A smile crept into the officer's eyes, which were blue and kindly, though they had a glint in them—something like metal—a look that a mother always noticed first when her son returned from the line.

'*Où est le village?*' he ventured.

'Le Curois?'

'*Oui!* Le Curois.'

'*Mais, monsieur*'—her eyes widened and her hands indicated the village dwellings—'*c'est ici Le Curois!*'

He breathed deeply and ventured again: '*Connaissez-vous un billet pour dix officiers?*'

He felt rather pleased with the sentence; it was true, he had intended to get accommodation for eleven officers, but it was moderately accurate for a foreign tongue.

For answer Simunde led him, preceded by the four cows, to her domicile. 'Madame,' like all French housewives, had received billeting instructions in the first year of the war. In conjunction with her neighbours on either side, she speedily arranged accommodation for eleven officers in their cottages, and for the officers' *domestiques* in the barns.

One hour later the guests of war, their battalion having come out for a rest, were dining comfortably in the home of Petite Simunde; while a sow, attended by ten small pigs, snorted approvingly outside the door.

Less than an hour afterwards Private Des Rosiers, acting as temporary batman to Major Douglas Campbell, was sitting on a chair in the farm-yard, in the glittering moonlight, regaling Simunde and her mother with grossly exaggerated stories of the mining country of Cobalt. He told them of his misdeeds, not in humility, but with much braggadocio, and his auditors listened, lost in gesticulatory admiration. Simunde was thrilled from her ill-shod feet to her braided brow. Jacque Des Rosiers was the first really wicked man she had met, and, woman-like, she was fascinated; also, he had nice teeth and flashing eyes.

The picture of a young officer on horseback, whose brown hair was almost red, and whose humorous blue eyes had a glint in them like metal, faded as completely from her mind as the memory of the sunset that had thrown its spell upon them.

Unromantic? . . . *Que voulez-vous? C'est la guerre!*

V.

Two weeks passed, during which period the placid fields about Le Curois resounded to the shouts of Canadian troops rehearsing open warfare (for rumour had it that the hour was almost at hand when Foch was to release the forces of retribution). For pastime, the troops played baseball and held field-days of many and varied sports. Whatever they did, they shouted lustily and continuously while doing it, for they had mastered one elemental truth—that nothing can be accomplished without intensity.

Des Rosiers explained baseball to Simunde, who enjoyed the description without allowing it to interfere with her innumerable domestic and agricultural duties. It was quite true that Jacque Noir had never played the game or even mastered its rudiments, but he had the narrator's instinct that rises above mere accuracy of detail.

Every evening he accompanied Simunde to the pasture-land, and together they guided the patient cows homeward. When darkness set in and Simunde's tasks were finished for the day, he sat with her in the farm-yard and told lurid tales of northern Canada—to all of which 'madame,' whose tasks were never finished, lent a delighted and adjoining ear.

He pictured to Simunde the snow—how it filled the rivers till they ran no more; how it covered the great pine-trees until, as far as eye could see, there was nothing but white; and he told of the wind that was never still. And she listened, as only a Frenchwoman can listen, with every emotion he called forth registering in her face, as clouds racing across the sun will throw their shadows on the ground.

Just before the battalion was to return to the line, the second-in-command, Major Douglas Campbell, was called to Divisional Headquarters for a prolonged conference. As a result Des Rosiers was returned to his company for duty, though he contrived to spend every free hour with the little belle of Le Curois. As the time for parting approached with cruel celerity, he talked less and took to long spells of moody silence. His heart had been melted as completely as the snow in his Northland is thawed by the sun in spring. As for her, the little artifices of gesture and the ceaseless coquetry of the eyes became less noticeable. For the first time in her life she felt the anguish of a woman's tears; Petite Simunde's guileless and innocent heart had been won by Jacque Des Rosiers, the bad man of western Quebec.

In a tempest of passionate ardour, but with becoming deference, he addressed his suit to the mother, who promised consideration that night, and her answer on the morrow.

It was hardly twilight when he wandered back along the main road towards the fields where his battalion was bivouacked. Full of the picture of the little woman who had bewitched him, he failed to notice the approach of an exceedingly smart young staff-officer, ablaze in a glory of red and brass. With unseeing eyes, Des Rosiers looked directly at the young gentleman, but failed to make any sign. The officer, fresh from a staff course in England, stopped him with a sharp command.

'Just a moment, my man. Don't you know enough to salute?'

Des Rosiers awoke from his dream, came to attention, and saluted very badly.

'I no see you, sair,' he said.

'Don't lie to me,' snapped Brass Hat (who wasn't a bad chap on the whole); 'of course you saw me. Damn it! you looked right at me. It's fellows like you who give the corps a bad name.'

He was wrong there. It was the presence of several thousand men like Des Rosiers that had given the Canadian Corps a wonderful name—but let that pass, as Jack Point would have said.

The element of tragedy seldom enters the lists of life with a fanfare of trumpets. It steals in

unobtrusively, like a poor relation. It comes in the garb of the commonplace, or masked in triviality or gaiety. One is unaware of its presence until it throws off concealment and points its yellow fingers at the throat of its victim. What dramatist would have read tragedy into the absurd tableau presented by a slouchy French-Canadian soldier and a youthful staff-officer? Yet, as inexorable as Fate, it was approaching Jacque Des Rosiers, and only a few yards away, hiding its skeleton's grin behind the mundane countenance of Sergeant Smith, returning to the battalion after a day's work in the orderly-room.

The officer, who had just made a move to resume his walk, noticed the sergeant, and called him over.

'You are from the same battalion as this chap?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Report him to his company commander for failing to salute an officer. Impress upon him that I would not have made this complaint, but your man looked directly at me, and—well, discipline must be maintained, especially out here.'

Whereupon, feeling that he had rendered unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, the youthful captain sauntered on to the château occupied by Divisional Headquarters, and dined with extra zest. And lest it be thought that this narrative treats him unkindly, let it be written that, three months later, he was badly wounded while performing a very gallant action. He was a professional soldier, somewhat lacking in psychology; that was all.

A little later Private Des Rosiers was arraigned before his company commander, a gentleman who was neither a soldier nor a psychologist. The heinous crime of passing an officer without acknowledgment was laid to the charge of the battle-worn and love-lorn villain from Quebec.

'What have you got to say for yourself?'

Des Rosiers said it. The officer shook his head.

'It 's not good enough,' he said. 'You French-Canadians seem to think there 's one law for yourselves and one for everybody else. You throw all your comrades down by deliberately insulting an officer—a staff-officer, who reports it to the G.O.C., and there you are. We 're known as a bad battalion just because of a few slackers like you. Put him on the horse line picket for two nights, and confine him to camp during the day.'

The prisoner started. 'Sair,' he said, 'I can no be here to-morrow night. *C'est impossible.*'

'Oh, is it emposeeble?' answered the officer, who prided himself on a gift of neat retort. Des Rosiers's eyes protruded to their utmost.

'By Gar!' he cried, 'and nex' morning we go back to the line *encore*, yes?'

'Well? Have you any objections? If so, I am sure the divisional commander would appreciate hearing them.'

'Ah, but *monsieur l'officier*'—his hands were stretched forth in an agony of appeal—'Petite Simunde, she wait for me. I promise to come—I no come—it is terrible!'

The judge in khaki laughed.

'I am fed up with the stories of you French-Canadians and your village sweethearts—and, confound it, stop waving your hands about!'

'Standt'attenshun!' bellowed the sergeant-major.

'Consider yourself lucky to get off so lightly, my man.—That will do, sergeant-major.'

'Escor' a'prisoner—ri' tuh—qui' mawch!—Lef' ri', lef' ri', lef' ri'—Pawty, ha't!—Report to horse line N.C.O. right away.—Escor', dees-mi'!'

Rather late for mess, by reason of holding orderly-room at an unusual hour, the company commander sat down to dinner with a glow of virtue in his bosom. He had been a lawyer-politician in a small Ontario town, and it pleased him to find that he had not lost the art of Buzfuzian browbeating.

And through it all the Fates had woven a thread of tragedy about the life of Jacque Noir, using in their scheme of things a non-psychological staff-officer, a non-military and non-psychological company commander, and a sergeant whose name was Smith.

'There is humour in all things,' said Jack Point. Gilbert would have been equally correct if he had substituted the word 'tragedy.'

Before sundown of the next day the prisoner was reported absent, and when the battalion marched away for the line Jacque Des Rosiers was not with it.

(*Continued on page 454.*)

THE QUININE HABIT.

THE value of quinine in cases of fever has been known for nearly three hundred years. Its virtues were first brought to light in Europe by the Jesuits, one of the brotherhood having been cured of fever in Peru by administration of cinchona-bark by a South American Indian. There is also a well-authenticated instance of the medicinal use of cinchona-bark for fever in 1638 by the Countess of Chinchon, wife of the Governor of Peru; and the name given to the bark is said to have been derived from the connection of this lady with the remedy. Sir Clements Markham, who in 1860 superintended the first consignment of these plants from South America to India, thought that the term should, therefore, be written *chinchona*.

The trees in the Government plantations in India now number several millions. The culture has spread over a wide area in southern India and in the Himalayas, and the plantations are highly prosperous and remunerative.

In 1870 the Government of India had to purchase eighty one thousand six hundred ounces of sulphate of quinine to meet its requirements; it is now able to satisfy its needs from the febrifuge prepared at its own plantations in India, and to distribute annual supplies of tablets free of cost to the inhabitants of the most malarious districts. The cheapening of this valuable remedy has doubtless done good, and has helped to reduce the suffering and the mortality caused by malarial fever. It is said that in malarious districts persons have been exposed to miasmatic influence without danger after taking a dose or two of five grains of quinine once or twice a day.

In the smallest doses quinine is purely tonic, in larger doses it is a stimulant, in big doses it acts as a sedative, and in excessive doses it is poisonous. Large doses sometimes produce deafness, and act injuriously in all inflammatory states of the mucous membrane. A doctor who says he has had six years' experience writes of the difficulties encountered in cases of those accustomed to daily prophylactic doses when they really get fever. It would seem that there is always this danger, that people may acquire the 'quinine habit' just as they do the 'opium habit,' the 'morphia habit,' or the 'whisky habit.'

In some parts of Austria and Hungary arsenic, which is well known as an irritant poison, is regularly eaten by peasants to give plumpness to the figure and beauty and freshness to the complexion; whilst it is also said to improve the breathing and give length of wind, so that steep and continuous heights may be climbed without difficulty or exhaustion of breath. The habit soon becomes a necessity of life, and the habitual user will die if it is not continued, although the ordinary amount eaten daily would poison any one unaccustomed to arsenic.

There are comparatively few things to which the human body cannot accustom itself by constant use. Some of them are good things, like quinine, which in malarious places in small doses doubtless has a beneficial effect in warding off attacks of fever. The danger is, however, that the user will take to increasing his daily modicum, and then, when he requires quinine as a medicine and not as a prophylactic, will find that he has to take a much larger dose if it is to be of any service, and that may bring on deafness or otherwise act injuriously. We should all guard against using 'too much of a good thing.' Moderation in everything would seem to be the great secret of keeping one's health, and the daily use of any medicine as a preventive, unless it is taken by medical advice, is a habit which should as a rule be avoided.

A great deal may be done in the way of drainage and judicious planting to improve malarious localities, and this is certainly better than swallowing medicines of any sort or kind. The common sunflower plant is said to have a very beneficial effect in improving malarious localities. Many police-stations in India have gardens, and it would be easy to have all of them provided with this cheap and luxuriant plant. The seeds are largely eaten in southern Russia, are of agreeable flavour, and are also a valuable food for poultry. The 'Jerusalem artichoke' belongs to the same genus. The tubers are rich in inulin and sugar, and the plant deserves attention at the hands of cultivators. The effect of eucalyptus-planting in Italy is well known. The tree grows well on the hills in India, and is not unknown in several stations on the plains. It should certainly be tried at every Indian police-station.

After American success in abolishing malaria in the Panamá isthmus, we have no reason to despair of India, although the problem there is so very much bigger. If we achieve success, it will be by sanitary measures, and not by dosing people with medicine. And outside the larger Indian towns sanitary measures, draining, and judicious planting can hardly be said to have been tried. Distribution of quinine tablets is no doubt cheaper, and statistics show that in many provinces deaths from malarial fever have diminished in the last three years, so that quinine may be credited with having done some good. There are no statistics, however, to show the numbers of people who have suffered from deafness or a disordered stomach from having acquired the 'quinine habit.' We have heard of one doctor in the Deccan who last year, because fever was prevalent in his station, prescribed two to five grains each to be taken daily by every man, woman, and child in a whole household, consisting of five Europeans and some fourteen or fifteen Indian servants. Surely this was giving 'too much of a good thing' in the way of a prophylactic.

Those who have spent many years in the East know that a good deal of the sickness Europeans suffer from is brought about by their mode of life, the food they eat, and the times of taking it, often more adapted to a temperate climate than to a tropical one. It is the fashion in most Indian households, where doctors are commonly paid by the month, to call them in on the most trivial occasions. In the districts people frequently have to doctor themselves, as well as any of their servants who may happen to be ailing. In all except really serious cases the old adage about a man over forty being his own best doctor is as true in India as in Britain. To keep one's health in either country moderation in everything is the golden rule, but it is perhaps more absolutely necessary in a tropical climate than in a temperate one.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XX.—*continued.*

'THE next prisoner!' demanded the president, when the table had been restored to its feet and the papers had been tidied up.

Ginger Thomson was marched in, guarded by an escort, who were armed with wet mops. We knew Ginger!

'Sergeant Ginger Thomson, No. 1 Company, —th Cadet Battalion, you are charged with (1) Posing as a woman-hater; (2) Declining to wash; (3) Joy-riding in a Ford car.'

'Evidence, please, Mr Brown,' ordered the president.

'Sir, this youth, for the past two months, has been posing to all as an enemy of the opposite sex. In a recent discussion he declared that women were soulless, inconstant, mercenary, and loved us only when we had chocolate or plenty of the golden goblins. We believed him to be sincere, and he received homage as the great monk of our platoon. Other remarkable attitudes in controversy convinced many of us, however, that this brilliant but erratic gentleman was simply pulling our legs. By accident we discovered that he is an ardent admirer of the beautiful lady who dispenses ale and bitters at the local hotel. In fact, our agents have procured a gramophone record of a conversation with this fair lady. This is the record,' I added, turning on the gramophone, the record of which had been faked for the occasion.

'Edison Bell Record.'

Gur-r-r-Gurr-r-r-r.

'Hello, old girl! how are you?'

'What cheer, Ginger?'

'Gin and ginger, quick—awful thirst, old girl! Bring it up to the private room.'

'Right-o, dearie!'

Gurr-r-Gurr-r-r-Gurr.

'There you are, Ginger. . . . Don't! . . . The master 'll hear us. Oh, my hair! . . . You've broken my comb. You mustn't kiss me. Oh, Mr Thomson! . . . Oo'd a' thought it?'

Gurr-r-Gurr-r-r-Gurr.

'You're a dear old thing!'

'And you're a giddy boy. . . . You mustn't! . . . If the master sees me sittin' on your knee, there 'll be trouble. . . Ah, don't!'

Gurr-r-Gurr-r-r.

And the record ended, just in time, for Ginger let fly and kicked the gramophone to the other end of the room.

'Tie him up! Tie him up!' ordered the president.

It was a tough job, but we managed to get his feet tied, then stood him up before the 'beak.'

'Carry on, Mr Brown,' commanded Nobby.

'That record, sir, absolutely proves that this man deals in terminological inexactitudes.'

'You mean he is a common or garden chancer?'

'Yes, sir. The second charge is equally serious. He has an objection to soap, and loathes water like a Bolshevik.'

'Has he no soap in his possession?' asked a member.

'Oh yes, sir, a small piece, which he received three years ago on enlistment. This is it:

GINGER'S SOAP.

1915–1918.

'Note the size. He keeps this for kit inspections, and I understand he is to make it a family heirloom after the war.

'Now for the third charge—"Joy-riding in a Ford." During his leave he was seen several times in a palatial petrol tin-can, accompanied by a fair lady. The lady was holding his hand, and the car was doing a cake-walk down the road. Several roosters and pet-poodles are at present in the mortuary. Two maiden ladies demand the prisoner's life, and the town council have sent in a bill for two policemen and three lamp-posts. That 's all, sir.'

'Very serious! Very serious!' muttered Nobby, chewing his Ole Bill moustache. 'What about his character?'

'He lost it at St Omer.'

'Oh!'

'Found by the A.P.M. (Assistant Provost-Marshal) singing "Home, Sweet Home," on the top of a lamp-post.'

'Then he is hopeless?'

'Absolutely, sir.'

'Ginger, you are a bad lad,' commented the president. 'Have you anything to say?'

'Yes, sir,' shouted Ginger, seizing a mop out of the hand of one of the escort and charging full tilt at the president. He caught Nobby in the chest and heaved him over in excellent style. But the valiant president arose and shouted, 'Duck him! Duck him!'

Ginger was seized and promptly heaved into the company bathroom. 'You are a lot of blighters,' said he, on emerging. However, Ginger was a sport, and took it merrily. When he returned to the courtroom he exchanged the rôle of prisoner for that of prosecutor.

. . . . . .

'Next prisoner,' ordered the president, after shaking himself and wiping the traces of the mop off his face.

Tosher Johnson was marched in, guarded by

two hefty lads. We were taking no risks with the wild Canadian.

'Corporal Tosher Johnson, No. 1 Company, —th Cadet Battalion, you are charged with (1) Worshipping the almighty dollar; (2) Pulling a railway alarm-cord; (3) "Swanking it" in Glasgow.'

'Evidence!' commanded the president.

'Sir,' said Ginger, 'the accused is a Canadian, and therefore a mystery. He blew in about 1915 from out West, and reckoned he was *the* man to win the war. His career, like that of all back-blockers, has been most varied and adventurous. He commenced life eating pork-pies in Nova Scotia. At the age of twelve he was assistant to a negro medicine-man, who sold corn-cure at a penny a time. The corn-cure, I may say, was made out of wagon-grease stolen from the C.P.R. Having done in the son of Ham for about a hundred dollars, he went West, where he started a shoe-shining parlour and a horse-betting booth. Next he was seen in a fat-reducing advertisement; after which, he floated a company to supply the ladies of Winnipeg with imitation busts.

'In these ventures he was, like all Canucks, highly successful, and therefore plunged into real estate. This is a get-rich-quick scheme. Tosher was a star-turn. He took double-page advertisements in the home papers, and sold corner lots to dukes, commoners, and simpletons. When these "duds" went out to stake their plots in Paradise Alley, they discovered their land was in the Arctic regions, and tenanted only by Eskimos. What did Tosher do? Why, he simply apologised, and said his clerk had made a mistake by *turning the map upside-down!*

'Since then he has had a dollar for his crest, a dollar for his god. He has got money in everything from corn-plaster to chewing-gum, and he reckons to fizzle off this 'ere planet (as he calls it) with about a hundred thousand dollars earned while chewing cigars and drinking cocktails in Montreal, Toronto, and the mixed-bathing cave up in Banff, Alberta. The fellow 's a marvel!'

'Look here, Mr Thomson; this is a court-martial. Evidence! Evidence! We're not here to get the story of how we all lost our money before the war.'

'Very good, sir!

'The second charge is, "Pulling a railway alarm-cord" while on leave. Apparently the accused got into the company of a simple old Scottish gentleman, who was accompanied by his wife and a rather charming daughter. Tosher took the corner seat like a conqueror; and muttered, "It was real fine to get away from the blasted Boche."

'"Are you just from the front?" the old gent inquired.

'"Yip!" he said, lighting a twopenny Havana.

'"You 're a Canadian, aren't you?"

'"Sure!"

'"You fellows are winning the war."

'"I guess so."

'And in this vein he went on. He spun them yarns as tall as a wireless mast, relating how he had missed the V.C. by going round the wrong corner, lost the D.S.O. because the durned officer wasn't there, and was recommended by Joffre for the Legion of Honour for holding up a German army corps with a Woodbine and a six-shooter. These poor innocent mortals were bewildered. The accused is greater than Louis de Rougemont. He then showed them nicotine-stained fingers, and said it was blood; his vaccination-mark was a cut by a shell; and a birth-mark on his chin was a bit sliced off by a prince in the Prussian Guard.

'The old gent and his party were thrilled.

'"But say, old friend, have a cigar to chew," remarked Tosher.

'"Thanks, I will."

'Tosher opened his case, but found it was empty.

'"Sorry. I guess I'm run out. Where can I get some?"

'"Not till Carlisle. We have two hours to go yet."

'"I reckon we pass other bum towns *en route*."

'"Oh yes."

'"Well, I guess I'll call the guard," he said, jumping up to the alarm-cord.

'"You can't pull that—you 'll be fined."

'"What? *I'm a Canadian!*" And he pulled the cord. The brakes went on with a bang, and the old guard hurried up along the line.

'"Say, old Father Time," shouted Tosher.

'"What 's up?"

'"Stop yer old bus at the next bum town. I want some cigars to chew."

'"I'll shove ye in jail!" roared the guard.

'"Easy, old child."

'"What 's your name?"

'"My mother christened me Johnson."

'"You 're a Canadian, I suppose?"

'"Yip!"

'"All right. I'll show you I'm a Scotsman."

'Tosher didn't get the cigars. He got "Five quid or twenty-one days" at the Police Court.'

'What did he say to that?' inquired the president.

'Oh, he reckoned it was durned stiff that a bloke who was winnin' the war couldn't get out of an express for cigars.'

'I see! I see!'

'The final charge, sir, is, "'Swanking it' in Glasgow." He had a maple-leaf in his cap about the size of a young fir-tree, smoked evil-smelling cheroots the size of a submarine, stopped the traffic when he wanted to cross the road, and

tried to elope with all the best-looking women in the town.

'"Who are you?" asked an interested lady.

'"Tosher Johnson, real prime, and the best kid out of Tauruntoe."

'"All right! There's my card. Call and see me to-morrow."

'When Tosher got there her father was waiting for him. *The old man was a brain specialist.* That's all the evidence, sir,' concluded Ginger.

'Johnson,' said the president, 'your career and exploits resemble those of the Arabian Knights and the adventures of Baron Munchausen. What have you got to say?'

'Well, boss, I guess Ginger is the brother of Ananias, and the uncle of the Kaiser. He's just real good at the story-faking business, and after the war we'll get him to run the *Real Estate Noos*, and the selling of corner lots in Greenland and Hudson Bay. As for the "Canuck" being top-dog in the lead-swinging business, I reckon that's fizzled out. If Oxford can pan out liars like this 'ere child in the future, we from out West will have to take a back-seat in the boosting business. Why, the fellow 'ud make his pile hanging around a Calgary beer-bar, telling them how to make a nigger into a white man.

'In this old country you are a long-faced lot o' wowsers, tied up by regulations and B.C. institooshuns. When you want to meet a prime girl, you need an intro.; and if you're keen on eating with a duke, you've got to show your birth-certificate. It makes me real tired to walk around and see your orders: "Keep off the Grass;" "Keep to the Right;" "No Smoking Allowed;" "Private—Trespassers will be Prosecuted."

'That's your whole durned system. You ain't a free-thinking crowd; you're a bunch of kids kept in order by bamboo canes and laws made by Moses. Even your little rabbits, that we gives to our dawgs, are protected by ancient statoots with about a ton of sealing-wax hanging on the tail.

'As for your women, you don't know how to make them smile. They're the best-lookin' kids on the planet, and they're just real glad that we wild men are over to tickle them up and make them dance. Say, boys, but you are just dead slow. Why, I can get anything in petticoats from an heiress to a barmaid by giving them a Tauruntoe glad eye, and saying, "Come on." You fellows are the fag-end of an old system, and if it weren't for us prime hustlers from out West, you'd be losing this fightin' business.'

'Look here, old cow-punching Bill, this isn't a bally entertainment. It's a court-martial. You're on trial for your life. What have you got to say?'

'We never says anything out West.'

'What do you do?'

'Shoots!' And Tosher banged three rounds of blank ammunition in the air.

'Seize him! Seize him! He's an outlaw and a desperado,' roared Nobby!

We rushed Tosher, but he let fly at his escort, and caught Nobby in his powerful arms and dumped him out of the window.

Ginger then caught the Canadian's legs and threw him.

'*Kamerad! Kamerad!*' shouted Tosher.

'All right, we'll let you off, if you stand drinks.'

'Sure! Come on, boys;' and off we went to have another jolly hour at the canteen.

Tosher was a sport, and he kept us laughing all the night.

There's nothing like the army—for jolly good fun!

(*Continued on page 471.*)

AUSTRALIA—THE SPIRIT OF THE BUSH.

No one yet has ever seen her
When her beauty she unveils,
As the dusky shadows lengthen
And the sunset glory pales.
Only sometimes, through the gum-trees,
In the silent twilight hush,
We may glimpse her, shyly peeping,
Our sweet spirit of the Bush;
Sometimes, 'mongst the golden wattles,
As the sunlight ripples there,
I have seen it flashing, glinting,
On the yellow of her hair.

In the violet shades of night-time
I have seen her soft eyes shine,
Like the tender eyes of angels,
With a light of eyes divine;
Or among the water-grasses,
Where the idle breezes dream,
I have seen them through the water,
Two reflected stars agleam.
'Mongst the fruit-trees in the orchard,
On the margin of the creek,
Nestling in the arms of autumn
Lies the brown curve of her cheek,
With the red of warm lips smiling—
Sweetest smile that lips have worn—
Love and hope and gladness in it,
And the radiance of the morn.

Never grows she old or weary;
Naught she knows or dreams of death.
Like the scent of brown baronia
Is the fragrance of her breath.
Many-toned and sweet her voice is,
Laughing through the kissing leaves,
Crooning in the swaying she-oaks,
Sighing sadly as she grieves
When the bleak winds come and gather
All the flowers she loves to tend—
Early blossoms on the fruit-trees,
Violets in the river-bend;
Glad, exultant with the spring-time,
Rich and full with summer's love,
Low and mellow with the autumn,
When the ripe fruit hangs above.

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SEVENTH SERIES

AN ENGLISH GIRL'S ADVENTURES IN TURKESTAN.

I.—TASHKENT DURING RAMAZAN.

By FLORENCE FULLER-NEARY.

I.

OUR first impression of Tashkent was an exceedingly happy one, for we arrived at half-past six on a sunny July morning, after six weary days in the train from Moscow. The air was still fresh and exhilarating, the nights often being cool, though towards noon the city is oppressed with tropical heat. Life was just stirring, and we saw a few laden carts coming in from the country, and troops of about twenty camels roped together in single file, in the charge of one driver seated upon the first.

The Hotel Regina, where we stayed, fronts the street at a busy corner; but the absence of cobbles, heavy wagons, and motor-cars makes the noise of the passing crowds soft as the pattering steps of unshod beasts. My room had two big windows looking out on to the scene, and it was difficult to tear one's self away from the strange sights. Strings of camels, stately Sarts in flowing robes, market-carts with wheels disproportionately large, pedlars, beggars, passed in endless procession.

One of the pedlars, seeing me look out of the window, came up smiling, and offered me luscious peaches and apricots and plums, laid out on dewy leaves in a flat basket which he carried on his head. Fruit is plentiful in Turkestan, and even though he knew I was a newly arrived visitor, the price he asked was ridiculously small. I bought up a good portion of his stock for a few kopecks; but when I gave him one of the stamps which had been the small currency in European Russia since the outbreak of the war, I could see that the paper meant nothing to him, and he explained in his weird dialect of Russian that he must be paid in silver. One never saw metal coin in Russia at that time, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I persuaded him to accept a rouble note, for which he unwillingly produced the change in silver. Nothing showed more clearly how little Turkestan had been affected by the war than this ignorance of paper money and the survival of the metal coinage.

By nine o'clock the sun was high and the heat intense. However, we went out into the shady streets of the new (or Russian) quarter of the town. This part of Tashkent is clean and well planned. Every main thoroughfare is an avenue of tall acacias, and on each side of the road, as one sometimes sees in Holland, runs a canal. But here the canals, fed from the Salaar, a swift-flowing river, are crystal clear, and the roads are washed down several times every day with the clean water.

The heat became unbearable, and soon there was nothing for it but to return to the hotel. The whole town grew drowsy, and there was hardly any one in the streets. From one to five every afternoon all shops and offices, public as well as private, are shut; the world retires to rest, and the streets are quiet as in the hours that follow midnight.

II.

Tashkent is mainly a Mohammedan city, and as we had arrived during the feast of Ramazan, when the true believers fast till sundown and feast through the night, we were determined to explore the big Mohammedan area.

We set out at dusk, and as we were unable to find a carriage, boldly entered the electric tram that penetrates the native quarter. The native population, even to the most sympathetic European, appears to greater advantage at a distance. We never repeated the experiment, but in future were careful to order a carriage beforehand at the hotel.

When we alighted from the crowded and evil-smelling tram-car, dusk had fallen and the feast was being prepared. Boys were moving about the lamplit verandas that stretch out over the canals, which even down here bordered the main roads. Every house has a veranda, and the room behind is open to the street, like the stage of a theatre. Not a woman was to be seen, but some men were already on the verandas, lying on divans and cushions, smoking opium, and drinking a kind of green tea called *kok-chi*, which is taken without milk or sugar or lemon. The boys flitted in and out noiselessly, carrying plates of cut-up sweetmeats and green water-melons with red flesh. The men would pass the whole night there, falling asleep where they lay. The streets were narrow and winding, and the moving stream

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under the overhanging verandas was black and sinister.

Sometimes we would emerge from the dark streets into squares with gardens hung with Japanese lanterns, which threw shadows on trees and flowers and tiny jet fountains. It was not yet dark, and there was a strange unreality in the fading light and the faint rays of the paper lanterns. I felt a sudden hatred for this place; it was all so small and tinselly, and yet it seemed as though some malevolent power were lurking there, and waiting to break through and shatter these gaudy trappings. Evil djinns seemed to hang in the air, and gibber among the trees and in dark places. And through it all was a disquieting familiarity, as though I were returning to some forgotten horror of babyhood, or entering in waking moments a land of haunted dreams. The sight of these people, the winding streets, the distinctive odours, the little squares with the Japanese lanterns, lacked the element of surprise. I came upon them with the apathetic anticipation of one passing through the familiar places of an unhappy childhood.

Once I saw a veiled figure hurrying along a narrow street, clad in black, and seated on a donkey, led by a small boy. I had imagined such a shadow, and now it had materialised, I looked at the veiled woman as one would gaze at some expected ghost flitting down the corridor of a haunted castle. She stepped so naturally into the setting where I had awaited her coming, and yet the sight of her passing down the winding street and disappearing into the gloom caused a cold depression to creep over me, and increased the unreasoning repulsion that was mastering my senses. The silent figures on the verandas of the larger houses, the laughing faces in the street, and the robed forms stalking down the alleys had no relation to human beings, but were like devils, hostile and steeled against pity. As yet it seemed that, like creatures in a dream, they had not seen me; but a dread came that one of them might at any moment awake to my presence, and that then they would beset and torture me.

At length I could stand it no longer, and I asked my companion to return to the hotel. Soon we were in wide European streets, with windowed houses. The nightmare of the East, with its alternate glare and darkness, was far behind. We had fled to ground where its evil could not pursue. It was like passing out of some fetid Satanist meeting into the quiet moonlight.

I cannot explain this weird repulsion, which never returned, though subsequently I made several visits to the native quarter; and now, in the damp Northern winter, as I write down these experiences, I look back with longing to the gorgeous brightness, the colours, the light, the laughter, of those far-off Eastern towns. Perhaps it was the Western woman's instinctive horror on finding herself in a land where men are the enemies of women, regard them as no more than chattels or slaves, and subject them to a mechanical and soul-destroying oppression.

III.

I woke several times that night, and could hear through the open window weird monotonous music, reminding me that the unreal scenes that I had witnessed were still in progress, not a mile away. There was a regular beat of drums, mingled with wailing instruments never heard in the West.

But with the coming of day and the cessation of this music, the spell was broken once and for all.

We spent the morning in the shop of a wealthy Sart merchant, who lived on the border between the old town and the new. Hardly more than the door seemed to front the street; but behind, the high room—lit by a lamp suspended from the ceiling—expanded, and we found it closely packed with rich stuffs and Oriental ware of every variety. He showed us silk bed-spreads, and scarves, and Sart dresses, and heavy bracelets of gold and jade, worn by native women, and fans, and vases, and Egyptian curios. We passed several hours there, and came away with our carriage laden, our purchases including two of the inimitable Bokhara carpets.

Business was conducted according to the immemorial custom of haggling and beating down prices. I longed for one piece of Sart embroidery, gold on crimson silk. The merchant first asked one hundred roubles, and at last came down to fifty. Finally, never expecting an acceptance, I told him I had twenty roubles left, and he could take it or leave it. To my surprise, he flung the embroidery at me, saying that during Ramazan ready money was essential, and he must obtain it, even at a loss.

In spite of my assurances that 'I would not be silly again,' my companion insisted on spending the evening in the European quarter. The East was indeed very far away as we sat in a lighted public garden that might have belonged to any large town in Europe, and listened to a first-rate string orchestra, made up entirely of Austrian prisoners of war.

The new town is of considerable extent, well laid out, with fine buildings, the chief of which congregate about a great square, where stands a statue of General Kaufmann, who as Governor-General (1867–1882) added greatly to Russian Turkestan.

For me, the day at Tashkent opened with the arrival of the Sart fruit-seller, who came faithfully every morning, bringing on most days at least one new variety of fruit for me to try. He was a picturesque figure in his bright clothes of various colours that never seemed to clash. We became quite good friends, though his dialect would have been difficult even for a Russian to understand.

On the second morning of our stay in Tashkent we visited the old town by daylight, and

spent several hours rummaging about stalls and bazaars and little shops. Most of the goods were of inferior quality to those we had bought from the Sart merchant, but now and then we found a treasure—something genuine that had become mixed with spurious goods from Berlin and Birmingham.

There are several mosques with nests of white storks on their roofs. The birds are more interesting than the formal buildings, which are not very large, the domes and the minarets being all of a drab yellow colour.

That evening we drove out of the town to the river Chirchik, a swift mountain tributary of the great Sir Daria or Jaxartes, which flows into the Sea of Aral. The dusty road led through cotton plantations, and we passed two native villages, clusters of mean huts round a little mosque. The river has the swiftness of rapids, and its waters, between deep and wide banks, swirl angrily round great boulders. The wooden bridge is very narrow and rickety, and in mid-stream it turns at right angles to the left, and then after six paces as abruptly turns again towards the farther bank. Our driver told us that the bridge was not safe, but it looked as though it had been there a good many years, and the chances seemed heavily against this being the end of its existence. We decided to risk it, and crossed and recrossed without disaster. A half-moon was now floating high above us, and by its light we could see the dark Pamir mountains, one jagged peak towering above the rest, crowned with glistening snow.

IV.

We went down into the old town one evening when the feast was at its height. A reaction to my old repulsion had set in, and both of us were eager for another taste of the unique and unforgettable atmosphere of the East. We took with us, as guide, a Sart boy who lived in the town, and could show us everything worth seeing. We drove through a winding maze of windowless streets, and finally drew up at what we thought was the towered gateway of an immense mosque. But it was only an entrance to a large square, like a big bazaar. Here there was great noise and bustle among the crowds, where Europeans and Asiatics jostled together. The weird native music that I had heard every evening, soft in the distance, was now loud and harsh, rising above the jabbering voices of the crowd. All round was a line of stalls where dealers, some strident and excited, others sitting with Eastern immobility, sold wares of every kind, cheap jewellery, scarves and hangings, sweetmeats and fruits. At many places men were toasting over charcoal-fires pieces of mutton on wooden skewers. The passers-by bought readily, and ate the meat off the skewer as they stood in groups or moved on with the crowd. There were also men moulding little cakes with incredible deftness, and roasting them in pans over charcoal-braziers.

I felt no trace of the sense of malevolent gloom which had oppressed me on my first visit. Every one seemed in the highest of spirits, and friendly and harmless. They were very willing to talk to us, and the booth-keepers were the most winning of salesmen, persuading us to buy many things that even at the time we felt to be utterly useless. It was difficult to refuse, and impossible to do anything disagreeable. From one corner of the square we heard the most dismal howling, and on approaching and inquiring, we found that it was a singing competition. The competitors made the most extraordinary facial contortions, and produced curious noises from their throats, which to our ears had no relation whatever to music. The spectators, however, were much impressed, and evidently considered it very fine. To complete the strange medley contained in that square, there was a large mosque, and we saw grave turbaned figures making obeisance at the door before they entered.

We might have been transported by magic back through time to the great days of Baghdad and Damascus. It was fascinating to think that Haroun al Raschid might have wandered a spectator of just such scenes as we were witnessing. But the illusion was broken when we found a crowd fighting for admittance to a little hall where a cinematograph, brought to Tashkent for the feast-time, was installed. Sad it was to see these Orientals, in their flowing robes, crushing to see films of Red Indians and cowboys, and a domestic drama of New York society.

Perhaps the revolution has saved Tashkent and Samarkand from picture-palaces. As an experiment the cinematograph seemed as great a success there as it is among the educated proletariat of civilised Europe. Our guide, having shown us everything to be seen, took us out by a different gate from that by which we had entered. We met a native here, evidently undecided whether to enter or return home. Our guide went up and spoke to him, and tried to persuade him to let us visit his house. But he refused; and there was indeed little chance of a favourable answer, for, though the natives are quite friendly to Europeans, it is exceedingly rare for any stranger to enter the closely guarded houses. Again we found ourselves in the maze of narrow streets, but our Sart boy knew his way, and soon we were standing by our waiting carriage.

It was a lovely night, warm and fragrant, with a full moon suspended in a starlit sky; so we drove once more out of the city. We passed through a still fairyland of trees and fields and hedges, silvered by the moon and set with glow-worms, which sparkled like strange gems. The road, gleaming white, wound towards the mountains, far away in the distance.

We stopped by a little hill, and the driver told us that from the top of it we should obtain a fine view. I found on the slopes of the hill,

growing amid the prickly turf, a strange star-like flower with four petals, whose colour I could not determine, and a bright-yellow heart. Its trailing stem ran along the ground, and when I stooped to pick it I found it had sharp thorns. Its perfume was heavy and exotic, but the blossoms were so fragile that they soon withered and drooped limp in my hand. From the top of the hill we saw once more the jagged Pamir mountains, with the one snow-clad peak thrusting its sharp point into the clear sky.

We left early next morning, and it was that glimpse of the lonely mountains that I carried away as my last memory of Tashkent.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SPARKE turned up punctually at seven o'clock next morning, and was closeted with Tony for an hour. He had, of course, been given the details of the scheme. He was not to accompany us. His part now was to remain in the valley to look after (as he put it) 'his end of the net.' Having jotted down an approximate time-table of our movements on the morrow, off he went in great good spirits.

Angus had gone to seek Duncan Ross and Hector Matheson, the two keepers, and before his return with them, Finlay Mackenzie appeared from the hills. He and Rob Macbain had been in hiding night and day near Sron na Leirg, but had seen no one. I sent him for some breakfast; and when Angus returned with Duncan and Hector, I took them all into the library, where the plan was unfolded to them. The heartiness and the promptitude of their offer of help could not have been bettered. Duncan, senior and spokesman, assured us at the outset that although they 'kent fine' there was something 'no very chancy' afoot, they were asking no questions. They would do anything for the sake of the old laird and myself. There was no hesitation, no doubts, no 'ifs' or 'buts.' If ever I am in a tight corner, I shall wish no better allies than these deep-chested, sun-bronzed hillmen, keen, intelligent, loyal, and men of their hands. Even Angus, in spite of his years, would have been an ugly customer to tackle if his blood was up. They listened intently, now and then throwing in a question or a suggestion, until each man had grasped the scheme, and knew thoroughly his place and share in it.

Finlay was to rejoin Rob Macbain, and thereafter the two were to take posts in the Chanter Corrie. Next day Duncan, Hector, and Angus, with spades and picks and plenty of provender for the party, would join them in the afternoon. A simple code of signals was arranged, and to every man was assigned a watching-post. Hector and Angus were to spy the northern approach, while the others, distributed in the Corrie, waited until our arrival by way of Glen Dee. The strictest secrecy was laid on them, but they were instructed to make it known to all and sundry that Keene-Leslie and I were leaving for the South by the afternoon train next day.

'You will see, Duncan, that all take their rifles. They may have to use them,' I said.

Duncan nodded. 'Very good, sir,' said he, as composedly as if he had been asked to arrange a morning's ferreting; but after I had taken him aside and given him fuller instructions, his eyes met mine with understanding and his mouth was set hard.

After they left, Tony and I walked down to the village, where, by telephone, I engaged the car and a chauffeur to meet us with the guide at the Stag Hotel on the arrival of our train at Ardgarry. On our way back to The Bield, near the lodge, a boy on a bicycle overtook us. He was the bearer of a note for me.

'From the doctor, Tony,' I said when I had read it. 'I asked him to dine with us to-night, but, much to his annoyance, a visit to a country patient makes his acceptance of my invitation impossible. He says, however, that he will look us up after dinner if he gets back in time. And that reminds me. Are we to take him into our confidence?'

Tony considered for a moment.

'Well, I recognise that he is *amicus curiæ*, and he certainly might be useful if there was any blood-letting up in the Corrie. But that would mean asking him to come with us, and we can't very well suggest to him to share a risky job which is no business of his. Besides, I am all for secrecy. There are five men (not counting ourselves) "in the know" already. The fewer the better, to my mind. On the whole, I don't see why any one except the actual participants in the "scrap"—if it comes off—should know anything about it.'

I agreed. After all, it was our affair. The doctor, although no doubt much interested, would have no reason to be offended if he afterwards discovered that we had hesitated to subject him to unnecessary risks.

Dry, sunny weather in the afternoon promised well for our adventure next day. The branches of the trees tossing lightly in a fresh wind beckoned us out of doors. By consent, further discussion of the eventful to-morrow was tabooed. The map of the hills was rolled up, our oft-conned half of the paper pocketed, and a brisk three hours' walk over the moor in the fine June weather gave our minds and bodies a much-

needed tonic. I sat down to dinner that evening in better spirits than I had known since the colonel's death.

The doctor came in after dinner, and we chatted over our cigars for an hour. He was surprised to hear of our proposed departure next day.

'Your affair, of course,' he said; 'but I think it's a pity you can't remain for a few days. I'm convinced that the man whose footprints we saw in the Afries Wood is somewhere near, and will be found.'

'You're probably right, doctor,' Keene-Leslie answered. 'Indeed, I go further. I think that you are certainly right, and that sooner or later Mr Searcher will be found. But it may be later rather than sooner, and Forbes and I can't remain here indefinitely.'

'I understand. But it's a pity. It's hardly probable that the man will turn up to consult me again, is it?'

'I doubt it.'

'Still, it is possible, for, like most criminals, he shows a streak of stupidity. It has evidently never occurred to him that his footprints are distinctive.'

'That is so. To change his boots would have been an elementary precaution.'

'Yet the man I saw looked like a person with more than one pair! However, there's no more to be done meanwhile except to say good-bye. I'll try to get back from my round in time to see you off at the station, and hear if you have any news, and I'll wire you at once if anything turns up,' he said, and rose to go.

The night was deliciously cool and full of scents of the summer dusk, and I accompanied him as far as the lodge. I had not covered twenty yards of the way back towards the house when I fancied that I heard a rustle in the shrubbery. Eyes and ears on the alert, I slipped into the shadow, but I saw nothing, although twice I imagined that I heard a stealthy step. For a minute or two I waited, listening, but the only sound that broke the hush of the night was the mournful call of the owls. I dismissed the incident as a trick of the nerves, and returned to the house.

We did not sit up late, for everything was now in train, and the next day's business demanded a good night's rest. The weather signs were friendly. My last look through my window showed me the country bathed in silver moonlight, so bright that in its wizardry the sleeping woods round The Bield looked as if cut out of cardboard, in sharp relief against a clear and starry sky.

(*Continued on page 469.*)

A BEE AND A BEETLE.

IT is one of those fascinating bits of natural history brought to light by that prince of entomologists and charming writer, Henri Fabre.

One of the earliest bees to appear in spring is a small black insect with a little patch of red on each hind-leg. At first you would think it had been gathering red pollen; but if you look closely, you will see the patch is a part of the bee itself, formed by tufts of red hair. A black bee with red patches on the hind-legs! You can't mistake it; there is no other native bee like it. You will probably see it on the polyanthus flowers. If you watch it you will very likely see another bee, a brown one, hovering over it, and following it as it goes from flower to flower. This is the male pursuing the female. And the fact that they are so dissimilar in colour makes it again easy to recognise the species. About the same time of year a small *brown* bee may be seen in a similar manner rifling the polyanthus flowers. It also is shadowed, as it were, by a brown bee ready to pounce upon it. Again a male pursuing a female. Both of these belong to a small group of our native bees to which the name Anthophora has been given. For want of another, we will continue to use this word.

It is a species of Anthophora which is associated in such a remarkable way with a minute beetle. Many beetles are parasites, but none, in the matter of parasitism, excels in wonder this parasite of the bee Anthophora. It is one of the blister beetles, the precise name of which we need not trouble about. Fabre, in his wonderfully detailed and painstaking way, found out its extraordinary life-history.

When the tiny beetle is hatched out in the autumn it is not as other young beetles are, a fat little grub, like the 'worm i' the bud.' It is an active creature with the proper insect supply of six legs. The first marvel in its life-history, perhaps, is that it can do without food until it has met with its bee; and this will not be till the following spring. The bee Anthophora burrows in the ground in the spring, and lays up stores of honey and pollen for her offspring. In each little store she lays an egg. The object of the beetle is to breakfast—a very long fast—on the egg, followed by unlimited honey. It arrives at the entrance of one of the numerous burrows of Anthophora. It is a sunny day in spring, and presently a *male* Anthophora emerges, and perhaps stays to sun himself at the mouth. The beetle is on the alert, and promptly attaches itself to some of the hairs on the bee. So the beetle is carried about by the bee. But still it seems no nearer breakfast. The male bee gathers no honey, nor provides the desired egg.

Soon, however, the females emerge from the burrows, and seek the flowers—perhaps the polyanthus-blossoms in your garden. They are sought out by the males, some of them carrying beetles. When the bees mate, the beetle transfers itself to the female! By-and-by *she* goes to a little store that she has laid up, and lays an egg in the honey. The beetle then cleverly manages to drop off on to the egg. If it got into the honey it is said it would be drowned. Well, it eats the egg, and having done so, it acquires the power of feeding on honey for the rest of its grub life.

Such is the story of the wonderful association of a bee and a beetle, as related by the brilliant Frenchman, Henri Fabre. If our natural histories were full—as they might be—of such wonders as this, then, surely, the rush for them at the libraries would be as great as it is for popular fiction.

PETITE SIMUNDE.

PART III.

VI.

FOUR days had passed before the second-in-command rejoined his unit in the trenches. He had been held at Divisional Headquarters, and now for the first time learned of Des Rosiers's desertion. With a stiffening of the jaw and an ugly contraction of his shoulders, he quickly interrogated tragedy's mummers—a sergeant named Smith and a politician-lawyer company commander. To the former he said nothing; the man had done his obvious duty. To the company commander he gave a careful hearing; then, in short staccato sentences that had an odd resemblance to a machine-gun in action, subjected him to a brief questioning.

'What is Des Rosiers's conduct-sheet like?'

'Pretty bad, sir.'

'What were his crimes?'

'Oh, the usual things—dirty on C.O.'s inspection, equipment missing, late for parades, and generally slovenly. If he hadn't had such a poor sheet, he would have been decorated.'

'In other words, his crimes are rest-billet ones. Is that correct?'

'Well—yes, sir.'

'But in the line he earned a decoration?'

'Yes—at Vimy he'——

'Have you known him to lie?'

'Well, you know what these French-Canadians are like.'

'You understand what I mean. Have you ever known him to lie when put on his honour?'

'Er—no.'

'When he told you that he had to see this girl, did you find out if he was speaking the truth?'

'No, sir; I'——

'Did you look for him at this girl's place when you were coming away?'

'I sent a picket through the village.'

The blue in Campbell's eyes became unpleasantly light. 'I had Des Rosiers in my company at Ypres when the Hun sent over his first gas—you were addressing meetings in Canada at the time—and I know him for a brave chap, as faithful as a dog. It's men like you, with a sense of vision no better than a mud-puddle, that are making the French-Canadian question another Irish one. They are like children, these French-Canadians—easily swayed, yet true as steel to those they trust; but as long as you and your kind make a political cat's-paw out of them, alternately yelling "*Kamerad!*" and "Traitor!" according to the political exigencies of the moment, so long will Canada be without the sympathy and the enriching of a wonderfully virile race.'

The junior officer's face flushed. 'I acted according to the evidence,' he persisted hotly.

'Damn the evidence!' said Campbell furiously. 'Play the man, not the charge-sheet. Does Des Rosiers strike you as a chap who would deliberately insult a staff-officer? When he is caught, he will be shot. It can't be helped—discipline must be maintained; but I tell you, when, every few days, I read in the adjutant-general's orders that Private So-and-So, charged with desertion in the presence of the enemy, was apprehended in a certain village, tried by court-martial, and sentenced to be shot, sentence duly carried out at 4.15 A.M. on such and such a date—you know the ghastly rhythm of the thing as well as I do—I never read one of these announcements without having a bad ten minutes afterwards. I don't question the decision of the court—a deserter must pay the penalty—but, mark my words, behind every one of these offences there is the unseen part played by some officer or N.C.O. who punished at the wrong time, or failed to punish at the right time, as the case may be. There are far too many machine-made, routine-fed chaps in the army, with stars on their cuffs, who don't know that there are times when the grip of a hand on a Tommy's shoulder, and a few words as man to man, free from any cursed condescension, are worth all the conduct-sheets in existence.'

'You are making a mountain out of a mole-hill, sir. I consider you are very unfair to me.'

'You do, eh? . . . What about your unfairness to Des Rosiers and his little French girl, when he faces a firing-squad in the early morning?'

With an angry gesture, Campbell left the

dug-out and hurried to Battalion Headquarters. For twenty minutes he and the colonel, a gentleman and a soldier, quietly but firmly discussed the case of desertion.

'I agree with everything you say, Campbell,' said the older man, 'and I will strongly recommend mercy to the court; but I am commanding a unit made up of many personalities, and I must think of the example to all.'

'Very good, sir. By the way, colonel, I know where Des Rosiers is.'

'You do? Then send word to the A.P.M.'

'Excuse me, sir—may I go and bring him myself? I ask this as a very great favour.'

The colonel pondered for a moment. 'When will you be back?' he said.

'Before "Stand to" in the morning.'

'Right—but, Campbell, my boy'——

'Sir.'

'Whatever you have in mind, remember that your duty and mine is to think of the example to the battalion.'

The blue in Campbell's eyes deepened; then, with an imperious gesture of the head, like that of a horse which hears the sound of galloping hoofs a mile away, he saluted.

'I shall not forget what you say, sir.'

'Thank you, Douglas.'

With a restless impatience for delay, he left the dug-out and climbed from the trench to open land. Heedless of a machine-gun that spat at him from the enemy lines, he hurried on until he reached the brigade transport lines, where he secured a motor-car.

'Where to, sir?' asked the driver.

'Le Curois,' said the major; 'and drop me just before you come to the village.'

VII.

In the scorching heat of a summer afternoon Petite Simunde was washing some linen outside her cottage home. The silence, like the heat, was oppressive, and seemed more so by contrast with the noise of the troops who had been there a week before. An apple falling from a tree to the ground; the restless pounding of a horse's hoof in its stall; the distant hum of an aeroplane; the rumble of guns, faint but ominous—these, and the sighs of the little woman at her task, were the only sounds that broke the stillness of the air.

She heard footsteps, and her heart, more than her eyes, told her that the man she dreaded had come. Her face blanched, and she caught her breath with a spasm of pain.

'Simunde'—Campbell's voice was gentle but firm—'where is Jacque?'

She continued her work without looking up.

'Simunde'—again the quiet monotone—'where is Jacque?'

She shook her head. 'No compree,' she faltered, falling into the jargon of war.

'Simunde!' There was an inflection in his voice, an almost imperceptible note of severity, that set her heart throbbing with fear. This was a new person to her, this calm, stern, blue-eyed man who showed no excitement, no anger, only a quiet, kindly severity that gave her no chance for subterfuge. She hated him for his calmness—because he was English—because he was unfair. If he had only shouted or gesticulated—but this brown-haired giant! To oppose him was like trying to stem the incoming tide.

She looked up suddenly, and her dripping hands were clenched in a fever of supplication. Madly, passionately, she pleaded for her lover, as a woman will plead only for the man she loves or for her child. Tears ran down her cheeks, and her voice was choked with sobs.

Patiently he listened, gathering from the anguish more than from her words the story he had already guessed. In a climax of grief, she groped for him with her hands and would have cried on his breast. But he made no move; only, his eyes were very grave and tender.

'Simunde,' he reiterated in English, 'where is Jacque?'

With a shrill cry of rage, she stamped her foot on the ground. This great iceberg of a man was a devil! He had come for her lover. He would take him away to be shot. With an involuntary instinct of dismay, she glanced at the barn a little distance away; then, fearful that he had read her meaning, she forced a smile with her lips, only to find that her fear was correct.

Without a word, he put her gently aside and started for the barn. He had gone ten steps before she moved; then he heard her hurried breathing, and her hands were on his arm.

'*Monsieur*,' she cried—'*monsieur le major*—Jacque—Jacque *keel* you!' She spoke in broken English, remembering one of Des Rosiers's stories of his misdeeds. Releasing her fingers, he reached the barn in a few swift paces. Opening the door, he cautiously entered and tried to accustom himself to the semi-darkness—and saw the barrel of a rifle in the loft slowly aligning itself in his direction.

'Des Rosiers!' His voice rang out like a pistol-shot. 'It is I—your officer!'

There was no sound for almost a full minute; then the rifle was withdrawn, and the unshaved, dishevelled French-Canadian stood before him.

'Why you come?' he said brokenly. 'I can no shoot my *officier*. Why you come, eh?'

'Because you will go back with me, Des Rosiers.'

The deserter's eyes filled with tears. 'By Gar!' he said, 'it is not, what you say, play fair. I say I shoot who come, and Jacque Des Rosiers, he is no afraid. But you—my boss—*mais non!* Maybe I go back with you, and maybe they shoot me, yes?'

'You have deserted, and the punishment is—well, you know as well as I. If you come with me now, there is a small chance of mercy.'

The man's eyes flashed. 'I no ask for mercy,' he cried. 'I, Jacque Des Rosiers, want mercy? Pouf! I laugh. They tell me I no see Simunde again, when I do nottings wrong. *Très bien*—I say sometings about it too. I go, I stay—*mêm' chose;* I am shot. Good! I stay with Simunde.'

Campbell took a step forward, and there was metal in his voice as well as in his eyes. His hand fell on the other's shoulder and gripped it like a vice. 'You will come back with me,' he said, and again there was the strange similarity to a machine-gun; 'not that you may receive mercy, but because you are a coward, and must take your punishment for desertion in the presence of the enemy.'

Des Rosiers's face darkened.

'Now, at this minute,' went on Campbell, 'the battalion, your battalion and mine, is in the line. Because you were not there, another man is in your place, perhaps at sentry duty. He may be dead by now—and why? Because he did his duty, and took the place of a man who was afraid.'

The French-Canadian's breath was hot with fury. He clenched his fists, and great veins stood out on his forehead. 'By gosh, me!' he yelled; 'who say Jacque Noir, she is afraid?'

With apparent calm, but his muscles poised for action, the officer looked squarely at him. 'I say you are a coward,' he answered. 'You were afraid to go to the line with your comrades. You are afraid now to face your punishment.'

Campbell noticed that Jacque was crouching for a spring. With a shrug of his shoulders, he produced a cigarette-case and put a cigarette into his mouth.

'Well?' he said.

It was the second time he had beaten Des Rosiers. The poor fellow paused, then knelt at his feet and exhausted his passion in a sobbing explanation that would have been ludicrous but for the sincerity of anguish behind it.

A few minutes later they went together from the barn. Simunde was standing by her door. From the interior of the house the lamentations of 'madame' could be heard. With a simplicity that strangely ennobled the rough fellow, Des Rosiers stopped and spoke to Simunde in French, then kissed her on the lips with a reverence that was more moving than the deepest passion. Without a word, he walked to the motor-car and stared fixedly ahead at the road which climbed by the château. With a half-sob, Simunde turned to the officer. She said nothing, but her tears spoke a language that needed no words. The metal in his eyes melted into a deep compassionate blue; and Petite Simunde's troubled little heart thanked God for the great, broad-shouldered man with the hair that was almost red.

The two men slept in a deserted hut that night, but ere daybreak they were making their way through the communication-trenches to the front line. It was half-an-hour before 'Stand to' when the major and his unkempt companion reached the last dark trench where sentries were straining their eyes at the blackness of No Man's Land. A junior officer stepped up to the major and reported, quietly, the situation during the night.

'They've got a machine-gun post,' he said at the end, 'somewhere over by those three trees. Can you see them, sir? They got five of our chaps last night, and two the night before.'

'Humph! They tried for me too, yesterday afternoon. Can't the guns do anything?'

'They've tried, sir; but the rise in the ground seems to protect the post from anything except a direct hit.'

Even in the darkness the young lieutenant could notice the sudden look of decision which flashed into Campbell's eyes.

'Give me an A form,' said the senior officer tersely.

The lieutenant handed him a message-pad, on which he wrote a few words.

'See that the colonel gets this,' said Campbell, 'and pass word along to the other companies that Private Des Rosiers and I are going to get that machine-gun post. If we come back, don't give us too hot a reception from your sentries.—Sergeant, some bombs.—And let Des Rosiers have that revolver, old chap. My batman will give you one of mine. Right—thanks.'

'But, sir'—the young officer was vastly troubled—'it's not up to you. I'll go, major. Honestly, I want to'——

'Thanks, old man; but this is a bigger job than it looks. Not that you couldn't do it as well or better, but—well, I've set my heart on going, that's all.'

He glanced at Des Rosiers, and noticed that his face was grim and set.

'But, my *officier*, it is not fair,' began the French-Canadian; 'it'——

'Not fair?' There was a rasping sound in the major's voice.

'For me, *mais oui;* but for you, *non*. Please—I do my bes'—I go alone.'

Without a word, the second-in-command put out his hand and grasped that of the deserter; and Des Rosiers felt that death for the other would be easy. Truly, as Campbell had said, war is a great big game, and men are like children.

Three minutes later two figures were crawling like panthers towards the German lines.

. . . . . .

The colonel of the battalion took the message from the runner's hands. It contained seven words:

'*As an example to the battalion.*
'CAMPBELL.'

'What's that noise?'

'Sounds like Mills bombs,' said the adjutant.

'And revolvers,' muttered the colonel, and swore softly to himself with a lip that quivered strangely.

VIII.

If ever you go to the Cobalt country, do not fail to take the boat to Ville Marie, on the blue shores of western Quebec.

There is an excellent hostelry at Ville Marie called 'Les Voyageurs,' where a little lady, known as Petite Simunde, has worked wonders in making it the cosiest, snuggest, neatest little place that ever warmed the heart of a lumberjack or a mining-prospector. At night her husband leads the singing with a mighty voice that shakes the rafters; for did not the former proprietor, Pierre Generaud, say that singing encouraged thirst?

At times, when Madame Des Rosiers is away for a day, Jacque Noir will regale his old friends with tales of his past life—tales that differ with every telling, and seem to indicate that the narrator himself is beginning to doubt their accuracy. At such times, too, he has been known to sing of a sailor who loved a Portuguese maid; but at the first sound of his wife's footsteps outside Monsieur Des Rosiers is the model husband—a rôle, to be frank, which suits him quite well.

When the snow is very thick on the ground, and the wind howls mournfully over the lake, Jacque Noir talks of France and the weary years of war. He will point with pride to his artificial foot, and then to his decoration, and slowly tell how two men went out into the dark after a machine-gun post.

And when the guests are gone and the fire is low, when the wind is moaning quietly, while the snow falls thick—thick—thick, they speak to each other of the officer who will never come back; of the one whose hair was brown, almost like red; whose blue eyes were stern, and yet so kind.

Hand-in-hand they sit close together, and the only sounds are those of the crackling logs and the wind that is never still.

THE END.

SOCIAL, MENTAL, AND MORAL EFFECTS OF INTERNMENT.

By Tom Govett.

IN the first days of November 1914 several thousand men were collected together in the stable compound of the trotting race-course at Ruhleben, on the outskirts of Berlin, and distributed in the horse-boxes and stables themselves, to remain there, for the greater part, until a week after the signing of the Armistice. Such close and continual confinement could not fail to exert a considerable influence on the men interned, and it is not without interest to note what the principal effects of this internment were.

In the first place, men of all ages, professions, and colours were mingled together. Stokers shared boxes with their former skippers; elderly professors were thrust in with blacks from the West Coast of Africa; business men and stable hands, Government officials and Continental crooks, public schoolboys on holiday, trawlermen from Grimsby, artists, musicians—all were mixed up and packed in at the rate of six men to a horse-box measuring ten feet square, there to eat, sleep, live, and wash—if they felt inclined.

The effect was quickly noticeable in the speech of the better-educated men, which rapidly degenerated, till in many cases it became as bad as (or worse than) that of the sailors, whose coarseness is proverbial. This lasted for three years, when, curiously enough, there came a reaction, and many attempted to drop the vile vocabulary they had acquired.

At the same time, this mixing up of all classes (which, by the way, had been done by the Germans with a view, as they openly stated, to causing additional hardships to those who possessed finer sensibilities) was in some ways highly beneficial. The callous and equal treatment of every one eradicated any tendency towards strict class distinctions, which were desired by some, but would have been intolerable to most of those in the camp. The intimate conditions under which men in the same box lived gave all a broader outlook on life, and a deeper understanding of, and sympathy with, the pleasures and the troubles of those with whom, under ordinary circumstances, they would never have come in contact. It cannot be denied, however, that while this condition of affairs lasted it entailed great discomfort. Fortunately we were afterwards enabled to sort ourselves out and get together with friends and acquaintances.

Our outlook on life was further broadened owing to the lack of any restraining social conventions. It is obvious that a community consisting of men of every description, suddenly thrown together as we were, could have no traditions of thought and but few points of common interest beyond the desire to get out; while, as already stated, the mixture of all classes made real social distinctions impossible. There was, then, to all intents and purposes no 'public opinion' on any subject whatever that might tend to impose conventional standards on thought and ostracise those who would not, at least outwardly, conform thereto. I am convinced that we were far more free in this respect than any other country on the face of the earth. The military regulations had nothing to say on such matters;

and there were no censors in that sense to attempt to influence thought for the benefit of any particular caste or form of government. We had only one unwritten law on the subject: 'You can do as you like, and speak as you like, and think as you like; but don't interfere personally with me!'

The result was the free expression of all kinds of theories on all subjects, political and artistic. It was, for instance, the custom here in the United Kingdom to respect the news published in British papers, and condemn anything that contradicted it in the German papers, this without even having seen the latter. In the camp, where we had both German and English papers (English journals being smuggled in regularly about a week old), and where we also had time to study them, a comparison enabled one to detect the errors in both; and if the Germans sinned more frequently than we did, we were ourselves certainly not immaculate. Such things led among the more educated to a scepticism that spread to many things besides war matters; and it was just this sceptical frame of mind which seems to me to have been one of the chief results of our internment. Whether it will be permanent, now that we are hemmed in once more on every side by written and unwritten codes, depends, of course, on the age and the temperament of the individual.

To this freedom of speech there was one exception. Just as in British concentration camps there were a number of Germans who desired Britain to win the war, so in our camp there were a number of Britons—mostly naturalised Germans or the sons of naturalised Germans—who were in sympathy with the aims of Germany. They were expected to keep their views to themselves, and to endeavour at any rate to talk English in public; though even here too there was a great deal of tolerance as time went on.

The third great factor in influencing the character of the interned men was the lack of necessity to work. We were packed into vile quarters, but at the same time we did have lodgings, and a little ingenuity and disregard of military regulations went a long way towards improving them. Food and clothing were sent from England in adequate quantities, and each man could, if he desired and had no private means, borrow money from the British Government to the extent of four marks per week. It was then possible to exist in absolute idleness, and this a number of the men did. There were old sea-captains who hardly even moved during their internment, and boasted that they had never been twenty yards from their barrack, except when compelled by the military. There were scores whose daily programme was as follows: morning muster, preparation and consumption of breakfast and 'washing up the things' afterwards, a stroll round the field, preparation and consumption of dinner, washing up of dinner-things, an afternoon nap and a little novel-reading on their beds, preparation and consumption of supper, washing up, cards and bed, varied only by letter-writing and an occasional visit to our theatricals.

But, on the other hand, there were large numbers whose innate energy would not allow them to take life so easily. They had to occupy themselves in some way, and moped when occasionally out of a job. Many of this type turned to whatever offered itself, careless of *what* they were doing, so long as they were doing *something*. Many found employment in the camp administration, which was entirely in the hands of the prisoners, and employed working-gangs to clear away rubbish, bring in parcels, &c., besides salesmen in the canteens, hairdressers, accountants, and even dentists. Most of the posts had salaries attached to them, but in no case were they large enough to tempt a naturally lazy man from the idle existence he could lead if he chose.

All the various camp activities, education, sport, drainage, entertainment, &c., were under the control of unpaid committees, and attendance at these committees (and incidental duties involved) provided work for more men. Most of the committees had stormy careers; there were innumerable quarrels between the committees and in the committees themselves. The quarrels were mostly about nothing, and arose from the amount of time at our disposal, and from another more interesting reason.

At the commencement of the camp we had all been more or less united as prisoners suffering a common lot, but very soon we began to split up into two rival groups. These were none other than the conservatives and the progressives (the terms are used in their primary and not in their political sense). The conservatives desired to do everything in the good old traditional way; the progressives maintained that the sooner all traditions were thrown overboard the better for all concerned. Distinct points of practical difference were naturally difficult to find except in the realms of art, but each party nevertheless spent much energy and thought in the attempt to obtain control of the different activities. It would seem that wherever men are thrown together, these two tendencies will sooner or later come to the surface and divide them into two opposed camps.

The amount of time at our disposal led to another very bad habit, that of procrastination, which is difficult to shake off.

Among other activities to which men devoted themselves was the pursuit of sport. We had facilities for almost every game that is played in England. We had rented a field, and the necessary apparatus was sent from England. Some spent the whole of their time playing something or other.

Music, painting, writing, and acting attracted a large number of people, whose tastes had probably always lain in those directions, but whose careers had not permitted their pursuit before they were interned. I do not think that any hitherto undiscovered genius was discovered, though some of the men themselves would perhaps hardly agree. It is certain at any rate that the success they achieved in the camp led some of them to an exaggerated opinion of their own artistic capabilities, and they considered their name and fortune as good as made in the new careers they had determined to follow on their release. This loss of all sense of proportion was not limited to those engaged in artistic activities, but was quite general among all who worked there; there was no measure to enable us to judge the real value of our work. Some must already have suffered a bitter disillusionment, though others may have been enabled, as a result of what they did in Ruhleben, to exchange their old profession for one more congenial to their tastes and suited to their capabilities.

Another little characteristic was the general desire as time went on to make out that one had filled a better position in one's profession than was actually the case, or that one had had altogether a 'nicer' occupation. The curious thing about this was its absolute futility; there was a register compiled at the commencement of the camp, containing every one's real occupation, and this register was open for any one to see at any time.

The monotony of life in Ruhleben, and the conditions of existence there, made it difficult for those who did not possess unusual pertinacity and strength of will to do much real study; though every encouragement was given by the authorities at home, and it was even possible to take some of the English examinations. The mind grew dull there; moreover, though there was plenty of time, it was split up by the necessity of doing one's household duties. I knew the case of one man who took nearly two years to prepare for an examination for which he was allowed six months at his university, where he would have had to do other work as well. That we did not get even duller is probably due in some degree to the never-ending arguments in which we indulged. After a time, as can be imagined, we grew to know as much about our messmates' lives as we wanted to, and our conversations were limited to impersonal subjects in which we were interested at the time. Small-talk was uncommon, and I used to wonder what I had found to say to casual acquaintances before my arrest, and what I should talk to people about when I got out again. We argued, then, upon the most impossible subjects, and descended only too frequently to quibbling about the very finest points; but we did set our minds against those of other people.

The absence of womenfolk of any kind was naturally not without effect, but it is not necessary to go into that here, as the results were not different from those familiar at the front, in Polar expeditions, &c. I will only say that the absence of women had the effect of bringing out the effeminacy of men inclined that way. This was especially noticeable with the younger men, and was further increased in the case of those who were accustomed to take the female rôles in the plays we produced. One unusually observant youth gave up acting these parts because he had noticed the effect upon himself of the continual use of feminine clothing and mannerisms.

What will be the lasting results of our four years' internment it is yet too early to decide. The older men should quickly drift back into their old habits and frame of mind, but the younger men will bear deeper marks, some of them beneficial, though mostly, I fear, such as will not make them the fitter for the lives they must now pursue, after wasting in idleness and makeshift work four years of their youth—years that should have given them the experiences essential to the parts they must play in the future, if they are to live up to their reputation as Britons.

SUGAR-CANE GROWING IN NATAL

By James Paterson.

THE cultivation of sugar-cane is carried on throughout almost the entire length of the Natal North Coast Railway, which extends north-eastwards along the South African coast from Durban to Somkele, a distance of one hundred and sixty-seven miles, and the plantations cover a large part of Zululand. Cane is grown also in the vicinity of the South Coast Railway, which runs for about eighty miles from Durban in a south-westerly direction along a seacoast famed for its beauty.

At Inverugie, a railway stopping-place not far from the middle of the South Coast line, is to be found the unusual combination of tea-planting, cane-growing, and cattle-farming—thus providing, with water, all the necessary ingredients of the 'cup that cheers.'

The quantity of sugar-cane treated last season at the dozen or so sugar-mills located along the North Coast Railway was not far short of a million tons, two-thirds of which was transported from the plantations by railway engines and trucks, and the remaining third by mill or planters' tram-lines and trollies. From this cane

were manufactured about one hundred thousand tons of sugar, which, with the thirty thousand tons of sugar milled on the South Coast line and in districts adjacent thereto, represent the annual volume of one of Natal's 'essential' industries, of an approximate value of two and a half million pounds sterling.

The planters and the millers are, of course, interdependent; and this was strikingly illustrated after the heavy floods in February 1917, when, in addition to the railway station at Umfolosi being washed completely away and a number of people drowned, the local sugar-mill was so badly damaged that it had to suspend operations for a long time, thereby debarring the Matubatuba and Umfolosi planters from the usual outlet for their cane, as the more distant mills had their local cane to deal with before they could accommodate any from outside.

Periodical floods are not, however, the only drawback with which the Zululand sugar-planter has to contend. North of the Tugela River fever is rife at times, although of a mild recurrent nature rather than virulent; but with the cleaning up of swamps and other insect-breeding grounds this menace to health and comfort will disappear.

The financial results to be obtained from cane-growing outweigh, evidently, the disadvantages above referred to, as the Zululand and South Coast sugar-belts are well settled, and estates change hands at large figures—from five to ten thousand pounds being a not uncommon price to be paid for a developed cane property of very moderate acreage.

After the pioneering work in connection with house-building, cane-planting, and the provision of tram-lines and roadways throughout the estate has been accomplished, the planter's life cannot be termed a hard one, especially if he is on good terms with the local sugar-mill authorities. The cane is cut every eighteen months or so, a conservative estimate of production is two tons of sugar per acre, and the price of sugar is about twenty shillings per one hundred pounds. Labour costing what it does, even a small estate should yield a handsome financial return; and it is common knowledge in Natal that many men have become independent, or at least well-to-do, after only a few years' sugar-farming in Zululand.

At Amatikulu, sixteen miles beyond the Tugela River, a commencement has been made with the growing of cotton, alongside the cane-fields, and the initial success attained will probably lead to considerable development in the production of another 'essential' commodity which seems to be getting insufficient now in other parts of the world.

Railway business in connection with the sugar industry is considerable, as, in addition to the transport of cane from the plantations to the mills, and of sugar from the mills to Durban and other large South African trading-centres, there is a heavy inwards traffic, consisting of rice for the Indian coolies and mealies for the Kaffirs on the estates, machinery for the sugar-mills, manure and fertilisers for the land, and general goods for the European population. The number of engines constantly employed in the haulage of raw cane and manufactured sugar during the nine months' season on the Natal North Coast Railway alone is not less than twenty.

About two years ago a private commission made an extensive and exhaustive inspection trip through part of the native territory lying between Somkele and the Portuguese border, and reported to the Zululand Planters' Union that this territory included an area of seven hundred and forty thousand acres, most of which was more suitable for the cultivation of sugar-cane than a great deal of the land already planted. After allowing one-third of this figure for the sites of homesteads and the grazing of stock, about half-a-million acres would remain for the cultivation of cane; and if we assume that the cane is cut every two years —a longer period than is necessary in Zululand—the total annual production of sugar in this new district, at the fair ratio of two tons per acre, would be five hundred thousand tons, which, at, say, twenty shillings per one hundred pounds, would represent an increased annual wealth to Natal of ten million pounds. The commission added that the settlement of this land would require, on five-hundred-acre farms, one thousand five hundred European settlers with their families, and considered that to manufacture the sugar at least thirty large mills would be required, which, with the stores, &c., necessary for such a population, would mean a livelihood for probably as many tradesmen, traders, and other Europeans as settlers.

A concomitant part of the scheme is an extension of the North Coast Government Railway for a distance of one hundred and eighty-five miles, through easy country, beyond its present terminus; and the commission forecasted that the cost of such an extension would be entirely covered by one year's excise, estimated at five hundred thousand pounds, on the sugar to be produced annually in the tract of country opened up.

Is this one of the solutions of the post-war problems of increased production of the necessaries of life, and the settling on the land of those men who have rendered yeoman service to their country on the battlefields of Europe, Africa, and Asia?

THE DARK PATCH.

By Bart Kennedy.

I.

IT was my own fault. I had tried to do two days' climbing in one day. I ought to have stopped where I was advised to stop. The innkeeper in Andorra had impressed on me to be sure and stay at Soldao, and wait there for a party of four who were going to L'Hospitalet the next morning. They were to start from a place near to Soldao.

But when I got to Soldao that afternoon I felt —after I had had a hearty meal and a bottle of stout red wine—that I could step over the mountains with the seven-league boots of the fable.

It was the beginning of winter, and the first snow was falling in the Pyrenees. But I felt free from all care as I stepped along. I had tucked the noble dinner securely under my belt, and I was as right as a trivet. The trail was easy to follow, and I went up and up like a climbing god. I cared less than nothing for the light snow that was falling. I should be in clover when I got to L'Hospitalet in France! There I would take it easy. I would rest on my laurels, so to speak, after my long journey afoot through Spain.

Up and up I went blithely. Up and up. The clear, cold air invigorated me. It was as if I were inhaling the very spirit and essence of some glorious champagne.

Up and up. Up and up. The scene around me was splendid and wonderful. I was on the roof of the world.

Here was the summit. And here was something else! A faintness had come into the trail. In places the snow had drifted over it, though I could still see it, as it stretched along. I went forward quickly; but my enthusiasm began to wither slightly. I soothed myself, however, with the idea that the trail would surely become more distinct the farther I went. It was an idea, of course, for which there was no particular foundation. But I forced myself to believe that things would be all right.

Yes, it was all right. The trail was clear now, and I went swiftly on.

There was still plenty of daylight. It would be some time before the sun went down. And I began to sing. Yes, all would be well. I had taken a chance, but in life one must take chances if one is to accomplish anything.

My voice rang around and around. I was singing an air from one of the Italian operas, singing gaily as a lark. And here was a great boulder, a vast boulder shaped like the head of a giant. The trail ran to the side of it. I followed the trail, and—well, my song stopped suddenly. The trail ran no more! It was swallowed—eaten up by the snow. I stopped and looked out over the snow to see if it were showing away in the distance. No, it gave no sign. It was gone—gone utterly!

I held swift counsel with myself. I was beaten—done. I had been too confident. And there was but one thing for me to do—one thing only. I should have to eat the leek. I should have to go back to Soldao. I, the wondrous mountaineer! I, who could do two days' journey in one day!

I should have to go back.

So I faced about, this time not singing. And it is needless to say I went as quickly as I could. It would take me all my time to get back to Soldao before the night fell.

At first it was easy going. The print of my own footsteps helped me. They had not yet become obliterated, for the snow was falling but lightly. The wind had begun to rise, however. And it was this that did it. For the trail was again covered!

I was lost!

There was no use beating about the bush. I was lost. I could make my way neither back to Soldao nor forward to L'Hospitalet!

I stopped and began to reflect upon my own foolishness. But this could not help me. I was lost. And there was the beginning and the end of it.

I turned and began to walk again in the direction of L'Hospitalet. There was no particular reason for my doing this; but I did not like to stand where I was. And there came to me the wild hope that the wind might have cleared, or partly cleared, the snow from the trail. My reason told me that this was impossible. The wind would only drift the snow over the trail all the more deeply. But I hoped that this might not be so. The truth of the matter was that I was becoming confused.

And then I became afraid.

Fear comes to every one who is lost. For the consciousness loses its moorings, so to speak. The mind gets out of its balance. If it may be so put, there is no fulcrum from which it can work. And fear comes.

There is no use denying it; I was very much afraid. All sorts of fancies and imaginings came to me. I began, for instance, to think of wolves. And the memory of a story that I had heard—not long before—of a party of travellers being eaten up, here in the Pyrenees, came vividly back to me. Perhaps the same fate would happen to myself. True, I was armed; but that would help me but little.

I began to think of other things. Perhaps I should die of the cold, for I should have to pass

the night out here in the mountains. It was not very cold now, but there might come a sudden fall in the temperature at any time. If it went down below zero, I was done for.

II.

Suddenly a wonderful glow lit up the mountains. The sun was just setting. But the beauty of the sunset did not especially appeal to me. What struck me with force concerning it was that it might be the last sunset I should ever see. Mixed-up, jumbled ideas were rushing through my mind.

Darkness began to come now, and then it was that I made a strong effort to pull myself together. 'If you become afraid, you will be done,' I said to myself. 'Look out, man. Take it easy.'

And, after a while, I mastered the fear and got control of myself.

What was I to do? If it had been day-time, I should have known well enough. All that would be necessary would be to follow a water-course as closely as I could, and in time I should get into touch with some one or another. It is the way to do when one is lost among mountains.

I still kept going along in the direction of L'Hospitalet. I had come to the conclusion that it was better to keep moving. Perhaps if I went on long enough I should see the lights of the place for which I was making!

Slowly I went on. And then I saw out ahead of me the reflection of a light. L'Hospitalet, I thought. Things would turn out right after all. I made my way cautiously, and I came to the edge of a torrent. It made a great deal of noise, but I knew that it was not dangerous, for the sound of it told me that it was shallow, and that it was running over a bed of gravel. I should have to ford it, if I were to go in the direction of the reflection of the light.

For a moment I hesitated. There might be a hole in the middle of it. But it was necessary for me to ford it, and I stepped into it boldly. It was only about ten yards across, and the water came up no higher than my waist. It did not touch the knapsack that was strapped to my shoulders. I got up on the opposite bank, and went on in the direction of the light.

And then it was that I felt a stiffness around my waist and my legs. My clothes had suddenly become frozen. It was colder than I had thought. Yes, much colder. It was useless to bother about that, however. The thing was to keep on.

It had stopped snowing by this time, and the stars came out. How clear they were! There was now a fair amount of light. I could see well enough. The snow seemed to have disappeared. The travelling was hard and awkward, and as near as I could make out I was getting to the slope on the other side of the summit. There was the danger of my falling over some steep place. But there was nothing for me to do but to keep on. If I were to stop, the cold might get me.

I was surely going down the slope of the summit! The wind had died down by this time. This was all to the good, for if it were blowing I might not be able to stand the cold. I was not bothered by the cold as yet. My exertion had kept me fairly warm. Besides, I was as fit and as strong as possible. And I comforted myself with the thought that I should soon see the actual lights of L'Hospitalet. L'Hospitalet! When I got there, I should have supper and a bed! If I were late, I would rouse up the people. Yes, everything would be all right when I got to L'Hospitalet.

I was going towards the reflection of the light, when it faded away all at once. I stopped, and wondered. What could it be? What was the matter? The reflection must surely have come from lights in the distance. I couldn't make it out. I turned round and looked in the direction from which I had come. No lights there. Nothing but great, dim, frowning masses of rock. In a way, I was lost a second time. My objective was gone, and with it my sense of direction. But this time I felt no fear at all. If I was done for, I was done for. And that was all there was about it.

But I should have to move on. I should have to keep going. Stopping would be dangerous. I should have to manage to keep on the move till daylight came. There were a good many hours to pass between now and then. I should have a hard time. But there was no help for it. I should have to do the best I could.

I came to another torrent. It seemed bigger than the last one. And I turned from it. There was no point in fording it. I was as well off on one side as I would be on the other.

The night became clearer, and colder. I was really in danger now. It looked as if the chances were against my lasting through the night. And I was beginning to feel tired. I had had a hard day. I thought of the fine dinner I had had, hours ago, in the *posada* at Soldao. If I were only back in Soldao now! If——

I sat down on a ledge of rock. I felt tired. But I got up at once. My clothes were frozen on me. If I could only have changed them, things would not have been so bad.

There was another thing, too. I ought to have carried some food with me from Soldao. I should need it before the night was out. But how was I to know, when I was there, that I should get into the pass in which I found myself now? I had felt then that making L'Hospitalet would be an easy matter.

III.

I was trapped right enough, and the fact that I had got into the trap myself was no consolation. I felt that I had been an over-confident fool. I had gone in the face of advice that had been

given me by one who knew these mountains. He had told me that I ought not to attempt to make L'Hospitalet in one day. But I had paid no heed to him.

There came to me a curious sensation of being watched. But I forced it from my mind, for there could be nothing round here. I felt certain of that. If the wolves had been around, I should have heard them long ago. No, there was nothing watching me.

I was still moving about. It was the only thing to do. And, all at once, I felt that there was something near me. I got out my revolver so as to be ready to deal with it, whatever it was. But it was nothing. My imagination was playing me a trick. It was odd. My imagination was weaving and working in a curious way. But I had absolute control of my mind at the same time. It was as if I were two men. One of them was subject to the dominion of strange, wild fancies. The other was resolute, calm, and alert. He kept the first man in check.

Two men! The feeling that I was two men became most vivid. As I moved about, I could feel that the other man—my other self—was moving by me. It had a weird effect upon me. But I was in no sense afraid. I was able to control this man of phantasy and imagination. If I had not, he would have led me into the realm of fear. And then certain death would have come upon me.

The fancy passed away from me suddenly. And slowly there came to me the conviction that I should somehow manage to weather the predicament in which I was. How, I knew not. But I felt that help was at hand.

It was. I noticed, some distance away from me, a round object. At first I thought it must be a rock. But I was impelled to go towards it. Some sense that I could not define urged me on.

I was close up to it now. It was not a rock. It was a hive-shaped structure that had been built by man, built out of square stones that had been mortared together.

I walked slowly around it. I was expecting to find something—and I found it. It was an entrance into the structure. It was about two and a half feet in height, and about the same distance across. Evidently a storm-shelter. It had been built in the shape of a hive so as to resist the wind when a storm was raging here in the mountains.

I wondered if there was anything inside it. 'Hulloa!' I shouted into the entrance. 'Hulloa!'

I waited. But no response came. And then I thought it was time to chance it. I crawled through, holding my revolver ahead of me in my right hand. It was as well to be ready in case. If a man had been there, he would most likely have answered when I shouted; with an animal it would be another matter.

I was through the entrance now, and I got suddenly to my feet. With my left hand I got a match out of my pocket, and, after feeling cautiously for the wall, I struck it.

It was a wax match, and it gave out a clear, full light. For a second or so it dazzled my eyes; and during that short lapse of time my nerves were jumping. There might be something or some one in the shelter after all. But it was all right. There was nothing.

Well, there was nothing save some ashes that were close to the wall. The remains of a fire! Some one had been here. But how long ago I was unable to tell. The ashes were quite cold. They might have lain there for months.

The floor of the shelter was earthen and quite dry. Near to the middle of it was a round, dark patch. I wondered vaguely what it might be.

IV.

I was safe now. Even if it got very cold, I should be able to manage till the coming of daylight. The first thing to do was to get off my frozen clothes. I had some dry underclothes in my knapsack. I stripped, and put these on; and then I lay down with my knapsack under my head. I covered myself as well as I could with my coat, which was dry.

It was cold, of course. But I lay with my body as much in a circle as possible—as animals lie. It was the best way to keep the warmth within myself. Stretching myself was out of the question.

The only thing that really bothered me now was the hunger that had come upon me. If I had had something to eat, I shouldn't have minded things at all. But to think about that was useless. I should have to wait till I got to L'Hospitalet the next day. The next day! It was a long way off. The hours through which I should have to pass would be hard, long hours.

I tried to sleep. But it was useless. The cold was not dangerous here in the shelter, but it was enough to keep me awake. I was lying with my face turned towards the entrance, so that I could see any one who might try to come in. It would not be an animal—of that I was sure—for an animal would know that a man was there already. It could only be one of my own kind who might disturb me.

I began to wonder what the time was. It was perhaps somewhere between seven and eight o'clock. It could hardly be more. Daylight would not come before six in the morning. Perhaps not even then. It would, therefore, be ten hours at least before I could go forth. Things might have been much worse, however. I was lucky to have found this place. And I began to try to define the power that had guided me towards it.

Did this power come from myself, or did it come from outside? I wondered. It might be that there was in the mind of a man a power that consciousness knew not of—a power that

only asserted itself in times of extreme stress and danger. Or it might be that there were agencies around us that were outside the scope of ordinary human knowledge. I had been as surely guided to this shelter as if I had been definitely told of it in spoken words. It was strange. And, as I lay, there came to me all sorts of curious notions and ideas. I was here, alone. But was I alone? Were there things around me? Were there things with me here in this very shelter? And my mind ran from one thing to another.

'Yes, there are things about you,' said a deep, peculiar voice. 'You were guided here by me.'

I woke with a start. I had fallen into a doze, despite the cold. It was an odd voice that had spoken to me. And even though I was now wide awake, I had a strong feeling that something or some one was with me here in the shelter. It could not really be so, of course. But still I had the feeling.

I got a match, and I reached out and struck it on the wall. It flared up. And it seemed to me as if a shadow passed out through the entrance of the shelter as it flared. For an instant I felt frightened. But it was nothing. It was only my imagination. At least, my reason told me so.

But did reason know of everything that was around me? Perhaps it did, and perhaps it did not. I felt strangely nervous. It would be better for me not to fall asleep.

I felt very cold. I had no sense or suspicion of numbness. It was not cold enough for that. But I felt great discomfort. And I wondered how I had come to fall asleep.

Perhaps I had been asleep a long time. It might now be near to the dawn of day. I should be glad if it were so. For as soon as the dawn came I would get up, dress myself, and proceed on my journey.

I was looking at the entrance of the shelter. Light came through it, but it was the darkly clear light coming from the stars. In it there was no hint of the softness of dawn. It was just a hard, darkly clear light.

At any moment! The dawn might appear at any moment, for there was no telling how long I had slept. What I had to do was to wait and watch for the dawn.

v.

All at once a change came into the shelter. It was filled with the light of a fire that had appeared suddenly. How it had appeared I could not tell. All I knew was that it was there. And there was something more. Two men were in the shelter. One was lying prone. The other was bending over him, rifling his pockets. I knew what had happened. He had just stabbed the man who was lying prone. I wanted to stop him, to interfere. But I could not move. I——

I was awake again. Once more I had been dreaming. And I felt that the scene I had witnessed in the dream was a scene that had actually happened. I was certain of it. Absolutely certain. A murder had been committed here in this shelter. That was the meaning of the dark patch! And the picture of the whole thing had appeared before me. My mind had sensed the terrible happening of the past as I slept.

A strong desire came upon me to get up and leave the place. But it would not do. I should have to stay where I was till dawn came. There was nothing else for it. I should have to stay where I was.

There was no sign of dawn yet. The light that came through the entrance was still the light of night. It was not as clear as it had been, however. It might be nearing dawn.

Who were the men of the scene that had come to me in the dream? Who was the one who had been killed? Who was the one who had done the killing? I was sure that the sinister drama had occurred exactly as I had seen it.

Surely this shelter was haunted! In a way that it was given to no one to understand, it held the records of the things that had happened in it. These records were there to be read at certain times, and in certain states of mind. Perhaps it would have been as well if I had not heeded the power that had directed me to it. Perhaps it would have been as well if I had remained outside it. And then the power of connected thought left me suddenly.

'If you had remained outside, you would have perished,' said the deep voice again. 'I, the spirit that guides, directed you here.'

'But the place is haunted,' I cried.

'True. But it has given you life. Accept the gift as it comes.'

Here was another scene. A dreadful scene—not to be described! I awoke, trembling with horror. And I got to my feet, and struck a match. I could stay in the place no longer. It would be better for me to go out into the cold and the darkness.

There was no sign yet of the coming of the dawn. But I must go.

I dressed myself as quickly as I could, and I got out through the entrance of the shelter. It was very dark, and very cold. And a numbing wind was blowing.

And suddenly a sword of light flashed into the mountains. The dawn! At last it had come. The wind was cutting me to the bone. If I had remained in it through the night, I should have died.

Full dawn. It was now here. I was stiff, and I went stumbling along.

A golden, glorious tone was now in the light. And there—shining down in the valley beneath me—was my destination.

L'Hospitalet!

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

ONE has heard it said, with some subtle (but perhaps bitter) cynicism, that the system of teaching modern languages in our preparatory and other schools to-day is in its objects not merely not positive or neutral, but directly negative. In other words, the bodies and persons responsible for the system and its application, it is contended, not only desire that when the willing but bewildered pupil has completed his course of education in such languages, and goes out into the world where skill of tongue is put to practical test and men do not speak with grammars in hand, he shall not be encouraged to make any use of such knowledge as he has acquired, but that, negatively, he shall have been impressed with so deep a sense of the difficulties—overwhelming difficulties—of learning languages, and the almost impossibility of using them freely and easily when acquired, that an absolute distaste of linguistic study will be experienced, and the task abandoned entirely, never to be resumed. The great labour of learning languages is always instilled into the student. Difficult they may often be, but the preceptors make the difficulties out many times greater than they really are. In this suggestion some seem to desire to maintain a certain professional dignity, and to encourage the belief that all learning, however elementary, is a more fearsome business than those who have not been engaged in professional instruction can imagine. As with the doctors, the lawyers, and many others in real possession of special professional and technical knowledge, it is part of the game to pretend that it is vaster and even more mysterious than is generally known; a pose is adopted, solemnly and seriously. It is good for the cause. From this point the tremulous but heroic student, hopeful despite all official discouragement, strikes out into the deep and turbulent waters of grammars whose compilers have agreeably entered into the teachers' conspiracy of mystification and terror. Pages of exceptions to easy rules follow fast upon each other. The rule is simple; it applies to the majority of the words; but the teacher exalts the exceptions. He sternly sends to the bottom of the class, with scorn upon him, the pupil who has forgotten the feminine of *ambassadeur*, and the pert youth, suspected of murmuring that a woman ambassador is unknown and uncontemplated, is ordered to write out a hundred lines of—not of French (for thus something might fasten in his memory), but of Latin or Greek. The remotest intricacies and subtleties are worked upon in this system of instruction; the main rules and the simple but thorough practice of the speech and use of the language are comparatively neglected. By all means, let the grammar and the syntax be studied to the farthest pages, so that the student may possess a defter knowledge of certain points than even educated persons who were born to that particular tongue; but it should be understood that this study is meant to be a form of mental gymnastics and memory practice, and is not by way of equipment for the practical needs of life. Delightful as the study of languages may be (but is usually prevented from being), it is too often forgotten that, after all, language is but means to an end.

* * *

Now, it has been said that the study of languages with the special object of bringing about the general acquisition of one that may serve as a universal means of communication between persons of different nationalities is the most important thing in the world to-day. The suggestion is that every person ought to acquire, and be given the means of acquiring—and perhaps not that merely, but be obliged by law or national system to acquire—the use of two languages, that of his native country (or the one in which he lives and works) and one other, the latter to be the language designed for universal intercommunication. The second language, if acquired upon such a system and with such an ideal, would not be merely a language chosen by the individual because it happened to suit his own particular needs or tastes, for the ideal of the human race established upon a complete system of intercommunication is not approached by an Englishman learning Chinese or even Russian or Italian. Obviously regard must be paid to the extent to which certain languages are already in use in countries other than those to which they belong, and also to the tendencies or the intentions in this matter of nations bent on progress. While the suggestion that the acquisition of a second language with

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this object by all peoples is the most important thing of all—superior even to leagues of nations and other ideals and schemes of the kind—may appear at first thought to be a fancy flight of exaggeration, such an impression is largely dispelled on further consideration. For it is argued, and with seeming fairness, that one of the reasons why nations go to war is because they do not understand each other; and they do not so understand each other because they cannot converse or read one another's newspapers. Thus they are entirely dependent for their understanding on what they are told, and those who tell them, human nature and politics being what they are, have their own fine fish to fry, and so relate that which suits them best. By omissions truth is distorted and suppressed. There would be smaller need for frontiers and guards upon them if all men could speak to each other and understand. Sympathy is not conducted through interpreters; its heavenly potency is lost in the transmission. And in these days, when it is made necessary by the inexorable demands of economics that all men and all peoples should work more and produce more to repair the sad wastage of over four years of war, an immense gain would be accomplished, work would be speeded up, posts, cables, telephones, and all other instruments of communication would be rendered immensely more effective, if there were a common tongue for all—or, failing all, for as many as could be brought into a system. More could be gained by this, more work done, more money earned, more prosperity and comfort achieved, than by all the legislation that any Parliament or international conference could effect in any other direction. For each and all the resources of the world would be vastly increased by such a state, and not only the material resources, but those of the intellect, and those for the more elementary pleasures. Travel would become a different thing. It is not so far from London to Madrid as it is from New York to San Francisco, but how immensely farther it seems, and for practical purposes really is, because of the language difficulty that exists and has always existed, making this immensity of distance a traditional and accepted principle! The United States would not have been united, and would not have remained so, if divisions, restraints, coldnesses, suspicions, and misunderstandings had been fostered by differences of language; nor would the country have achieved its marvellous prosperity. One common language makes it cohesive and compact. To Britain the necessity is not less than to any other nation—even though the English language is established in so many parts of the world; perhaps it is greater. During and since the war our British insularity has been manifested as a fault and a source of weakness even more than before. At this present time the difference between our most frequent conception of the views and the attitudes, the modes of thinking and the instinctive tendencies, of even our closest allies, the French, and the real truth as it is expressed in their newspapers and by other means, impresses all who have an opportunity of studying the contrast. Our conceptions of some other nations, like the Spanish, are ludicrous. When peoples know nothing of each other, they presume the worst; if they know but a little, they presume some ill. It is obedience to a racial law of suspicion contributing to self-preservation. When the Millennium approaches, the Englishman and the Russian, the Spaniard and the Chinese, the Persian and the Moor, will have acquired the means of conversing intelligibly with each other, and will no longer be in the difficulty of beasts and birds of different species—if indeed *they* are in such difficulty, as some may doubt.

* * *

One of the most remarkable publications in this country during the period of the war was a work entitled *Report of the Committee Appointed by the Prime Minister to Inquire into the Position of Modern Languages in the Educational System of Great Britain.* It consists of eighty closely printed foolscap pages, costs only ninepence, and ought to be in the possession of all persons interested in the progress of this country, who at the same time may be duly warned that a certain proportion of the many statements contained in the publication should be received with caution. For any hesitation they may have as to the advantage of a study upon which such reflections are cast, they may find a possible balance in the assurance that it is exceedingly fascinating and extraordinarily good value for the money. The committee in question, composed of most eminent persons, sat long and laboriously, and arrived at a large number of conclusions, some of which many authorities will consider to be unsound. It seems to have been very ingenuous, too much addicted to a child-like (not to say 'judge-like') attitude of mind which has to have facts revealed to it that are quite well known by the multitude. Thus we find the committee blandly remarking: 'We were told that the distributing trade of South America had largely passed from English to German firms, even where British goods were concerned, and this because the Germans took the pains to learn Spanish.' No committee should have needed to be told such a thing, or that the general British ignorance of Spanish is one of the greatest handicaps to our progress in a country to which an impoverished world turns its attention hungrily, in the hope and the belief that from that Spanish-speaking land it will recover more of its losses than from any other. The committee should have known and deeply reflected upon the fact that at all the internment camps in this country during the

war there were classes of Germans for the intensive study of Spanish, that these were the chief and the most popular classes, and that it was not possible, despite large importations—the wonder of it!—to cope with the heavy demand for German-Spanish dictionaries by these wise and far-seeing students. Yet in face of this fact, confronted by overwhelming evidence of the importance of Spanish, the committee nowhere dwells as it should on the exceptional value of this language.

* * *

The committee takes five modern languages as being in varying measure desirable studies at British schools and universities, in addition to the native tongue—French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. There can be no question about French being first. This and English are the most widely spoken languages in the world; French is the language of culture and diplomacy, and the world events of the last few years have only enhanced its importance. If a living tongue ever obtains mastery in the world as a universal language, or one is chosen for promotion to universality by some united policy, it is very possible that it may be French. The value of German and its rightful place in the scale of importance are much more disputable points. The violent and perhaps inevitable prejudices that were expressed during the worst of the war period, when truth and facts were obscured, and it was considered patriotic to advocate the total abolition of German from all our language schemes, systems, and habits, were, of course, like most other war prejudices, merely ridiculous. German is a great tongue; it is great in its literature, and it can no more be abolished than Germany can be removed from the face of the earth, while those who know it are richer than those who do not. Exactly to what extent their commercial and other prospects are enhanced by such knowledge is the point upon which there is some doubt. The committee, in weighing the pros and cons of German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish, hesitates to assign definite relative values till 'the political situation is more settled;' but it enthuses more over the scholarly value of Italian than over the commercial advantages of Spanish. Now, Italian on the cultural side is most desirable; it is possibly superior to Spanish, but only by a little, if at all. On the commercial side it is vastly inferior, and it is that side with which the committee ought to have been most concerned. Italy has no South America given to its tongue, or any other great patch of earth which famished peoples would now exploit. Russia, again, is a doubtful quantity. It is a huge country of enormous resources, which the hungry millions would feed upon when it is somewhat 'pacified,' but the position here is not the same as in South America. The Russian language is isolated in its own country, presents unusual difficulties, and it is highly probable that the Russians themselves, when they are sobered, will commonly acquire another language for purposes of foreign intercourse, and that language is likely to be French. It were, therefore, better that the enterprising British subject should master his French, and then, if time permits, acquire Spanish, than that he should labour heavily and perhaps to small advantage with Russian. The need of a universal language will soon be felt in Russia, more than in any other country in the world, for all peoples with their different tongues will be vying with each other there. The Russian cannot learn all their languages; he may learn one of them, and the others must follow his example.

* * *

The decision of the committee in bracketing Spanish with German, Italian, and Russian is the more amazing after its own statements and admissions. Thus the report declares: 'Of the four languages Spanish has perhaps the greatest commercial importance, owing to the size and growing wealth of the Spanish-speaking communities of Central and Southern America. We have had conclusive evidence of the damage suffered by British trade in America through British ignorance of Spanish. We are told that the Latin races of America are unwilling to learn English or any other foreign language. The citizens of the United States, although themselves not much inclined to study foreign languages, have not only been alert to see a likely advantage here, but have displayed, no less than the Germans, an intelligent anticipation of a possible renaissance of Spain herself. We learn that the supply in North America of text-books and handbooks for the study of Spanish is far superior to our own. Spain has a striking and romantic history and a fine literature.' Yet with all this, with the vision of South America and the riches that may be gathered from it, and, most significantly, the knowledge that Germany and the United States are both cultivating Spanish with great zest and to the neglect of other linguistic studies, Spanish is given no preference in this British commission's list! Can, then, the example of Germany and the United States be so lightly ignored? Are those nations generally so short-sighted and stupid that it would not be remunerative to follow them in such a matter? Those who, like the writer, have travelled and inquired in Spain herself have been assured on the best and most extensive authority that one of the main reasons why American and German traders have gained on the British there is that the two former send their catalogues to Spain printed in Spanish, and they are read and acted upon, while the British send theirs in English, and they are thrown into the waste-paper basket. What one suspects on perusing this report is that the committee felt out of its element in considering the purely business aspects of modern languages, and prosecuted its inquiry from wrong standpoints. Its sympathies are predominantly

cultural; and while at present we are, and must be, materialistic upon this language question, and the thing we seek most is commercial advantage, and therefore the speedy acquisition of a working acquaintance with foreign tongues, the committee thinks too much of schools and their systems, professors, universities, and so forth. It does not properly envisage the sternly practical. 'The educational system of Great Britain' considered in its present connection, is, of course, not a system only of schools and universities for the young. The rising generation must be put right, but the generation that is in commercial action also needs attention, and must be encouraged. A tendency of the report is to magnify the supposed difficulties of acquiring a foreign language after one is grown up. That the difficulties are often (not always, for the study is approached with better understanding and more enthusiasm) greater is, no doubt, true; but they are not so great as the report appears to suggest, and the student, especially one who reads and works alone, should not be discouraged. The value of class tuition, slow and needlessly complicated as it always is in these cases, is enormously exaggerated. Those who say so know it from their own experience, and not from such hearsay as the committee not infrequently relied upon in its gathering of 'evidence.' Listen to the committee: 'We hear of men and women who have fitted themselves to become commercial correspondents solely by private study assisted by these classes'—evening classes. Why should the committee appear surprised? There are many thousands of persons who have thus qualified themselves; perhaps they constitute the majority. More than that, the person who could not very easily by private study qualify himself thoroughly for such work would be lacking in simple intelligence.

* * *

Men and women should now by every means be encouraged to make such study, and so equip themselves with a strong arm for personal and national progress. The average individual, school-days over and work begun, is not often much of a serious and regular student of anything except politics, the newspaper, and forms of entertainment, including (to be fair to him) the arts in the last-named section. This is because studies that smack somewhat of school have become distasteful or seem unprofitable, and languages are instinctively avoided because of the grammatical terrors that were encountered in the mistaken school systems. The truth is that modern and much-used languages are the most interesting, most thoroughly practicable, and by far the most profitable study that a person without a special mission demanding other studies can engage in. They open new worlds, and no other study can be so well prosecuted without outside or professorial assistance. The study of a language yields an immediate return to the student. He possesses an advantage or quality which he can in some form immediately turn to account. No other study furnishes him with such a constant and regular measure of his own progress and his sense of it. The man who has two languages to his lips is better than other men; the world is larger to him; he is clearly a superman of sorts. He is envied, appreciated, and often sought. Anyhow, the committee produced, as we have said, a most interesting report, deeply entertaining. It might be taken away upon a holiday. No other official report ever presented can quite match it in some respects. It is historical at times; with all its faults, it embraces a mass of information as the result of special investigations; and occasionally it is delightfully philosophical. 'No country,' it truly declares, 'can afford to rely on its domestic stores of knowledge. The whole civilised world is a co-operative manufactory of knowledge.' Or again: 'Knowledge and training have a clear value in the struggle for existence; and in order to live well, it is first of all necessary to live. Practical education is the only foundation on which idealistic achievements can be raised; to neglect the practical ends of education is foolishness; but to recognise no other is to degrade humanity. Moreover, it is to ignore a most powerful motive. Art, poetry, the drama, history, philosophy, may have no "survival value;" but men will work for the joy of comprehension, for the joy in beauty, for the joy of creative construction, as they will not work for less inspiring ends. The desire to live well is a most potent force; and it has done, and will still do, as much to modify the aims of men as the struggle for existence. Culture and civilisation are by-products of life; but, like some other by-products, they may yield a greater return than the parent industry. What gives dignity and splendour to life may be more precious than the life itself.' The committee expresses many profound truths very well. Here and there are pretty passages, almost purple. There are epigrams, and such dissertations as are not to be discovered in other reports. This one is unique. For the committee clearly said unto itself that, as it was treating of languages and literature, and only incidentally of markets, tonnages, exports, imports, and the like—perhaps more incidentally than should have been—here was an opportunity. Avidly it was seized. Our committee was determined that, whatever might be said about, or done with, other languages, this body of scholarly persons would for themselves demonstrate the possibilities, the flexibility, the many charms of our own dear island tongue. At times it soars to enthusiasm in this endeavour; some of its constructions are subtle and charming. The report becomes a classic. And if it does not further the great cause of a universal language or even assist our own people to a more extensive expression of their mean-

ing among foreigners, it will achieve no less than was ever expected of any committee, and there is the consolation that the cause is so good that it must ultimately triumph. Did not a noble lord, satirical upon royal commissions and committees, declare that if the great Creator had entrusted to a commission the task of preparing a report upon the proposed construction of the world, we should, for lack of earth to walk and live upon, all have missed existence?

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXIX.

NEXT morning tatters of mist, high up on the Cairngorms, stirred and took changing shapes, like smoke-puffs, in the slight June wind; but they were fleecy as the clouds above them, for, though the glass had fallen a little, sunlight filled the sky, and there was not a stain on the company of clouds, a full-sailed white fleet, signalling fair weather, in stately motion across the blue.

Duncan and his men had started early by different roads for the Larig, and beyond a few details of our packing, Tony and I had little to do in the way of final preparation. I was on thorns of impatience and excitement. What Keene-Leslie's emotions were no man could have told—he went about his business as imperturbable-looking as an Indian sachem. Outwardly he was as calm as I was unsettled. At luncheon he drank 'Confusion to Sempronius! We'll do more than deserve success, Neil! We'll command it!'

In the afternoon there was no one at the little station except the railway officials and two or three dawdling rustics. We took our tickets for Edinburgh and London respectively, and the station-master found an empty compartment for us.

Just as the train started, Dr Hall's little two-seater came swiftly up the slope of the country road parallel to the line. The doctor had evidently been unable to get back from his long round of country visits in time to see us off, for he scanned the train, disappointment on his brow; but I waved a hand, and was in time to see him signal a good-bye. Keene-Leslie was apparently not inclined to talk. He stared stonily at the country-side, and I fancied there was now a hint of anxiety in his eye.

'Cheer up, Tony,' I said with a laugh meant to mask my own concern. 'You're a bit under the weather, surely!'

'Maybe! By nature I am neither a pessimist nor a fatalist, and I don't think I am unduly careful of my skin, but I believe that the two of us will see some queer things in the next forty-eight hours.'

'But we hold good cards.'

'We do; but'—he shrugged his shoulders—'you never can tell.'

'Do you think that "The Searcher" smells a rat?'

'No! On the contrary, I think that our little trap will give him the surprise of his life. But mark my word, as soon as he sees the game is up, look out! However, there's no good in picking ourselves up before we tumble. I'm going to forget about it for an hour or so. Let's dismiss the subject until we get to Ardgarry.'

He lit a cigar and opened his newspaper. I followed his example, but failed to galvanise myself into any interest in current affairs. After ten minutes' mental confusion, I laid down the paper and looked out on the familiar surroundings. A burst of sunshine lit the landscape; the river was in half-spate, rich in magic gradations of light and colour; amber depths starred with bells of foam; shallows where the sun-sparks glittered; still mirrors of pools under the banks; here and there the snowy dazzle of a check in mid-current. The tranquil green valley looked a thousand leagues away from dark adventure. Through some refraction in the atmosphere, the mountains which I knew so well, and which were now to be revisited on so strange a quest, held the illusion of nearness; the shoulders of these neighbourly giants were playgrounds of cloud-shadows, the lines of their fastnesses softened and mellowed in the sunlit distance; and high up, near the crest of Braeriach, a snowdrift lingering in a hidden corrie, caught by a vagrant sun-ray, gleamed with the splendour of a lonely star. In the sincerity and the majesty of these high places, man's puny spider-webs of evil seemed remote and futile. Yet evil there was, watchful, resourceful, near at hand.

At the thought I lifted my eyes again to the uplands, and as I looked a shadow crept into the sky. The sun withdrew. The serrations of the hills were dislimned, and the great star of snow dulled and vanished.

Keene-Leslie was absorbed in his newspaper. Beyond a glance now and then out of the window, and a growl at the fickleness of the day, his demeanour was irritably stolid. Not once did he refer to our mission, and after one or two fruitless attempts to lead him into conversation, I relapsed into silence, staring at the snow-fence slipping past as we neared the smooth tops at the summit of the Drumochter Pass, and for the thousandth time linking together the chain of events of the last few months, tormenting myself with the thought that our plans might come to naught, and our adversary and the secret slip through the net at the last moment.

The inaction of the journey chafed me, and I

was heartily glad when the summit was reached and the train gathered speed down the gradient. Here the outlook became less wild. Brown empty moors gave place to the charm of woods; a great Highland castle reared its stately head amidst the trees; smoke rose from the haunts of men. There were few people at Ardgarry station—some countryfolk back from the market, a bagman or two, a handful of nondescripts. We kept a wary eye for any one who might have been dogging our movements, but saw nothing to rouse the slightest suspicion; and after the train left, we made our way down the quiet street to the Stag Hotel, where the car and the chauffeur were waiting in the courtyard. Malcolm Cameron, the guide with whom I had tramped many a mile in the solitudes of the Cairngorms, was there also, and five minutes sufficed to instruct that hardy Gael in what was required of him.

'All speed to the top o' the Pass, Mr Neil?'

'That's it, Malcolm. I'll tell you the rest as we go along. Meanwhile, let the chauffeur know that we are out for a tramp in the hills, and that we are in a hurry.'

'*Tha mi 'tuigsinn*' ('I understand'), said he.

A few minutes after four o'clock we swung out of the village. Taking no risks of espionage, I ordered the driver to run southward, and after three or four miles had been covered, told him that we had changed our minds. By a road on our left we doubled back, and in a few minutes, under the spell of a liberal tip, the driver was exceeding the speed-limit up the wild and beautiful Glen Tilt, through a fine forest flanking both sides of the road. Far below us, the river, broken here and there by glittering cascades, hurried over its curiously bright and polished channel to swell the music of the Garry. The road steepened as the car began to climb the valley and we neared the green mass of Beinn a' Ghlo. Here we drew up near the lodge, a thousand feet above sea-level, girt about by great rugged hills. These rose on every side, Beinn a' Ghlo and Carn nan Gabhar towering on our right, to the northward stern slopes unrelieved by a touch of colour, and away beyond these, as far as the eye could view, hills stretching, billow upon billow, to the Mar country and the great southern gateway of the Cairngorms.

The car was sent back, for the road now dwindled to a bridle-path. Keene-Leslie and I turned eagerly towards the narrowing riband of track pointing towards the wilds.

'What lies beyond?' said Tony, his eyes on the inscrutable heights. The words gave voice to my own thoughts.

'Come no farther, pigmies! What seek ye? We have our ancient secrets. They are ours, not yours. Come no farther!' Thus might some spirit of the wilds have greeted us.

'You are off on one of your mystical flights, Neil,' said Tony.

'I can't help it. I was born in the shadow of the mountains, my friend. I have drunk of the magic heather ale.'

'See!' said Tony, pointing to the skyline. 'Your mood has infected me. Your Cairngorms look like the rim of another world. Their "Come no farther!" is a challenge. *En avant!*'

He hitched up his rücksack, and the three of us struck up the track towards the mountains. A cool, westerly breeze was blowing, and although there were a covey or two of clouds flying rather low, the evening was pleasant enough for our tramp. The stream rumbling below was the only sound, except our footsteps and the wind's voice strengthening as the ascent steepened to the Falls of Tarf, fifteen hundred feet up. Then the track fell to the county march and Glen Tilt was left behind. The face of the country became wilder as we neared Glen Ey Deer Forest, where my eye caught the dark green of a little company of trees in a fold of the uplands, and set in their midst, unspeakably lonely in the frowning wilderness, the gray gable of a house.

(*Continued on page 487.*)

FISHING WITH WATER-BOMBS.

By ÆSCULAPIUS.

NOW that military considerations no longer stand in the way, it is possible to say something about an anti-submarine device which played a decisive part in overcoming the U-boat menace.

The ordinary depth-charge has, of course, been known for some time. For the last two years of the war nearly every torpedo-boat destroyer, cruiser, or armed merchant liner putting to sea carried these heavy canisters of explosives. First of all, they were 'hand-release' depth-charges, held suspended over the stern end of the ship. A voice-pipe number stood by. It was that rating's sole duty to let them go on an order from the bridge.

The disadvantages of this method of attacking the lurking submarine are obvious. It is true, these infernal machines of the sea were supposed not to detonate on contact, but to attain first a certain depth, so that the full violence of the explosion might be exerted under the enemy boat. All the same, they had a nasty way of 'going off' as the result of concussion. This was especially liable to happen in the case of a convoy, where ever so many ships might be steaming in close proximity to each other, without lights. Under such circumstances collisions could not altogether be avoided in the dark; and when they did occur between

ships carrying depth-charges, the latter were responsible for sterns being blown away and terrific damage generally.

Moreover, even when these deadly drums did behave themselves, the ship dropping them on a submerged target ran grave risk herself from the ensuing explosion. In other words, unless her speed were high, it was touch-and-go as to whether she had time enough to clear out of the affected zone.

That was the original state of affairs. Releasing the canisters hydraulically from the bridge while the ship was steaming at full speed effected some improvement. This was followed by an apparatus shaped something like the silhouette of a champagne-glass, in which the awful things lay until they were suddenly and forcibly hurled away from the end of the ship by compressed air. Undoubtedly this contrivance signified a considerable advance, and made it much safer for the ship dislodging them. Nevertheless, the situation was far from satisfactory for everybody concerned in overcoming the menace until something new was evolved which foreshadowed the failure of the U-boat campaign. It consisted in the perfection of a depth-charge so stable in its character of only detonating at a certain depth of water that it could be fired from an ordinary howitzer. The howitzer is mounted in the same way as any other gun on board ship, and requires a cartridge of specially low velocity to send the fearsome invention on its submarine-seeking errand.

These howitzers, which look not unlike some of the Mall trophies, increased rapidly in size and range, until not so long ago we tested an 11·5-inch one designed to fling its peculiar ammunition anywhere up to three thousand yards away.

The trial in question took place 'somewhere in the offing.'

Instead of lying about the stern end of the ship, the depth-exploding shells were snugly stowed away in the magazine. As soon as we had got out far enough, half-a-dozen rounds were brought up by the ammunition-hoist. Then the blessed howitzer was loaded. On an order from the gunnery-lieutenant, the gun-layer pulled the firing-lanyard. There was a burst of yellow flame, an ear-splitting crash, and our immediate vicinity became enveloped in smoke. Observers in other ships told us afterwards they were able to discern the water-missile's course through the air from the time of the flash until the moment it plopped into the sea. We ourselves did not see anything of its aerial flight. All we saw was the sea torn up into a mighty column of water after the explosion had occurred sixty feet below the surface. Then came the 'kick,' when it seemed almost as if some sea-going Titan had seized our comparatively small ship in his grasp, and given us a good shaking for disturbing his peace.

But all these details were as nothing compared with the big question that rose uppermost in everybody's mind: 'What about the fish?' We had not long to wait before there were joyous cries of 'There they are!' 'I see them!' 'Hundreds of 'em!' Sure enough, countless white specks began to gleam on the otherwise blue sea. After steaming cautiously in their direction, we lowered our dinghy, and the boat's crew proceeded to collect the fish. Gradually, too, we drifted in among the 'field.' Many queer 'catchers' were improvised on the spur of the moment; and soon the fish were flopping about our decks in all directions. We could afford to dally there only a very short time, however, and a good few had to be left to the sea-gulls. Apparently the dull boom of the howitzer was the signal for these winged opportunists to muster in swooping hundreds. As for us, we had dory, whiting, sole, conger, and goodness knows how many other varieties. Still living when picked up, they were as a rule beyond recovery. It is not a case of their suffering from mere concussion, as some people seem to suppose, but of the poor things having sustained a more or less complete dislocation of the internal organs. The all-essential swimming-bladder is perhaps dislodged through a gaping wound in the side, or the stomach is found displaced into the widely distended mouth. Usually, too, the piscine eyes are blown out to such extraordinary dimensions as to give the finned victims a preternatural look. Nonetheless we thoroughly enjoyed eating them in those days of not over-plentiful fish.

Needless to say, these injury-phenomena are not limited to the natural denizens of the deep—a submarine's 'vitals' are just as vulnerable in proportion; and even if the pirate managed to limp back to his base, one can appreciate to some extent the effect of several such shocks on his *moral*.

The great feature about water-bombing is that only reasonable proximity to the enemy is required; and under such circumstances U-boats were not particularly given to coming to the surface again.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XXI.—HISTORY AND ESPRIT DE CORPS.

'IT is a good thing, gentlemen, to cull the best from the past and never to ignore it,' said Captain Cheerall at another lecture. 'If our fathers frequently blundered through, they did so heroically. No army is blessed with such high traditions, such records of chivalry and glory, as ours; yet, like all armies, it has frequently failed. We do not claim to have been invincible. But

we have a right to know, and be proud of, the battle honours on our flags.

'This you may think is a new line of thought for me, the arch-priest of the present and the future. Well, my reason for reminding you is this: you are of the new faith, the new school, the New Army. Your success has been wonderful, and in another lecture I have paid tribute to your genius, courage, and patriotism. Now I want to remind you, not of past follies, but of past glories. The small-minded person is very apt to remind us of our failures in America during the War of Independence, our awful blunders in the Crimea, our shameful disorganisation in the early part of the South African War. Such accusations are true. But if you study these failures, get to know *why* we failed and *where* we might have scored, and thus increase your professional knowledge. Never be afraid to admit our errors, but take good care *never* to repeat them. This is a maxim you must ever bear in mind. Even in this war—at Loos, Neuve Chapelle, Cambrai, Gaza—there are instances where the human machine went wrong, instances which afford you food for serious thought and reflection.

'But what I really want to concentrate on to-day is the spirit of the British Army—that unconquerable soul which lightens a disaster, sustains us in a reverse, and proclaims to all the world that we Britishers never know when we are beaten. That, gentlemen, is the most priceless asset of our army. To understand this spirit you must look at our history. You must dip into the annals of India, Egypt, Africa, the story of the Peninsular War, or of Waterloo. In these tomes are the deeds of your fathers. Our army never fights better than when it struggles for a moral cause. We conquered Napoleon in the flower of his strength, and in our hour of national weakness, because truth, honour, and right were on our side.

'I do not say we have always been crusaders. There are wars in which we have played an Imperial game. Yet, after deep reflection, I am convinced some Power or Powers must be predominant in this world, and this leads me to believe that a Power which is based on liberty, equality, and fraternity is the Power entitled to impress its own culture on the world. We have always been civilising, always pioneering, always trying to leave the world a little cleaner, a little better, than we found it. This work has been supported and made possible by the splendour of British arms.

'What you must take from the past is the spirit of your fathers, the simple faith, the sense of duty, the code of honour, and the love of country which have been shown by the best of our men in all our wars. And I do believe no man is cultured or efficient unless he has a knowledge of history. This gives you the reason why. Such a study prevents gross materialism from entering your soul. It takes self above the battle, and enables you to realise that beyond the trials, the sorrows, and the horrors of war there is a god-like spirit which is clean, noble, and must, therefore, be triumphant. I am not sanctifying war, for I loathe it; but I am sanctifying the moral force which is behind us, for example, in this war. There never was a cleaner crusade.

'Whatever regiment you go to, you must first read its records, learn its battle honours, get to know its heroes, study all its peculiar traditions, and generally imbibe that *something* which has made it wonderful. There you are on sure ground. You can fascinate your men with its stories of valour. You can thrill them with its pride. You can cheer them with its humour. And you can make them love you by displaying an intense devotion to all things pertaining to your regiment. You will not do this in a day. But you can do it in a few months. And *yours* shall be the glory.

'Some one has said that the path of duty is where honour lies. Our military histories will corroborate that. White in Ladysmith, Gordon in Khartûm, and Townshend in Kut are good examples of patient courage and unselfish devotion. The death of Captain Oates of the Dragoon Guards is a fine story, if not actually military. This British officer and gentleman, when stricken with disease, walked out into the Antarctic snow to die, rather than burden his companions and bring them to death and disaster. There are thousands of anecdotes of this order. When you read them, your spines will thrill at the valour of your fathers.

'And I should like you to study very closely the spirit of friendship between the British officer and the private soldier. This is a wonderful story. It shows we have discipline, and yet we have none. In other words, it illustrates that we have got things done because the men liked their officers, and not because "they had to." You have to discover that secret. Yet it is easy to find. Frankness, courtesy, love, and courage are the basic elements of the plan. The gentle patience, the benevolent rule, and the paternal anxiety of our fathers were marvellous things. They made the British Tommy the most faithful, the most willing, the finest soldier in the world. He has no equal. He will never let you down. But you cannot get the best out of him unless you model your personal conduct on the lives of Kitchener, Roberts, Maude, or Wauchope. These four men are the pictures of simple British gentlemen, with Christian instincts, a plain sense of duty, unalterable devotion to their country, and a *magnificent* belief in their fellow-men.

'Again, I do want you to feel that a British officer is no vain person, put up for the admiration or the subjugation of the mob. Do not be a sabre-rattler. Let your demeanour to the civilian crowd be one of chivalry. If we are democratic in our politics, all of us, even the private soldiers, are aristocrats in temperament. We loathe a bounder; we hate a prig, scorn a sneak, and curse a knowing fool. Carry the

white flower of a blameless life, and champion all things that make for the propagation of truth, civilisation, and honour.

'History, I say, will give you much. It will prove that there is a wonderful fire and force in our race. Our island story is very well summed up by Kipling when he says:

'What should they know of England,
Who only England know?

'When you have travelled the Seven Seas; when you have walked in the footsteps of frontiersmen, seen the Valhalla of heroes and the sleeping-place of martyrs, watched tribes and nations of all creeds and colours saluting the British officer and the British flag, it is then you feel:

'There is a voice divine,
And a mission that is high.

'Gentlemen, here is the proof of our liberty and wisdom. At Gallipoli are the graves of free Colonists with no ties to this country except the ties of blood. Their country is a Labour country. Imperialism is banned. Yet when Germany threw the gauntlet these freemen came forth to help the Old Land. They died like Trojans. They died for LOVE. They died that we might live. And their brothers to-day are dying in France. Side by side are those wonderful Canadians, glorious Newfoundlanders, gallant Africans, brave Indians—indeed, all nations under the British flag. They have not rendered mere lip-service. They have given the flower of their land that this Old Country, the mother of Democracy, the breeder of nations, the fount of tolerance, shall keep her lamps burning brightly and repel the hordes who would destroy the Crucifix and deify the sword. You can understand this devotion only by a study of the past.

'When you have mastered military history, you will quickly grasp the value of *esprit de corps*. You will know *why* the Guards would scorn to be called Highlanders, and *why* the Highlanders would shoot you if you put them into the Guards; *why* the K.R.R.'s want to beat the Rifle Brigade, and *why* the Rifle Brigade believe they are better than the K.R.R.'s; *why* Dragoons think themselves superior to Hussars, and *why* Hussars would sicken if you named them Dragoons; *why* the R.H.A. believe that the R.F.A. are not fit to lick their boots, and *vice versâ*. Unimportant as these things may seem to the uninitiated, they are really the basis of good work and true fellowship. This spirit is the same as the spirit of the public schools. You will not find this spirit in Germany. Force is the gospel of Germany, even in school and in sport. *Force never made a gentleman or a great nation.* Let me tell you a story. A broad-minded German was travelling past the playing-fields of Eton before the war. He saw the boys playing Rugger, Soccer, &c., and immediately ordered his car to stop. He sat for quite a long time looking at the clean, bonny British boys playing their games. Then he jumped up, took off his hat, and shouted, "Ah, mine friends, I would lub to be one Breetish boy!"

'That is a very great tribute from an enemy. To you we hand the guardianship of that spirit. You must believe that to "Play up, and play the game," is the noblest thing in life. You must live not for self, but for country. Your wealth, your gifts, your pleasures, even your loved ones, must be surrendered at the call of duty. Duty is the keystone of patriotism. And patriotism has made us what we are. The defects of this system are outweighed by its virtues. "The word of an Englishman" is all they ask of a Britisher in the Argentine. *But from a Hun they demand an agreement, stamped, sealed, dated, and witnessed.* What finer tribute can you have to the spirit of our race?

'An army, gentlemen, without a soul is a vile and cruel instrument. It will commit excesses. It will rape, plunder, and demoralise. It will stink in history like the armies of Attila, Cortes, and the Kaiser. We must avoid that. We cannot do so unless you leave this school with a full knowledge of history, an appreciation of *esprit de corps*, a love of the truth, and an adherence to the principles of justice.

'Gentlemen, words fail me—but I feel that I have shown you the soul of the British Army. Guard it! Cherish it! Fight for it! And when this bloody war is over, the world will take you into its arms, and God will proclaim, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."'

A strange silence fell over the room as the lecturer finished. The spell had not yet passed. Men had been transported from the sordid to the higher things. But when the captain lifted his stick and gloves to go, we burst into a wild hurrah.

. . . . . .

That night Tosher, whom we dubbed 'The Materialist,' slipped out of the hut about nine-thirty. He crossed the dark parade-ground, and made for the officers' quarters. On arriving at Captain Cheerall's domicile, he knocked at the door.

'Come in.'

'Say, cap., I 'd like to swot up some of that history.'

'I see! What can I do for you?'

'Well, I guess you 'd better lend me a book to get on with.'

'Certainly. Here you are. Anything to oblige a good Canadian.'

'Thanks, cap. And, I say'——

'What?'

'You were real good on that stunt to-day. Good-night, sir.'

'Good-night, Johnson.'

When Tosher got to the hut, he looked at the book. It was entitled *Deeds that Won the Empire.*

(*Continued on page 507.*)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A NEW TYPE OF GRAMOPHONE.

SINCE the invention of the gramophone no considerable modification has taken place in the design of talking-machines. We still have as the source of sound the mica disc vibrated by the needle, while the horn merely amplifies the effect. Recently, however, a different type of sound-producer has been invented, consisting of a parchment disc in the form of a shallow cone. Owing to the large diameter of the sound-disc, no horn is required to magnify the results. The parchment disc, which is stretched upon an aluminium ring, occupies a position at one side of the revolving table, and has an arm projecting from the centre. As seen in position, it bears a strong resemblance to a mushroom laid on its side, the end of the stalk carrying the needle. The whole arrangement is supported on swivelling trunnions at the root of the stalk. The needle, which may be of steel or fibre, bears on the record as usual, and the vibrations are transmitted by a lever to a rod which passes through the 'stalk' to the apex of the parchment cone. Pleasing results are said to be obtained with this new instrument from all types of records.

THE MICRO-TELESCOPE.

Few persons realise that a telescope is composed partly of a microscope, a distant view or an astronomical object being presented by the lens at the big end of the telescope, and magnified by the eye-piece, which is really a miniature microscope. Indeed, the eye-piece in a big instrument may have a magnifying-power equal to that of the most powerful microscope. Until recently, however, a telescope of even very moderate power could not be used on objects that were less than, say, fifty yards away. It is true that some field-glasses will show clearly a picture at the far end of a small room, but their magnifying-power is very low. Another point to be remembered, when considering the instrument that forms the subject of this note, is that any power can be used on any telescope; that is to say, one could apply an eye-piece which magnified an object five hundred times to an ordinary telescope, the only drawback being the dimness of the view owing to the lack of light, and the want of definition owing to the character of the object-glass. Lastly, every high-powered telescope is of unwieldly length, due to the long focus needed for the big lens; moreover, this feature involves a very small field of view. These drawbacks have been overcome in the 'Davon' Patent Micro-Telescope, in which a special object-glass with a short focus gives a big field and brilliant illumination, so that objects may be examined at any distance to within three feet, the degree of magnification ranging to sixty diameters. With an object-glass of still shorter focus uneven areas can be viewed at a distance of from one to three feet, the degree of magnification ranging from thirty to one hundred and fifty diameters. The magnifying is done by an ordinary microscope, which, thus used, forms the eye-piece of the object-glass. In fact, the latter is made to fit the standard microscope without any alteration. Such an instrument has a great variety of uses. For instance, the habits of bees, ants, and other insects can be studied from distances of from four to twenty feet without disturbing them; while mineralogical specimens, fractures of metals, or textile fabrics can be illuminated and highly magnified, the whole surface within the field, though irregular, being in focus. This is a most important feature, as under a plain magnifying-glass or an ordinary microscope only parts can be focused at one time, the remainder being blurred. The application of these principles is carried still further in the 'Davon' Super-Microscope, with which high magnifications can be obtained. The ordinary microscope still forms the eye-piece, but instead of the telescopic object-glass attachment, a microscopic objective is fitted with a collecting lens, so that the power of one microscope is employed upon another. As in the micro-telescope, the depth of focus is considerable, and as the object-glass does not need to be close up to the specimen under examination, opaque objects can be illuminated and their surfaces studied, whereas only transparent specimens can be seen under high powers in the ordinary microscope (unless a vertical illuminator is used, as is done in examining metals). Finally, photographs can be taken of everything as shown by the micro-telescope or the super-microscope. The former is also made without the microscope-stand for field use, and, owing to the principles upon which it is constructed, it gives a wide field of view at all powers, while being remarkably compact when compared with other instruments of similar power. Although this field-glass is only twelve and three-quarter inches long, a magnification of forty-five diameters is obtained. Many of these micro-telescopes were supplied to officers in the army and the navy during the war for use in observation posts, kite balloons, and the like. The micro-telescope is likewise made in binocular form, and the result is greatly increased field illumination and stereoscopic effect.

A GUN RANGE OF ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-ONE MILES.

Although in actual achievement in the matter of long-range bombardment the Germans outdistanced the Allies with the guns that threw

shells into Paris from a distance of seventy-five miles, it is generally admitted by artillery officers that even greater ranges could be obtained if the results were likely to justify the cost. The problem is simply one of obtaining a high enough initial velocity for a projectile of adequate weight. In order to compass the first end it is necessary to have a slow-burning powder and an enormous length of barrel, so that the pressure may act on the projectile for a comparatively long distance. Weight can be obtained only by adopting a suitable diameter of shell, as there is a limit to the length of the shell which is practicable. According to the *Scientific American*, a gun has been worked out by the United States Ordnance Department that could hurl a shell for just over one hundred and twenty-one miles. This weapon would have a bore of ten inches and a length of two hundred and twenty-five feet, while its weight would be three hundred and twenty-five tons. One of the chief difficulties with so long a barrel would be to prevent the end drooping with its own weight, and this drawback was to be overcome by a deep lattice girder along the under-side. This method of construction renders impossible the use of the customary trunnions for supporting the gun. As a substitute for these, the two sides of the girder at the breech end are curved to form an arc of a circle about the centre of gravity. The gun, therefore, exactly balances on these curves at any elevation. Teeth are cut in the curves, and these engage with similar teeth in flat tracks upon which the gun rests. This arrangement is often applied to raise the portions of bridges which open, the Tower Bridge in London being a well-known example. The gun would be elevated by means of a huge hydraulic cylinder with a telescopic plunger working on trunnions underneath the barrel, and pivoted to it at a point nearer to the breech end than to the muzzle end. In order to be loaded, the gun must be lowered into a horizontal position, with the breech end opposite the loading-stage. The mounting would be carried on rollers, and arrangements were worked out to take the recoil, which, of course, would occur with enormous force. It was estimated that a charge of slow-burning powder weighing fourteen hundred and forty pounds would maintain the pressure behind the projectile throughout the two hundred and twenty-five feet of the length of the barrel, and give the shell a velocity at the muzzle of eight thousand five hundred feet (more than one and a half miles) a second. Moreover, this prodigious speed could be obtained without putting any undue strain on the breech end of the gun, the pressure being only twenty tons per square inch against eighteen tons for an Elswick ten-inch gun. To enable the shell to pass quickly into the upper and more rarefied regions of the air, where less resistance would be encountered, the best elevation was considered to be fifty-five degrees. A shell, weighing four hundred pounds, was designed, with a long, tapered, false head, so as to give the least possible resistance to the air. When fired from the gun, the shell would soar to a maximum height of forty-five miles, and would come to earth again at a spot about one hundred and twenty-one miles distant from its starting-point.

SOAP SUBSTITUTES IN GERMANY.

During the war many samples of German food-stuffs and other commodities were investigated with a view to gauging the shortage of materials arising from our blockade and other causes. Apart from the scarcity of food, the comfort of German homes was seriously affected by the miserable substitutes for soap with which housewives had to content themselves. Most of this so-called soap was largely composed of clay, sodium silicate, or sodium carbonate, which gave bulk and enabled more water to be taken up, but did not properly take the place of soap, although having some action in removing dirt. One of the worst samples consisted chiefly of clay held together by a little soap. Most of the soaps tested were dirty, and their character suggested that they were made from refuse and recovered grease not properly purified. One sample contained, in addition to the clay, gritty matter, which appeared to have been added to give a scouring effect. In a final report the investigators mention a sample composed almost entirely of clay, such as pipeclay, with a very small proportion of soap, probably as a binding agent. In general the substitutes examined are said in no way to resemble soap, as they clean mechanically, the fine clay *absorbing* grease from the skin, and with it some of the dirt, instead of emulsifying the grease, as genuine soap does. The report concludes with the dictum that 'if these clay blocks are actually in use as toilet soaps, it certainly points to there being a great dearth of fats in Germany. No real substitutes were found, nor any indication of emergency methods and processes, except adulteration.'

INCREASED PROTECTION FROM RUST.

The complete protection of iron from rusting has remained practically an unsolved problem ever since this metal was first discovered. It is true that various coatings, such as zinc, nickel, and lead, preserve iron and steel articles from corrosion for considerable periods, but sooner or later rust-spots appear and spread rapidly. Chrome steel, of which rustless knives are made, appears to be absolutely immune from corrosion, even when exposed to the action of salt water and vinegar; but this solution of the rusting problem is too costly for general use. In a German journal, *Zeitschrift für Strassenbahnen*, Professor Barff describes a process for protecting iron and steel which is said to be more effective

than any other. The part or article to be protected is maintained at a high temperature in a chamber filled with superheated steam. This results in the formation of a coating of black oxide of iron, upon which rust does not form, although the metal be continuously exposed to the weather. The thickness of the coating depends upon the temperature of the steaming-chamber and the length of time the treatment is maintained. Exposure to steam at a temperature of five hundred degrees Fahrenheit for five hours produces a rustless surface that will resist rubbing with emery-cloth for a considerable time. A temperature of twelve hundred degrees Fahrenheit for six or seven hours forms a coating that cannot be filed through. One advantage is that rust will not form under the protective coating, so that, if the black oxide is worn off in places, corrosion will not spread beyond the exposed areas. Pieces of iron protected by this process have been left out for six weeks in rainy weather without showing a sign of rust. It is thought that the new process will be applicable to bridges and other steel structures, the protection of which by means of painting costs large sums of money.

ENORMOUS COAL-HANDLING PLANT.

In railway matters, at least so far as mere size is concerned, the United States easily lead the world, American locomotives, goods-wagons, and passenger-coaches being not infrequently colossal as compared with the corresponding rolling stock to be seen on European railways. This being the case, one would expect to find their railway appliances for handling coal on a similar scale. In this expectation few will be disappointed after reading of the apparatus for tipping out the contents of coal-trucks recently installed at Hampton Roads by the Virginian Railway. This appliance, known in America as a 'car-dumper,' is said to be the largest in the world, which may easily be true in view of the fact that it tips over two trucks at a time, each containing sixty tons of coal. 'Car-dumpers' have been used in this country for many years, but their capacity is limited to single trucks holding ten tons, and these are tipped endwise. The Virginian variety consists of an L-shaped trough or cradle containing a platform with rails, on to which the trucks are run after being pushed up an incline, whereby the vertical lift of the dumper is reduced. The L-shaped trough is tipped over sideways; consequently the weight of the trucks and the platform is taken by the vertical side during the operation. To enable trucks of varying widths actually to lie on the side of the trough, the platform is fitted with wheels which allow of transverse movement. The trucks are turned nearly upside-down, so that all the coal resting on the sides is tipped out. It is necessary, therefore, that they, with the platform, should be kept from falling away. This is done by four inverted L-shaped clamps for each truck, which close down until the horizontal leg of the L lies across the top of the truck. Wire ropes pass across grooves in the upper sides of these horizontal legs, and are hauled tight by counterweights during the tipping operation. As the trucks are tipped, the wire ropes slip into the grooves of the clamps. The lifting and overturning of the L-shaped cradle is accomplished by means of wire hoisting-ropes, says the *Scientific American*. As the trough or cradle is lifted it encounters a pivot at each end when it has reached the correct height, and the pull of the ropes is converted into an overturning movement round these pivots. It is interesting to note that the American plan is to 'pour' out the coal from trucks with fixed sides all round, and that is why they must be turned nearly upside-down to empty them. British trucks have doors at the ends, and have only to be tipped sufficiently for the coal to run off the floor. The giant dumper is by no means the only astonishing feature of the coal-handling plant at Hampton Roads, for the equipment includes a loading-pier, of which the deck is seventy feet above the water. Coal is carried to this pier in trucks which are said to be the largest in existence, holding, as they do, no fewer than one hundred and twenty tons each. These are loaded by a dumper, and are either hauled up a long incline to the deck of the pier by a cable, or hoisted vertically by an enormous lift. The weight of the platform with a loaded truck is so counterbalanced that about the same power is taken to lower the lift as to raise it. This arrangement demands only half the power that would be required if merely the weight of the lift platform was balanced. Moreover, the power consumption is uniform throughout the round trip (up and down), which is more economical than using twice the power for half the time.

AN IMPROVED MACHINE FOR PRODUCING TYPEWRITTEN CIRCULARS.

Most of us receive circular letters from time to time that purport to be genuine typewritten productions written exclusively to ourselves. The nature of such epistles is generally made apparent by slight differences in the appearance of the body of the letter and of the name and address of the recipient, which, of course, have to be filled in after the body of the letter has been duplicated. Not infrequently, if both sexes have to be addressed, the 'Sir' or 'Madam' is not quite in line with the 'Dear.' These drawbacks have been overcome in a machine recently invented by Mr E. E. Strawn, of Des Moines, Iowa, the salient features of which include the following: (1) the printing of the whole letter at the same time in a form which exactly resembles typewriting; (2) the reproduction of the letter-head and the signature, the former

being in two colours if desired, while the latter may be in any colour; (3) the cutting off from a roll of paper of each letter as it is printed. These operations are carried out at the rate of five thousand letters an hour. Obviously, special arrangements are needed to avoid the setting up of type for the names and addresses, and so these are embossed on small zinc plates, which are fed to the machine in alphabetical order. The printing is done by pressing the paper down on to the type by a roller with an inked ribbon between the two, so that the process is the same as typing, and naturally gives the same result. As the paper moves forward for the next letter the heading and the signature are printed from electrotype plates. By double printing, which is provided for, part of the letter-head may be in one colour, and the remainder in another. The machine may also be used as an ordinary printing-press by rearrangement of the mechanism. In this case the paper passes through the machine continuously instead of pausing for the ribbon typing, and bill-heads or other types of leaflets can be printed at a speed up to fifty thousand an hour. Again, with a very simple attachment, says the *Scientific American*, the machine may be applied to the production of envelopes complete in every respect except for one fold of the flap, which has to be made by hand. The envelopes are creased and gummed ready for the fold, and, by means of the name-plates already mentioned, are addressed at the same time. Even yet the list of this machine's capabilities is incomplete, as it is fitted with pens for ruling in either direction, an operation which can be performed at the same time that the headings are printed.

A NOVEL FORM OF DOUBLE SAUCEPAN.

During the last few years increasing attention has been rightly paid to the invention of new domestic appliances and the improvement of those already in use. Among other household aids that have recently been placed on the market is a double saucepan which presents several novel features. The outer portion is made of stout tin-plate, and is provided with a beaded rim. Resting upon the rim, and separated from the outer pan by a space of about three-quarters of an inch all round, is a cage or frame with three legs connected to a perforated disc. This frame carries an inner pan or container, which fits easily and is furnished with a handle for lifting it out. Being made of glazed earthenware, the container is ideal for cooking purposes and is easily cleaned. It is exceedingly durable, and in case of accident a new one can be obtained at a reasonable cost. This inner container has also the advantage that when the cooking is completed it can be lifted out, and placed direct upon the table, with a table-napkin wrapped round it to keep the contents hot. During the process of cooking the cook can remove the lid at any time, observe the height of the water in the outer pan, and add to it, if necessary, without interrupting the culinary operation. With ordinary care, the food in the container will neither boil over nor burn, nor will it stick to the pan, although left untended for a considerable time. After use the various parts of the saucepan can be readily dried, thus preventing corrosion of the outer pan, and adding to its life. The essential part of this helpful domestic utensil, namely, the container, may be had from the manufacturer in three sizes, of one pint, two pints, and three pints capacity, and as the outer pans, the cages, and the containers can be purchased separately, any part of the apparatus coming to grief can be easily renewed, while the housewife who already possesses a saucepan of suitable size can readily obtain a cage and a container to fit.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE ATTEMPT ON LONE PINE RANCH.

By E. R. PUNSHON.

I.

OF the five of them, Cyril Rawson was the youngest—and the toughest. He was an Eton and Trinity man, and when one of the public school and university caste does go wrong—a comparatively rare occurrence—he generally goes very wrong indeed. By black pre-eminence, Rawson was the leader of the gang.

The others included the Scotsman, Johnny M'Rae, son of a God-fearing 'Wee Free' Kirk minister in the Highlands, who still, poor man! prayed daily that his boy might yet return to him, little dreaming that the granting of his prayer would have been the most cruel blow his God could have dealt him. For exactly fourteen years from the month of August 1900 had that prayer gone up, and it would continue to do so while the minister lived, though Johnny M'Rae loved to tell himself he must long since have been forgotten.

Then there was the cockney, Alf Dunning, who, when he was drunk, as frequently happened, was wont to lament even to tears that he had never had a chance—which indeed was true enough, for he had succeeded in dodging the

police till he was too old for Borstal, which might have made a man of him. He was a connoisseur in jails, and could compare them all, in England, Canada, and the States, with nice appreciation of their respective merits. And the quintet was made up by an English South-Country agricultural labourer, named Billingshurst, who was probably the one amongst them all of the most decent instincts—he had been driven by intolerable wrong into the crime of arson for which he had served the long term of penal servitude that had degraded him to the level of the brute he was; and by little Will Wilkins from Bristol, of whom the others, even Rawson himself, were a trifle afraid, so glum and silent was he, so given to fits of frantic and unreasoning rage.

It was at the foot of San José cliff, hard by a long-deserted hut some old-time pioneer or prospector had built there and sojourned in for a time, that these five met; and that they were all five Britishers was a coincidence none among them noticed, for indeed they had long since shaken themselves free from all ties of kin or upbringing or nationality. When they had hobbled their horses and turned them loose on a little patch of grass near by, they grouped themselves round the fire Dunning had started, and ate their supper of bacon and beans, bannock and coffee. Fortunately—or unfortunately—none of them had any whisky. Had they started drinking, they would probably have started quarrelling too, and the enterprise they contemplated have ended then and there in a free fight.

As it was, they all kept sober and comparatively amiable, and when they had finished their meal Rawson kicked the embers of the fire together, so that a flame leaped up and threw into strong relief their rough and weather-beaten, scowling features, glinted on the weapons in their belts and by their sides, and cast strange moving shadows on the rugged background of the rocks behind.

'Now, boys,' said Rawson, 'I suppose you're all game to see this thing through. If any of you don't want, he had better quit while there's time. It'll be too late afterwards.'

No one answered, and Rawson continued after a moment's pause: 'That goes, then. To-night the only man on the place is Colonel Veale himself, and seeing he is all of sixty-five, and is just out of bed after a touch of fever, I don't reckon he'll give much trouble.'

'Suppose he tries to turn awkward?' asked Dunning.

'Suppose he does, what then?' snarled Rawson. 'Sha'n't we know how to handle him? This is no Sunday-school picnic we are starting out on.'

'That's all right,' retorted Dunning. 'I only wanted to know.'

'I don't believe in taking risks,' said Wilkins suddenly. 'This here colonel's a kind of a big-bug, I reckon, and just the sort to raise Cain if he gets the chance.'

'Who says he'll get the chance?' demanded Rawson darkly. 'Do you think we want you to tell us how to look after ourselves?'

'So long as we understand each other,' answered Wilkins, 'it's all right. But I was as near as may be strung up once, only for letting go a fellow I ought to have plugged when I had the chance.'

'Hasn't this colonel a daughter?' asked M'Rae. 'Didn't I hear something in town'——

'I believe there's a girl of some sort,' answered Rawson; 'but I don't know—and, anyway, that's her trouble, not ours.'

'I didn't know there was womenfolk,' said Wilkins slowly. 'I hate having truck with womenfolk.'

'Oh—a woman—eh?' muttered Billingshurst, the first time almost he had spoken since they met.

'Any one who don't like it can quit,' said Rawson; 'quit right now.'

'Speaking for meself,' said Dunning musingly, 'I always was a man for the ladies.'

'Never mind the girl,' interrupted M'Rae harshly. 'She doesn't count. What matters is the cash. Are you dead-sure it's there, Cy Rawson?'

'Dead-sure,' answered Rawson. 'It's in the safe in the colonel's bedroom. We'll make him give us the key. If we can't get it, we must burst the thing open somehow, that's all.'

'You won't get the key from him,' said M'Rae. 'I know these old British Army men, hard as nails and proud as hell.'

'We'll see about that,' answered Rawson with a sneer. 'There's ways and means. There's one thing, boys, I want you to remember.'

'What?' asked Wilkins.

'No drinking till the job's done and the cash shared up. There's a whole lot of whisky on the ranch you can have as much of as you like afterwards. But not a drop till the cash is shared.'

'That's sense,' said M'Rae—'horse-sense.—You mind, boys.'

'You'll have to watch Scotty,' said Dunning with a grin.

Wilkins broke into a splutter of oaths. 'Whisky, a woman, money,' he said; 'it's all there, ain't it?'

'The woman'—— began Billingshurst, and paused and once more became silent.

'First thing,' observed M'Rae, 'is to fix up the old colonel.'

'That's so,' agreed Rawson; 'that's the talk. With him fixed up, it'll be all dead-easy; and as for the girl, she must look after herself. We can't let a chance like this go because of a fool of a girl being where she ain't wanted.'

'Besides'—— said Wilkins, and paused.

Dunning looked across at him and grinned. 'He thinks she'll take a fancy to him,' he said; and Wilkins grinned back through the dancing, flickering firelight.

'More like to me than you,' he said, with a hand on the butt of his pistol.

'Quit!' commanded Rawson, glaring at them both. 'The colonel first, then the cash. When that is shared up, every man for himself; till then, every man to do as he's told.'

'Let's have one thing plain,' said M'Rae. 'This here colonel's old, but he's tough, and he's a sure dandy shot. If he gets his gun loose and starts first, then this job won't turn out the dead-easy cinch it looks. I heard that last fall, with his big automatic, he put ten shots in an ace of spades at forty yards in ten seconds.'

'Some shooting,' said Rawson thoughtfully. 'Yes, if the old man cuts loose, things may turn out unhealthy. Well, boys, what do you say? My word's shoot at sight.'

A low, evil murmur of assent answered him, and for a little longer they lay and smoked and muttered to each other of the good time they would have when they had possession of Colonel Veale's cash, which he was so rash as to keep in his possession on this remote and lonely ranch.

II.

'Time to get a move on, boys,' said Rawson, getting to his feet. 'We had best be off.'

The moon was up now. They mounted, and in single file, a sinister and threatening procession, rode from the heavy shadows where the ruined hut hid beneath the shelter of the tall cliff out into the plain, where the moonshine lay palely clear.

Half-an-hour's brisk riding brought them to the borders of the ranch, and when they came to a wire fence, they were careful to close behind them the gate through which they passed, so that none of the cattle of the man they had come to rob and murder should stray and get lost or do damage. Another gate they passed through they closed behind them with the same instinctive care, and then there rose before them in the moonlight the lonely ranch which Colonel Veale had called after the one tall pine-tree that grew near.

The outbuildings lay all dark and silent, but in the ranch a light still burned. And evidently the sound their horses' hoofs made in the quiet night had been heard within, for there was movement perceptible, and the house door swung open at once.

Every man's pistol was ready, and had it been the old colonel who stood there, a shower of bullets would have smitten him to death at his own front-door before he had realised his doom. But it was a girl who came in view—a girl, tall and slim, young and pretty, peering out eagerly into the moonlit night.

'Who is it?' she asked in a clear, young, eager voice; and then, in tones a little quicker, with a touch of excitement in them, she called out, 'Oh father! Come here, father. I do believe you were right after all.'

A tall old man, still straight as the great pine his ranch was named from, his white hair in the moonlight like an aureole about his head, came forward quickly. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I'm very glad to see you—very glad indeed. When I heard you were camping by San José cliff, I hoped perhaps you were coming here. I hoped you were.'

'Hoped—hoped, did you?' muttered Rawson. 'Hoped, eh?'

'Mr Rawson, isn't it?' asked the colonel. 'I thought so. And Mr M'Rae—ah, no Scot's likely to hang back. I have seen the Highland regiments fight—yes, and the Lowland men too. I see there are five of you. Oh, the lads are gathering from all the world over.'

'Father, perhaps they have come a long way; perhaps they are tired,' hinted the girl.

'Yes, yes, of course,' said the colonel. 'Gentlemen, will you put your horses up? That first building's the stable. You will find all you want. Then perhaps you'll be glad of some supper. There's plenty ready, for, as I say, I hoped—I hoped you were meaning to visit me. When I heard where you were camping, I said, "Those boys are coming here. We must be ready for them."'

'Ready?' muttered M'Rae. 'My God!'

'See here'—— began Rawson, making an effort to control a situation he felt he failed to understand.

'No, no,' interrupted Colonel Veale; 'put the horses up first, and then we'll have a talk. Five of you, eh?' His voice rang out loud and clear, with a strange thrill of pride and exultation. 'All the world over,' he said, 'the British are going home again—back to the Old Country again. Germany never thought of that.'

'Germany!' repeated Rawson, and his voice, too, was a little high, and shook with a new and strange excitement. 'Germany!' he said again, and paused.

'And I should like to tell you boys right now,' added the old colonel, 'how proud I am, and what a privilege I think it, to be able to help you back to the Old Country now she has need of every man she ever bred. When I said I would give any man willing to go home to enlist every help I could—pay his fare or anything else I could—well, I hoped for a good response. I've got it. The Old Country won't be deserted in her need. And it is a need. I know Germany. She is strong, trained, disciplined, ready. It'll be a long war and a bitter, but the Old Land will win through in the end—the Old Land that breeds men still.'

'War!' muttered Rawson. 'War!... Excuse me.... We've seen no papers; we've heard

some talk, that's all. . . . There's war between Britain and Germany?'

'Since Tuesday last,' answered Colonel Veale. 'They say the Germans are already planning to invade England, but I think no German soldier will ever march through British towns.'

Rawson turned to his companions. 'Boys,' he said, 'we'll put our horses up.'

In silence the five of them trooped down to the stables; in silence they fed and watered their horses; and when they had finished, Rawson called his four associates round him. 'Boys,' he said, 'what are we going to do about it?'

'War!' answered M'Rae slowly. 'War! . . . Well, that's—war.'

'Germany and England,' said Dunning; 'England and Germany. There you are, you see.'

'A hell of a fight!' Wilkins said. 'Lord Almighty, a hell of a fight!'

And Billingshurst, the last of the five, looked at the clear, shining moon above, and said not a word, but remembered very clearly the little village where he was born, and the church-bells on a Sunday morning in the summer ringing out across the quiet and drowsy fields, and the people walking there in their best attire.

A memory stirred oddly, too, in Rawson's mind—a memory which he had done his best many times to kill, which he had often drunk himself stupid to forget.

'*Floreat Etona*,' he murmured; and then very quickly, bitterly ashamed, and hoping intensely that none had noticed these words that had escaped him so unexpectedly, he said aloud, for the second time, 'Well, boys, what are we going to do about it?'

'The Dutchies blow a lot about their army,' said M'Rae thoughtfully. 'I wouldn't mind seeing what they can do if I had a bunch of fellows from the Highlands with me.'

'The Germans,' said Dunning, with a judicial air, 'has their points which I never should deny, but taking 'em all in all, I never was stuck on 'em—never.'

'Bit of a spree,' Wilkins suggested—'bit of a spree to be in a show like this; quite respectable and lawful, and the police to cheer you on, so to say.'

'I'm going home,' said Billingshurst. 'If a man can ride a bit and shoot a bit, they won't ask now if he's ever been in jail.'

'No,' agreed Rawson; 'it's the chance of a lifetime to die good and clean and decent, after all.'

'Scotland for ever!' cried M'Rae. 'God forgive me; I never thought to say that again.'

'Shouldn't like it one little bit,' said Dunning, 'if the Germans marched through the Boro'. Dunno why; but it's a fact, I shouldn't.'

'Bristol men treated me dirty,' said Wilkins, 'and I'd burn the old place down as soon as not if I got the chance. But Dutchmen—that's another thing.'

'Lord, you talk,' exclaimed Billingshurst impatiently; 'talk and talk!'

'Then that goes, boys,' said Rawson. 'We're for it.'

At the head of his companions he went back to the ranch, where, in a blaze of yellow lamplight, the old white-haired colonel was waiting, by his side his daughter, holding a tray on which six glasses stood.

'Gentlemen,' the old man said, taking one glass himself, 'shall we drink—to King and Country?'

'To King and Country,' said Rawson, and took a glass and emptied it.

The others did likewise, and when all had drunk, Rawson lifted his glass high, tilted it to show not a drop remained within, then dashed it down on the ground so that it shivered into fragments. 'That's the last whisky or anything of the sort,' he said, 'that I will touch till this job's done.'

And M'Rae and Dunning and Wilkins and Billingshurst answered with a low, deep murmur of assent.

THE MESSAGE.

(RAINY SEASON LONGINGS—FOR N. G. E.)

That my heart, like the wind, were empower'd to find
The summer, the sun, and the swallow!
Ever northward it blows to the land of the rose—
Dear England—and bids me to follow.
'Follow on! follow on! till the daylight be gone;
Cool night brings the scent of the heather.
Hear the somnolent bees; list the murmurous trees—
'Tis summer! and finest of weather!

'Breathe the fragrance of June; English hearts are in tune;
Vagrant elves lightly flit through the sedges;
And the spirit of peace has imparted release
To health from a hundred green hedges.'
Southern wind! southern wind! let my joy be to find
The zest of thy sensuous motion;
Let me follow thy lead till my exile is freed
From the bounds of this severing ocean.

Happy wind! day by day 'tis your fortune to play
Through lanes that are sunlit or shady.
Speed swift by our ships, and find out the lips
Of my lady, my own little lady.
Shape the music of birds to these three earnest words,
As you playfully frolic above her;
Let your message be this (and its pledge be a kiss),
'I love her! I love her! I love her!'

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

**** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE MAN WHO LOVED LONDON.

By J. S. FLETCHER.

PART I.

THE First Commissioner of Works (the Right Honourable E. J. Jenkinson-Pelham, M.P.), while not precisely the hardest-worked member of the Cabinet to which he had had the honour of belonging for the space of three years, was one of those men who are always glad when Friday comes. As a matter of pure fact, so were most of his colleagues. They were all more or less week-enders. The Prime Minister retired to his little farm in Hogshire, and looked at his prize pigs. The Chancellor of the Exchequer arrayed himself in loud tweeds, and went to play golf. The Secretary for Home Affairs retreated to a country estate, and caught butterflies; when there were no butterflies to catch, he turned over his priceless collection of coins, and hugged himself when he came to one which he believed to be unique. The Lord Privy Seal spent Saturday in haunting the London bookstalls, and Sunday in inspecting the ancient rubbish he had picked up. Some Ministers went to country houses, where they ate, drank, and slept, or made love to the prettiest lady of the house-party; some marched solemnly by the sea, drawing in stores of ozone which should furnish them with air for the coming week of late hours and bad atmosphere. As for Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, he went fishing.

In these days of cheap newspapers, privacy for public men is a thing of extreme rarity. The man who wants to interview you comes in with your early cup of tea; the young gentlemen who take photographs for the illustrated press have no objection to fixing their cameras upon you as you disrobe for your bath or open your mouth for your first forkful of eggs and bacon. You cannot walk a yard along Whitehall without being button-holed or snapshotted; and if, during his week-end in the country, a Cabinet Minister obliges by reading the lessons in church, there is sure to be some infernal press-man at hand who subsequently remarks on the reader's inability to pronounce Hebrew proper names.

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, however, was a cute and clever man. He took good care that no one, not even his valet, knew where he went for his week-ends. According to the *Morning Post*, he left town for the country—the supposition being that he was either at his own seat, or at the Duke of A——'s or the Countess of B——'s. The truth of the case was that in the shades of evening Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, unobtrusively clad in an old tweed suit and carrying his own bag, went quietly to the railway-station and betook himself to a certain rustic inn, deep in the heart of the country, close by which was a delightful stretch of brown water, wherein, for the next two days, he cast his flies, thanking his stars for peace and quietness.

The certain rustic inn was called 'The Dish of Trouts,' and Mr Jenkinson-Pelham had discovered it by accident. It was seven miles from the nearest railway. It was an old—a very old—house. It had a thatched roof and diamond-paned windows, and it was set in an old-world garden, full, at the proper time, of hollyhocks, and thyme, and big, thoroughly English, red roses, and vast clumps of rhubarb and orderly rows of potatoes. The fragrance of flowers and herbs hung all over that house, and the sheets were lavender-scented. There was excellent mutton to be had, and home-fed ham, new-laid eggs, and milk from several respectable cows. If you desired company, there was an old-fashioned landlord and his buxom wife and pretty daughter; you could also sit amongst the rustics in the bar-parlour o' nights, and hear the affairs of the country discussed and settled with more acumen and promptitude than Mr Jenkinson-Pelham was accustomed to in Downing Street. In short, 'The Dish of Trouts' was an ideal place, and Mr Jenkinson-Pelham kept the knowledge of it to himself. He was known there as Mr Jenks, an elderly London gentleman, affable, peaceful, friendly, who was old-fashioned in his tastes and generous in his ways, and at certain times of the year was as much a fixture as the seventeenth-century signboard on the ivy-covered porch.

Upon a certain fine morning—Saturday, of course—Mr Jenkinson-Pelham sat by the side of his favourite patch of water, rod in hand. He was supremely happy. He wore a comfortable old suit; his head was easy in an old Panamá hat; he had a beloved old briar pipe between his lips. There was his little packet of sandwiches, there his pocket-flask of weak

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whisky-and-water, there a volume of very light and amusing essays. All around him was the pleasant mingling of sunshine and shadow, the hum of bees and insects, the plaintive bleating of sheep, the gentle lowing of cattle. What more could man desire in the way of peace and calm retreat? He would pass all the fair morning in this way; at two o'clock he would return to 'The Dish of Trouts' for his early dinner—roast-lamb, garden peas, new potatoes, cherry-tart, oceans of thick cream. That was the sort of dinner Mr Jenkinson-Pelham liked; he summed it up in one word—scrumptious! He was not quite sure where he had got that word, but it expressed exactly what he meant and felt. And, his pipe having gone out just then, he laid it aside for a moment and hummed a stave or two of an old song which he had learned by heart from *The Complete Angler*.

It was as he chanted this ditty that a shadow fell over Mr Jenkinson-Pelham—fell in more ways than one. He was so absorbed, and the grass on which he sat was so thick, that he did not hear the approach of a person who suddenly accosted him—not by his rustic name of Jenks, but by his proper patronymic.

He almost dropped his rod as he looked up—to find an oldish, rather uncommon-looking gentleman standing between him and the sun, gazing at him with a benign, yet decidedly wistful, expression. Mr Jenkinson-Pelham was a sharp and shrewd observer, and he took in the details of this interrupter of his privacy at a glance—a tall, gray-bearded, blue-spectacled old fellow, with the pallor of the student and the student's stoop; dressed in good, but very old-fashioned, garments; topped with an ancient wide-brimmed hat; and armed with an unusually large umbrella. He was the sort of man whom you would expect to find poring over old book-stalls or nosing round the remains of some ecclesiastical ruin, and Mr Jenkinson-Pelham labelled him in that way at once. Still, there was the disconcerting fact that he had mentioned him, Jenkinson-Pelham, by name. What was more, he repeated it.

'Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, I believe?' he said in a rather quavering voice. 'The Right Honourable Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, First Commissioner of Works, *with* a seat in the Cabinet. I—er'——

'Well, sir,' demanded Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, with considerable asperity, 'what do you want? And do me this favour, if you please—to omit any further reference to my name and office. I am here in an absolutely private capacity, and I—in fact, I very much dislike to be intruded upon. What can I do for you?'

'I crave your pardon, Mr—sir,' replied the old gentleman. 'The truth is, I am a person greatly interested in antiquities, and I am now on my way to inspect an old Jacobean mansion which is situate about a mile away. From the meadow-path yonder I saw you, and as you are quite well known to me by sight—I reside near you, in Kensington, as a matter of fact—and as I have long desired to have speech with you, I ventured to cross the intervening space and accost you. Do not fear, sir, that I shall not respect your privacy. I shall not even mention you at the inn where I propose to refresh myself later on.'

'Much obliged to you,' said Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, greatly mollified and relieved. 'Very good of you, I'm sure. Well, now, what can I do for you? Will you have a cigar?'

'Thank you—I never use tobacco,' said the stranger. 'Not that I object to others using it—pray relight your pipe. Yes,' he continued, as he seated himself on the trunk of a fallen tree, and laid his big umbrella across his knees, 'I am glad of the opportunity of having a little conversation with one who occupies your highly important position. Sir, I am the Man who Loves London! You have doubtless read many letters of mine in the public journals?'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham turned a quizzical eye on his companion, whom he had already set down as a harmless crank of some sort or other. 'Ah!' he said. 'I see. You're the man who sometimes writes letters about London's uglinesses, eh? Oh yes—just so!'

'Sir,' replied the other, 'I am, as I say, the Man who Loves London. I am not *a* man who loves London, but *the* man who loves London; for there are no other men who love London as I do. That is why I wish to see London swept clean of all the hideous, vile, abominable atrocities which disfigure her! London, sir, would be the most beautiful city in Europe if she were purged of certain eyesores!'

'Such as what?' asked Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, leisurely relighting his briar.

'The railway bridge at Charing Cross,' promptly replied his companion. 'Sir, that bridge is an offence! It is enough to bring down on us the thunders of the gods!'

'Not my job,' said Mr Jenkinson-Pelham calmly. 'Um!—I think you once referred to my powers in one of your—er—very interesting letters to the papers. But, you know, my powers are limited. Public buildings, palaces, and parks—that's my job. Can't touch private property, don't you know.'

'You might make a very good beginning with the parks,' said the old gentleman meditatively. 'Sir, to any one of an artistic turn of mind, our London parks and public places, squares and gardens, are revolting!'

'Ay? And in what way, now?' asked Mr Jenkinson-Pelham.

'The statuary, sir—the so-called statues to our public men,' replied the reformer. 'Not only that, but all our outdoor attempts at art. Sir, have you ever set eyes on that truly awful thing known as the Albert Memorial?'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham sniffed and rubbed his chin. 'The Albert Memorial is certainly a bit —trying,' he said thoughtfully. 'Yes, I admit that. Yes, I suppose it is awfully vulgar. What else, now?'

'The statuary in Westminster Abbey should be taken out, broken up, and used—in any useful direction,' said the other. 'All the similar things in St Paul's Cathedral should be similarly treated. The Crimean Memorial ought to be blown up, and the Achilles Statue should be ground to powder. As for the Surrey side of the river, the entire frontage from Lambeth to Deptford should be completely swept away—by dynamite if necessary.'

'Drastic changes!' murmured Mr Jenkinson-Pelham. 'All that requires time.'

'But you might make some small beginnings,' urged his companion, with almost trembling eagerness. 'It is in your power, you know. Public buildings, palaces, and parks—you have full control over these. Sir, why not signalise your term of office by doing something to rid our beautiful capital of these offensive and painful eyesores? It would beseem you. Besides, think what a benefactor you would be!'

'They'd only put up one of those horrible statues to me, you know,' answered Mr Jenkinson-Pelham. 'Or perhaps a medallion—they're bad too. However, what would you do first, if you were in my place?'

The man who loved London nursed his big umbrella and looked skyward through his blue spectacles. He was plainly in deep thought, and the First Commissioner did nothing to interrupt him.

'Well,' he said at last, 'I am not quite sure. Of course, whatever is done must be done with violence.'

'Violence!' exclaimed Mr Jenkinson-Pelham. 'Why violence?'

'As an object-lesson,' replied the reformer gravely. 'To show the people that never again must bad architecture, false taste, meretricious art, be permitted to obtain in our marvellous metropolis. Certainly, there must be violence. I would suggest the use of some of the more modern explosives, carefully choosing those that make the most noise.'

'Well—and what would you select as the first object of your wrath?' asked Mr Jenkinson-Pelham.

'It is difficult to decide,' answered the old gentleman, gently dandling his umbrella. 'But I think I should begin with either Buckingham Palace or the Bank of England. Perhaps the Bank. It is, of course, utterly stupid that such a poor, obscure, featureless place should house our main stores of wealth. Still, Buckingham Palace is so very hideous that'——

'I say,' interrupted Mr Jenkinson-Pelham, 'how would it do to blow up a few of the slums? East End—Borough—Lisson Grove—Lambeth—Notting Hill—eh? Some pretty decent eyesores round all those quarters, aren't there?'

But the reformer shook his head, and his eyes —from what Mr Jenkinson-Pelham could see of them behind the goggles—became dreamy. 'No —no!' he said softly. 'Oh no, sir—not the slums! Certainly not! The slums are very far from being ugly or inartistic. I know the slums very well. I am quite familiar with all the districts you have mentioned. I paint a little, in water-colour, and you would be astonished to find what truly wonderful colour-schemes and effects you can find in the slums. In fact, a slum street is a delight to the eye. The variety one gets—especially on washing-days—the blues, reds, yellows—delightful! No, no; the slums must be left to the artist. Besides, one finds raggedness and semi-nudity in the slums—most important adjuncts to a picture. No—I cannot have the slums interfered with.'

'All right,' said Mr Jenkinson-Pelham good-humouredly; 'we'll leave 'em alone. But I'm afraid I can't promise about Buckingham Palace. You see, we have just had a new face put on it, and I should like to see what artistic effect the weather has on the stone. And as to the Bank, I'm afraid it would be difficult to find accommodation for the money'——

'Well, well!' broke in the other, a little testily; 'there are other places. There is St Paul's Cathedral. Nothing could be uglier. I know several quite intelligent people who believe it to be a warehouse. Foreigners invariably take it for a bourse. It must be blown up, and something Gothic put in its place. You might well begin on St Paul's, because I am told that in any case it is bound to fall down within the next few years.'

'Well, that would satisfy you, wouldn't it?' asked Mr Jenkinson-Pelham.

'Not at all!' replied the reformer, with emphasis. 'My object is to see an example made and justice done. You will do it, will you not?' he continued, rising and waving his umbrella. 'Begin—begin! Even if you began in a small way, by pulling down and pulverising all the statues in Parliament Square, it would show that you mean well. But, sir, if you do not'——

'Yes?' said the First Commissioner composedly. 'What then?'

The reformer shouldered his umbrella and began to stalk away. 'In that case,' he replied over his shoulder—'in that case, somebody will do it for you. Unexpectedly! And violently!'

Therewith he marched off in the direction of the ancient Jacobean mansion, and Mr Jenkinson-Pelham cocked an amused eye at his back.

'Rum old bird!' he murmured as he picked up his sandwich-case. 'Mad, of course—mad as a March hare!'

(*Continued on page 505.*)

ON A RIVER OF THE FAR NORTH.

By G. LINDESAY.

I.

ON a beautiful June morning, two days out from the Humber, we got our first glimpse of the coast of Norway in the shape of a range of rugged mountain-tops. Gray mist effectually concealed their bases, and swept in filmy wreaths along their storm-worn sides. Ere long we were in among the outer skerries—haunt of the eider duck and of the seal, and soon the waters of the North Sea glittered in the light of the rising sun and rippled beneath the breeze.

At Molde some of our party, bound for the Rauma, took their departure; others, again, landed at Christiansund and Aalesund; and in the course of time the rest of us were beneath the hospitable roof of the Britannia Hotel at Trondhjem. The North Cape boat was not due to sail until late the following night, so I elected to try for a 'fush' at the Leerfos, about an hour's drive from the town *en carriole*. The roads were in very bad condition, and the Nid was in spate; but fortune smiled, and with the assistance of a big Silver Phantom, mounted on treble gut, I managed to secure, from an extremely leaky cockle-shell of a boat, a twenty-two and a twenty-four pounder, both with sea-lice on their silvery flanks.

Not until after midnight did our ship, which lay out in the fjord, get away from the swarm of boats that surrounded her; and some twelve hours later we were steaming up the Namsen Fjord, the colour of whose waters for many miles out towards the sea bore witness to the fact that the classic river which discharged into it was in heavy snow-flood. It was pretty evident that those of our fellow-passengers who left us to fish the Namsen and the Björa would have some time to wait before they got their first 'Lax.'

All up the coast there were signs of a late spring. In many places snow lay close down to the water's edge, and the splendid group of mountains—'The Seven Sisters'—which guards the entrance to the Vefsen Fjord presented a very wintry appearance. The fear that they would be too late for the first run of fish, which had been entertained by the Fusta and Vefsen men, was dispelled. Bodö, on the Arctic Circle, looked dreary and cheerless; but soon the sun shone forth, and throughout the passage northwards to Tromsö the weather was propitious. Far out at sea the peaks of Lofoden and Vesteraalen, flecked and sheeted with snow, stood up clear against a sky of cloudless blue.

On the coast of the Tromsö Amt a river called the Reisen discharges. In order to reach some of the casts the enterprising angler has to be let down precipices with ropes, and the valley, which is a very wild one, has the reputation of being one of the worst in all Scandinavia for gnats. As illustrating this, the story is told that on one occasion the Amtmand of Finmarken was conversing with a friend in Tromsö on the joys of life in Reisendal. Remarked the Amtmand, 'I was there bear-hunting three years ago, and the air was so densely filled with midges that I was able to trace my initials among them.' 'And there they still remain,' replied his friend. 'I have just come from the place, and saw them!' For this paradise two of our passengers, enthusiastic youths, were bound, and they were subjected to an immense amount of chaff. The best of the many fanciful sketches produced as appropriate to the occasion was one of an angler, attired in 'the garb of Old Gaul,' and provided with all the paraphernalia of his craft, being let down a tremendous wall of rock, while from far and near the bloodthirsty gnats were hastening to the banquet!

At Hammerfest there is a little loch which supplies that odoriferous town with water. It was full of blocks of ice, but I managed to catch a few char in it with the fly while our steamer was discharging cargo.

Dreariest of all Norwegian fjords is the Porsanger, the first great inlet to the east of North Cape. The island of Tamsö, near its mouth, which is the breeding-place for vast numbers of sea-fowl, and from which large quantities of the valuable eider-down are obtained, was sheeted almost completely over with the white bloom of the cloudberry; but its bird inhabitants, being occupied for the most part with domestic matters, were not so much in evidence. It was otherwise at Svaerholt Klubben, the famous 'Fugle Berg' which faces the Arctic Sea between the Porsanger and Laxe Fjords. There the air was alive with kittiwakes, while thousands upon thousands of these pretty little gulls sat on the ledges of the great cliff. At Gamvik, a fishing-hamlet on the north coast of Finmarken, we were transferred from the mail-boat to a steamer called the *Fram*, a wretched little craft. There were no signs of steam being got up, the captain and his engineer being both engaged in sleeping off the effects of a recent debauch; the machinery was tied together with pieces of string; and we were informed that the boat was always wrecked at least once a year. 'A hair of the dog,' however, in the shape of a strong dose of undiluted Scotch whisky applied to the skipper as soon as he emerged from his bunk, had the desired effect, and soon the old tub was rolling and tumbling down the Tana Fjord before a fresh northerly breeze. Every

now and again the sun was overshadowed by a cloud, from which snow or hail fell, and the thermometer sank to within a few degrees of freezing-point. The state of the tide was fortunately such that we were enabled to steam across the vast sandbanks at the head of the fjord, and to land at the little islet of Guldholmen, which lies in the mouth of the river. Here is the local merchant's store; here arrangements must be made for the journey up-country—by boat in summer, with reindeer in winter; and hither from the inland wastes come the Lapps to buy their stores and sell their skins and timber.

After a good deal of bargaining, four long canoes, with their crews of two Lapps each, were arranged for, and next morning we started off up-stream in good time.

II.

The Tana is undoubtedly the finest salmon-river discharging on the Norwegian coast. Including its tributaries, it is accessible to the migratory Salmonidæ for at least four hundred miles. It possesses a practically unlimited extent of spawning-ground, and many long reaches of water admirably adapted for angling purposes. But the Lapps net and spear it very severely, and comparatively few of the thousands of salmon which annually ascend it ever return to the sea.

The lower reaches of this great river are very monotonous. The low hills lie at a considerable distance from the banks, and between the latter, upon which only a few scrubby birches grow, the broad stream flows slowly and evenly for many miles.

After twelve hours' poling, during which we passed only one rapid (at Seida, where the road from Nyborg, on the Varanger Fjord, comes in), we reached Polmak, a small hamlet prettily situated among coppices of birch and juniper on the right bank of the river, and here we spent the night at the house of the Norwegian forest-master. Within two hours of resuming our journey next day, we came in sight of the rapids below the Storfos. Acres of ice, from fifteen to twenty feet thick, extended along the shores, and, the ice being gradually eaten away from below by the action of the stream, the upper parts of these frozen walls constituted a real danger to our heavily laden canoes, which, in order to avoid the tremendous current farther out, had to pass close alongside them.

A bitterly cold wind whistled through the pass, in which the Tana, compressed between lofty birch-clad hills, forms the series of rapids known as the Storfos, and snow continued to fall at frequent intervals. For a distance of nearly a mile everything had to be carried, and then the empty boats had to be poled and dragged up—a very hard task—to where a fresh start could be made. Near this point the line of demarcation comes in from the south-east, and above it the river forms the frontier between Russia and Norway for a considerable distance.

The first run of salmon on the Tana consists mainly of fish which average from twenty-six to twenty-eight pounds, and it would seem that they do not halt in their upward progress, as might be expected in view of the long journey, until they reach Ule Savo, a magnificent pool about ten miles above the Storfos. From this point upwards—varying, of course, in degree of excellence—the pools succeed one another, with (except in one instance) but short intervals between, for a distance of fifty miles, and, speaking generally, it may be said that after the 15th of June all contain fresh-run salmon.

The formation of the country is such that until the bulk of the first heavy snow-flood has run off, the Norwegian tributaries discharge only 'snow-broth,' a liquid which salmon do not appreciate; while the water from the Russian affluents, having been well silted in its passage through extensive moorlands, is moss-coloured, but clear, and comparatively warm. For miles down the centre of the main river the line between the two types of water can be plainly traced; and it is useless to fish on the western or Norwegian side of it.

About half-a-mile above Ule Savo the Vietsjok enters on the Russian side. The pool at its mouth—Vietsjok Savo—is a very uncertain quantity; sometimes, even when in seemingly good order, it will yield nothing; sometimes it will contribute four or five heavy fish to the day's bag. Between it and the effluent rapid there is a broad, streamy piece of water some three hundred yards in length, which by reason of its comparative shallowness is of no use under ordinary conditions. Here one evening in mid-June, when the river was in heavy spate, I chanced upon a shoal of salmon disporting themselves in the clear, brown water from the Vietsjok; and here, between six P.M. and one o'clock, I hooked and played thirty-seven of them. As soon as one was secured or lost, another was hooked. A better piece of sport with the rod could hardly be imagined. In gaffing a twenty-eight pounder one of the Lapps missed his footing and got half-drowned, to the infinite joy, apparently, of his companion! Similarly situated as regards another Russian affluent is the Utsjok Gnoika, a grand pool about five miles farther up, immediately below the mouth of the Utsjok River. This is one of the best and most certain casts on the Tana, and the Russian 'Krono Foged,' whose solitary house stands near by, told me that one day he caught a thirty, a forty, and a fifty pounder in it.

To recur, however. On the morrow of our arrival at the cottage (built at the instance of two good old Scottish anglers) on the banks of Ule Savo, I killed a forty-pounder and six other fish, all over twenty-five pounds; but

the weather set in cold and stormy, and next day it blew a whole gale from the north, with blinding snow. So much stronger than the current was the wind, and so heavy was the 'sea' it kicked up, that there was no working the canoe with any degree of safety on the exposed surface of Ule Savo. On the 18th of June everything was white, and when I was fishing Galgo Gnoika and Biavra Savo, the two next pools below, some thirty or forty reindeer were feeding on the banks. They had been driven down from the hills by the weather. On the 20th, however, the wind veered round to the south-west; the sun made its appearance, and so—*mirabile dictu!*—did the gnats—in thousands. The short Lapland summer had at last commenced.

III.

As on the Namsen and other classic streams, the spoon is the best lure for salmon on the Tana until the water has fined down very considerably; after that the fly is preferable. One of the 'confections' which proved very attractive was composed as to its body of black floss silk, ribbed with silver tinsel and black hackle; whilst its wing, besides fibres of Spanish bustard and Himalayan pheasant, consisted of six long golden crests, four jungle cocks, and four 'tippets'—a lovely insect! With one of these I had quite a performance in Ule Savo one day. On hooking a fish in this pool it was the custom to run the boat up on to the rocks near the head on the Norwegian side, the two Lapps following me while I played it. On the occasion in question a heavy salmon took me so far down-stream, with a long line out, that it was evident he meant to continue in the same direction indefinitely, and leave the pool, a proceeding contrary to all precedent. To follow along the shore was impossible, and there was not time to fetch our canoe from where we had left it; but a spare one lay at the landing-place below the hut, and into this, which we reached only just in time, we all three tumbled, the last Lapp giving a vigorous kick that sent it out well clear of the rocks. The next minute we were descending the long rapid to Galgo Gnoika at a great pace in the train of the fish, which, inasmuch as it weighed between thirty and forty pounds, and was hooked close to the tail, gave a deal of trouble before being secured. In this same pool on another day, after playing a fish for quite ten minutes, I lost it; but within a quarter of an hour it rose again at another fly at exactly the same spot, a submerged boulder, and I killed it. The fresh cut made in the mouth by the first hook was plainly visible.

Some thirty miles above Ule Savo, the Levjok River, descending from the wastes Rasta Gaiser, joins the Tana; and here stands another log-hut built by British anglers. The pools are as good as those farther down so long as there is plenty of water, but they get out of order sooner. In this part of the main river there are quantities of grayling. One evening in three hours I caught close on a hundred pounds weight of these fish, and a grilse, with trout-flies.

A couple of miles below the mouth of the Levjok a series of rapids nearly five miles in length, in which there are no salmon-casts, commences; it terminates in a very deep, rocky pool called Sjumpo. Salmon on their way to the upper waters rest here for a space, and as there are many fine pools immediately below, this is a good neighbourhood in which to camp out for a few days. A good deal of excitement attaches to the descent of the rapids aforesaid, as the channel is full of rocks, and everything depends on the skill of the Lapps. When the calm haven of Sjumpo is reached, the canoe generally contains rather more water than is consistent with comfort.

Every now and again we 'interviewed' exceptionally heavy salmon, but we were never fortunate enough to land anything over forty pounds. One day, for instance, when resting on the banks of a very long pool just above Utsjok, called Aite Gnoika Savo, I saw a huge tail show above the surface three or four times, and I prepared for an attempt on its owner's life by attaching treble gut to a beautiful new Snow Fly, which I had 'busked' the day before. At this, on its being nicely proffered, he came, and at once celebrated the occasion by taking one hundred and eighty yards off the reel with one grand rush. After he had been on for the better part of an hour, I began to entertain hopes of bringing him within reach of the gaff; but it was not to be, and finally this huge salmon broke away with the fly.

By the beginning of August the river had run very low, and at dawn on the 8th we bade farewell to the lonely little hut where we had had such a good time. The total bag was just over five thousand pounds to our two rods; the salmon averaged twenty-one pounds, and the grilse five pounds apiece.

IV.

The best season on the Tana of which I have definite record was that of 1867, when, in twenty-six days' fishing, one rod killed two hundred and eight salmon weighing three thousand seven hundred and sixty-four pounds, the best day being 5th August, when this lucky sportsman landed twenty-two fish weighing four hundred and thirty-eight pounds.

In this connection it may be recalled that the late Duke of Roxburgh, who for so many years rented the Alten, killed on that river in one day thirty salmon weighing five hundred and thirty-seven pounds, the largest a forty-six pounder; and that in two days the same good sportsman landed seven hundred and

fifty-five pounds to his own rod. On another occasion, on the same river, Mr Brittle captured thirty-three salmon, weighing five hundred and eighteen pounds, in a day; and in 1847 an angler landed two thousand five hundred pounds in a fortnight.

Seals are said to have been seen as far up as Assabagti on one of the main branches of the Tana, one hundred and eighty miles from the sea, and large numbers of these creatures frequent the lower reaches. Here they used to be destroyed wholesale, and in rather a curious way. In autumn, when the river was low and it was known that many seals had passed up, the channel, at a point above tidal influence, was barred from bank to bank with double salmon-nets in such a way that the seals could not pass round, over, or under them. In mid-stream there was formed either a square enclosure into which the seals were driven, or a narrow, wedge-shaped opening, which led to a large bag made of quadruple salmon-netting. Here two boats were stationed with a couple of Lapps in each, to despatch the seals when they showed their heads above water; whilst the other participators in the hunt drove the animals down towards the barrier by means of a salmon-net extending completely across the river. In this manner one hundred and twenty seals were captured on one occasion.

On the sandbanks at the head of the fjord war was waged on these enemies of the salmon in another way. At low-water a long timber log was buried in a sandbank to which at high-tide the seals were in the habit of repairing, and to this log were attached a number of sharp hooks about a foot long, each with its point towards the river. In the log were four holes, through each of which a stake was driven several feet into the sand, while both ends were fastened with ropes to strong pegs placed farther up on the bank; and all was buried so effectually that neither rope nor stakes were visible. These preparations having been completed, watch was kept in order to observe exactly when, after the seals had gone up with the rising tide, the water in falling again stood at such a height that the points of the hooks were about two or three inches below the surface. The attacking party then quietly approached the seals assembled on the sandbank. A shot was fired, at which, of course, the seals floundered into the water, and as they made for the sea were caught on the hooks. They were then despatched with clubs, a process, however, which had to be carried out quickly, as, if many seals were transfixed at the same time, they were apt to tear the log away in their struggles, and carry it off with them.

This method of capture has now been done away with. The seals are still to be seen in great numbers on the sandbanks; but although they do as much injury as ever to the salmon, they are not so much sought after.

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE house was the Bynack Shieling, a remote little outpost in the Forest of Mar. As there were thin, clammy vapours hanging like wisps of smoke over the cooling earth, we decided to call a halt there, rather than bivouac under the sky up the Pass; but when we arrived at the Shieling we found that the windows were shuttered and the doors locked. No answer came to our knocking, and there was an ominous absence of smoke from the chimneys. But there is an unwritten law among the hill-folk. Hospitable as Arabs, they turn no wanderer from their doors. If one of them is from home and his house barred, his friends who chance that way know where they may rest and shelter in his absence. With a confidence which suggested that he had been there before, Malcolm led us to a bothy at the back of the Shieling—disused, bare of furniture, but clean—and took possession of it as a matter of course. He vanished for a few minutes, to reappear—old compaigner!—with armfuls of hay from the stable and peats from the stack. The rücksacks produced sandwiches and thermos flasks; the hay was eider-down; peats were quickly blazing in the great fireplace; blue haze of tobacco rose to the rafters. But we had little time to spare for talk or tobacco, and, having left Malcolm on sentry-go, soon were stretched luxuriously on the hay, boots off, with our feet to the fire—the drowsy gabble of the Bynack Burn near the house the only sound in the night.

About ten o'clock, when Malcolm roused us, I was thankful to see moonlight flooding the little room, for the passage of the Larig in the dark is a venture with more than a spice of danger. The moon was riding clear, and the June dawn in these latitudes would greet us early. To make the most of the light, without delay we started off at a good pace through the young heather beyond the Shieling, and after the meeting of the Bynack and the Geldie Burns, having skirted the base of Carn Geldie, we entered the Glen on the threshold of the Cairngorms, where the Dee, escaped from its mountain cradle, was trying its young strength in sudden, coltish scampers round obstructing boulders. It was easily crossed on stepping-stones, and soon we struck the hill-track and faced the climb up the wild Glen.

Malcolm, who knew every inch of the way, walked in front. Now and then he would throw us a warning or a direction over his shoulder, for, though the night was moonlit, mists were marshalling on the heights, and the Glen was full of shadows. Between the dark and the danger of a twisted ankle when tramping over multitudinous stones or jumping burns, in the quaint speech of our guide, we 'cam' nae speed;' but we climbed doggedly on, passing Beinn Bhrotain and the great gap of Glen Geusachan, until we were eighteen hundred feet up, amidst an unearthly silence, near the grim peak named 'The Devil's Point.'

Great mountains now loomed up, tier upon tier, on every side, far as the eye could reach, the moonlight lending their misty masses a strange and spectral glamour. There was beauty and terror in the Pass as I beheld it that night—beauty in the moonbeams etherealising the stark masses of the mountains; terror when the icy brilliance of the night, suddenly tarnished by passing clouds, dissolved into a leaguer of inky shadows. The wild dark setting suggested Walpurgis Night on the Brocken.

The Forbidding Pass earned its name. To me the mists seemed to be weaving and unweaving sombre alleys and hiding-places where evil, secret things and unspeakable creatures of eld could hide and linger. I peopled the recesses with a thousand lurking presences and things unutterable, deadly legacies of ancient peoples and their unholy primordial rites; and these fantasies were aided by a Voice, the strange, steady, tireless harping of the wind, that is rarely still in the high places of the Cairngorms, now like a long sigh through swaying pines, now like the wash of seas on distant shingle; now pretending to die down, now rising again in a derisive halloo through the funnels of the ravines; never at rest.

Over three miles still lay between us and the Chanter Corrie. Terraces of moraine, granite boulders, acres of huge stones barred the way; and, to add to these grinding discomforts, a treacherous darkening of the moon brought us to a standstill. When the cloud lifted, the going was intolerably slow in the half-light, but at last we came upon a stalker's shelter-hut—the Corrour bothy—one of the loneliest roofs in Britain. Malcolm knocked, and the inmate rose and offered us hospitality. It was given with fine natural courtesy, and he was plainly disappointed when I told him that we only wished to rest for a little. Too well-mannered to ask any questions, he kept his birthright of tact, but on his face was written that the ways of wandering townsfolk who preferred darkness to daylight were beyond comprehension. The good fellow lit his lamp, got out the kettle, and wanted to kindle the peats. It almost required force to restrain him; and when he compromised on the offer by producing excellent oatcakes and mutton-ham, he did so with such obvious goodwill that it would have been impolite to refuse.

It was still dark, but a faint, scarcely perceptible brightness was stealing into the east when we set out again. The next two miles, in face of a stinging wind, were the most trying part of the Pass, but the first streak of day was now touching the sky-line, we were nearing our journey's end, and, much to our relief, the wind gradually died down. In this respite the swirling mists steadied and began to mass together. Now and again, between their uncanny, silent movements, we caught glimpses of great rock bastions, sombre and forbidding, a hint of the gaunt wilderness awaiting us. In a few minutes the mists sagged down, hanging heavy and motionless, dislimning everything over a hundred feet above us. I had visions of delay and dislocation of our plans, for Malcolm, who was making the pace a cracking one over the interminable stones, had outdistanced us; but a shout from him hurried us forward, and we came upon him waiting beside one of the stone men—all thanks to the thoughtful hands that set them up—which mark the track over two thousand feet up in the dark saddle of the Larig.

Here we turned from the Pass and struck into the gray wilds on our left. The mist clothed the hills almost to their base, but we followed the thread of a burn, and at last found ourselves near a huge granite spur called, in the Gaelic, *An Rùdan* ('The Knuckle'), one of the ends of the horseshoe entrance to the Chanter Corrie. There was just the chance of our quarry having arrived before us, but, the mist favouring us, under its cloak we went forward cautiously and silently into the Corrie until we found a boulder high up on a slope, from which we could command observation. From its cover, unseen, we could spy all avenues, except one behind us, which, however, was guarded by steep and difficult ramparts of rock. It was improbable that any one would use so circuitous and dangerous a way of approach.

The pallor in the east was slowly spreading as we got behind the shelter of the boulder, but daylight, delayed by the mists, was barely on the threshold, and in the dimness spying was impossible. We could not make anything out with certainty beyond a hundred yards.

'So far, so good!' said Tony, as he discarded his rücksack. 'By this time all our men are posted, and it's a hundred to one that "The Searcher" hasn't tackled the Larig alone in the dark. If he intends to come to-day (and I think he will), he is probably lying low in Glenmore or in Rothiemurchus Forest until daylight. Lord send us a clear morning!'

We tossed for the post of watcher for the first half-hour. It fell to me. My companions made themselves as comfortable as possible on the ground behind the boulder, with their rücksacks as pillows and their revolvers beside them, and were soon asleep.

Peering over the boulder, I watched the coming of the dawn in a silence fretted only by the whisper of a light air searching the Corrie, the muffled voices of unseen waters, and once the lonely scream of an eagle, harsh and pitiless.

A vast curtain of mist confronted me, moving so slowly that at first the eye hardly marked its movement. It swung gently in a light wind, and above its thousand feet, by a strange caprice of the air-currents, the high tops of the mountains were revealed like unearthly islets in an unearthly sea. Slowly the sky paled. The stars waned and melted. On the ridge of one of the islets in the skyland a tiny orange spark glowed for a moment, grew to a hand's-breadth, and crept steadily along until the ridge was edged by a trenchant hieroglyph of fire. As I watched, the streak of colour lengthened, the selvage of the mist wavered, and its swinging curtain lost something of its density. I had turned for a moment or two towards my sleeping companions, and when I looked up again a spear-head of granite was thrust through a hugh rent in the mist. But another moment and the dark arras was riven apart, the Corrie unveiled.

You are to picture the great *cul-de-sac* in the wilds, its steep ramparts scarred by the tempests of ages, seamed by innumerable channels, now dry in a brief spell of summer heat, but throughout most of the year filling the Corrie with the steady call of hoarse and menacing voices. Summer and winter, gloom holds the place in thrall. The streamers of mist which linger out of the wind are powerless to soften its inhuman contour. The stream creeps almost furtively out of it. Green blade never relieves its dark panoply; no path invites pursuit, for the Corrie leads nowhere except to the scowling face of a precipice which rises, stark and unscalable, a sheer thousand feet; high up on its forehead is an arrow-head of white, in strange contrast to its black matrix, for the lonely place is avoided even by the sun, and all the year round snow finds sanctuary in the cold heart of Coire an t-Òranaiche.

I awoke the two sleepers, a sense of isolation having suddenly encompassed me. It was as though an invisible gate had been noiselessly closed, shutting us off from the kindly world of men.

The hill-country around The Bield in Glen Ciuin is humanised by many things: peat-reek rising from the shielings, the solace of woods, specks of sheep in the distance, and the green of cultivated land. But man has never touched the untamed and untamable heights around the Corrie. No trace of his handiwork shows on its scarred fronts. The effect of the scene disclosed was as though we had been suddenly awakened in some secret land, grim, elemental, yet invested with a strange and savage dignity. I hate the place, but I own its magnetism. It recalls the sense of cruel strength in presentments of pagan gods and great emperors of old, something derived from the dim past, the unnumbered ages which its brute static masses had watched and defied and outlasted.

In the centre of the hollow was a rock-pillar about fifty feet high, its detachment from the disordered masses of detritus sprawling round its base suggesting something more than loneliness, almost, to my fancy, ostracism. Probably the pillar's shape (not unlike the chanter of the bagpipe) suggested the Corrie's name, but the hillmen, over the peat-fires o' nights; whisper that the wind, when in a certain quarter, wails as though the Devil himself played his chanter there. The fantasy fits the place. To this day I 'grue' at the thought of it—a spot apart, accursed-looking, inimical to life.

(*Continued on page 500.*)

MORE ABOUT THE MAGIC OF GOLD.

By James Beattie.

IN a previous number of *Chambers's Journal* (October 1917) I gave an account of how, having emigrated to southern New Zealand as a shepherd, I became a gold-digger, and I endeavoured to show the change wrought in the country by the magic of gold discoveries.

When I left the Otago goldfields through a sharp attack of what, for want of a better name, was called 'colonial fever,' I little thought to resume the roving life of the digger, with its come-easy, go-easy philosophy, its moving adventures by flood and field, its up-and-down fortunes, and its hardships and vicissitudes. But then I had not correctly gauged—in fact, I may say I had not even remotely guessed—the power of the microbe that had got into my blood. However, I soon made the discovery that when men have once been smitten with gold-fever, they are always liable to a relapse. So it was with me.

A great rush set in to the west coast of the South Island of New Zealand in the year 1864, and I succumbed again to the call of the goldfields. The call was loud and insistent, and I packed my swag in the usual fever of anticipation, and looked round for a mate. Go I must; but how? There was the choice of two ways—overland or by sea. Between Otago and Westland nature had imposed a gigantic barrier—the backbone of the island, the Southern Alps—grim, forbidding, their steep crests covered with a perpetual mantle of white. Away at their northern end, at the northernmost confines of the province of Canterbury, two or three mountain-passes led over into the wilds of West-

land; but these passes were difficult to trace, and proceeded through a rough, uninhabited, and foodless country. No! these precipitous, inhospitable paths might do for large and well-organised parties, but they were not for the humble digger and his mate.

We went round by sea, and it was a great experience. We were on a small coastal steamer called the *Gothenburg*, crowded with excited miners off for the rush. So many were crammed on board that there was not room on deck for all the passengers, and quite a number had to stay below during the two days of the voyage. Of course, with such a crowd aboard meals could not be properly served, and it was 'every man for himsel', and de'il tak' the hindmost.' The food for those below was thrown down amongst them, and the resultant scramble was more reminiscent of a wild-beast show than a Christian community partaking of victuals. However, all things come to an end, and our uncomfortable 'floating home' came abreast of the Hokitika River, and we were lightered ashore in relays, getting a solid drenching when crossing the bar, a sort of premonitory baptismal introduction to that wet and rainy region.

If the harbour was primitive, the town was equally (if not more) so. The bush had been hacked down, and some wooden buildings of a rough-and-ready architecture occupied—it can scarcely be said that they adorned—the business part of the town; the rest of the place consisted of the familiar canvas. The beach in the vicinity of the town was strewn with small coasting-vessels that had failed to make the river and had run ashore. The seashore was a novel sight to me, and I gazed at it in amazement and delight. For twenty miles north and south of Hokitika harbour is a bar of hard sand, and the great rollers of the Pacific Ocean, like the giant plough-furrows of some Titan, rise and roll in with endless regularity, in practically straight lines, as far as the eye can see. Along the shore at low-tide were parties of miners washing the last deposit of sand cast up by the sea. Every tide brought in a fresh deposit of sand, through which ran particles of very fine gold. Although this 'beach-combing' was not so remunerative as were land claims, it yet afforded easily earned and very reasonable returns.

With thousands of men rushing in from other parts of New Zealand and from Australia, Hokitika was a bustling place in those early days of 1865. Dozens of public-houses (or grog-shanties, to be more accurate) made their appearance, and one street in the town boasted of seventy-two drinking-shops alone. Banking-companies in the more settled centres sent agents to buy the gold, and opened branches which conducted business in a rough-and-ready pioneer manner that would have made the hair of a prim British banker stand on end with horror. The storekeepers were as busy as bees garnering the golden harvest, and packers (that is, the men who owned and drove pack-horses) did a roaring business transporting diggers' utensils, goods, and food from the town along the rough bush-tracks to the widely distributed camps. Everywhere was hurry and scurry, hustle and bustle—a madding crowd, truly—and excitement was always kept at fever-heat by fresh arrivals pouring in, and by the constant rumours flying from mouth to mouth of fabulous El Dorados just discovered or just about to be discovered. Newspapers were worth their weight in gold, so to speak, and Australians were known to give five shillings for a copy of one of their beloved journals published and sold in Melbourne for a copper or two.

A description of the goldfield may not be amiss. A densely wooded country, with a moist climate and plenty of creeks and rivers—in many cases tumultuous watercourses which swept away unfortunate diggers. These, I have sometimes thought, were the men who in after-years were advertised for by relatives in the 'Missing' columns of the newspapers—'So-and-so; last heard of at the Westland diggings.' The goldfield was approximately sixty miles long and from ten to thirty broad. Along the seashore the land keeps low and comparatively level, rising inland into terraces and ridges as it approaches the lofty mountain background. The bush at the seacoast and inland was very dense and luxuriant, there being some fine timber in it, principally red and white pine up to one hundred feet in height; but near the mountains the bush generally degenerated into scrub. The lush growth of the underbush and the abundant rainfall for centuries had covered the whole area with a leaf-mould of springy texture about twelve inches deep. A little way under the soil a uniform cement formation of gravel prevented water from oozing away; in fact, it kept the surface like a sponge. Once that hard crust was broken, however, the surface moisture drained away readily, as there was a gravelly soil underneath. This was a new description of goldfield after Otago's steep ravines and woodless mountains, and it took some time for me to adapt myself to the new conditions.

Eventually, after I had had a narrow escape from death by a falling boulder at Jones Creek, we got a good claim at Totara Flat, of a singular formation. About one foot from the surface we struck gravel, and we were no more troubled with water. At some thirty feet deep we struck a layer of about four feet of gold-bearing strata, which we had to drive out. Timber was good and plentiful, and we had no difficulty in timbering the drive, after which we proceeded to wind the 'wash-dirt' up to the surface, where it was washed, and yielded us fairly rich returns.

The gold, when extracted from the gravel, was of a nice colour, and resembled sequins in shape. We worked out the thirty-foot level, and then sank our shaft approximately forty feet

farther before we came on another layer of golden gravel, similar to that at the former level, but even richer. It was naturally more costly to extract, but it paid well for our arduous labour. This layer, like the former one, ran over our entire claim, and after getting it out we again sank until we found the rock-bottom at one hundred and ten feet from the surface, with a richer deposit of wash-dirt than ever. But, alas! below seventy feet we were beneath the level of the sea, and it was impossible to keep the water down without expensive machinery beyond our means.

Misfortunes seldom come singly, even on the goldfields. We had been so intent on luring the gold out of the ground that we had paid no attention to the miasmatic location of our tent, and I was stricken down with 'swamp fever' and ague. A devoted mate doctored me with pain-killer, nursed me back from the portals of death, and had me carried many miles into the primitive hospital then started at Hokitika. It was full, so a kindly couple took me in and tended me. I am pleased to say that the mate who acted as a good Samaritan to me bought a farm in Westland with his goldfield earnings, and is now a prosperous farmer there.

I went to Nelson (the 'Sleepy Hollow' of New Zealand), and its beautiful climate soon brought back health and vigour, and also, strange to relate, the craving for the excitement of gold-seeking. I was preparing to go to a small goldfield near Blenheim, when a Nelson capitalist advertised for a manager for a sheep-station, and I applied for and got the situation. This ended my gold dreams for the time. Shortly afterwards I learned how fortunate it was for me that I had not gone on the Nelson-Blenheim track, as the Burgess, Kelly, Sullivan, and Levi combination of bushrangers had 'stuck up' and murdered several people at that time. Three of this notorious gang paid the penalty of their crimes with their lives, but Sullivan turned queen's evidence and got off.

The magic of gold worked as great a transformation in the case of Westland as it did in that of Otago. Gold is still found on the west coast, but in sadly diminished quantities. Altogether that small area has yielded thirty million pounds' worth of virgin gold, and this has brought the district prominently before the rest of the country. Prior to the discovery of the yellow metal Westland lay lonely, neglected, out of the way, and unknown to all save a few hardy pioneers who had ventured into one or two localities. The search for the precious metal carried intrepid explorers and prospectors through treacherous rivers and almost impenetrable bush, down precipitous cliffs, and over wild mountains, into all the nooks and crannies from one end of the coastal strip to the other.

Some of the diggers settled down in fertile valleys, and when the alluvial diggings were exhausted they carved farms for themselves out of the wilderness. Sawmills came into these wilds, and a considerable trade in sawn timber has since resulted, the white pine having proved to be well adapted for boxes in which to carry our butter home to the Old Country. Greatest of all the monetary results of the opening up of Westland through gold has been the discovery of immense deposits of first-class coal. The coal is the best found in New Zealand, and the State owns large collieries there now. The towns of Greymouth and Westport owe their existence and prosperity to these seemingly unlimited seams of excellent coal. All these things might have come eventually as settlement increased, but the magic of gold has much accelerated their development. It is open to discussion that much of the west coast might still have been *terra incognita* but for the diggers of the 'sixties.

The great drawback is the lack of good harbours, all having bars and being exposed to the powerful swell of the mighty Pacific. This deters all shipping from going there except for very good reasons. This drawback will soon be considerably diminished, as a railway tunnel has been driven under the Southern Alps (a five-and-a-half mile tunnel, the longest in the southern hemisphere), which will give the west coasters direct access to the east coast, where are good harbours and good markets. Then will be seen the full fruition of the seed of progress planted by the diggers on Westland soil, and yet another illustration will be afforded of how the magic of gold has assisted in developing this portion of the land we so love to call the Britain of the South.

THE COURTING OF SUZETTE.

By Ashmore Russan.

I.

CORPORAL SHILLITOE had driven the great Italia through La Lisière on numerous occasions, but had never before seen the children. He could not stop, of course, for General Ridgeton—otherwise the 'Rigid Un,' or the 'Black Tiger,' as the *N*th Division more or less affectionately called him—was in the tonneau. One glance, indeed, was all the corporal could give them, as just there the street was very little wider than the car, and the roadway was in a terrible condition owing to the too frequent passage of heavy British motor-lorries. Besides, La Lisière was about the twistiest town in all France, 'Eyes front and skinned' being the

order of the day for motor-drivers passing through it.

But that one casual look (which, however, took in the children's rosy cheeks, curly, yellow hair, and bonny bare legs and feet, as hand-in-hand they stood on the narrow pavement outside an *estaminet*) instantly summoned up a never-to-be-forgotten picture that dimmed the corporal's eyes and set his heart beating fast and confusedly. It was of a little orchard at home in Surrey—an orchard with many apple-trees, at the time just huge pinky-white bouquets, and tall pear-trees so laden with snowy blossom that the leaves were scarcely visible. Beneath, springing from the greenest grass that ever grew, late yellow daffodils jostled golden-eyed narcissi; and under the trees, amongst the flowers, gambolled two other yellow-haired, barefooted children—his own motherless Sammy and Lou. So had he last seen them, and that was the picture the youngsters at La Lisière had conjured up before his mind's eye. 'They're their very livin' images,' he told himself as he crouched low over the steering-wheel, peering under the brim of his tin hat with his misty eyes. 'I'll look out for them two when I come back—if ever I do.'

Having seen a great deal of the war, Corporal Samuel Shillitoe of the A.S.C.M.T., then acting as chauffeur for the divisional general, could have rattled off a pretty long list of M.T. drivers who had gone to the front never to return; but his luck happened to be in, for he was sent back to the base beyond La Lisière the same day, the great car empty, except for himself. His orders being to remain at the base until wanted, he threaded slowly the tortuous ways of the little town, keeping a keen look-out for some place where he could pull up and leave the cumbrous machine, a proceeding impossible in the narrow streets. Directed to a tiny square, he stopped the engine and hastened to the *estaminet* near which he had seen the children.

The place was full of English soldiers drinking thin beer, supplied by a handsome young woman with fluffy, fair hair and laughing blue eyes, at whom Corporal Shillitoe gazed steadily and appreciatively for a space; indeed, he stared at her very hard, for her hair was of the same rather unusual colour as the children's. 'Kids' mother, or aunt, for a pound o' nuts!' he reflected, nodding to himself with great satisfaction. 'Here goes,' and he gave an order. 'Doo beair, sivvo play,' he said boldly, for, like most British soldiers who had been a long time in France, he had picked up a lingo that sounded something like French sometimes, and, strange to say, was frequently understood.

The fair lady of the *estaminet* smiled, for Corporal Shillitoe was rather a handsome fellow and very smart, as befitted the chauffeur of a general of division. 'Een 'arf a teek—'arf a mo',' she answered roguishly.

'Ho—ho!' exclaimed the corporal; 'so you can speak English? That'll save an awful lot o' trouble. Where's the kids?'

But the fluffy dame's English had limitations. Such phrases as ''Arf a mo',' 'Stow that,' or 'That's the stuff to give 'em,' she knew the meaning of, if she did not exactly comprehend how it was arrived at; but 'Where's the kids?' she had never heard before. Aware, however, that a question had been asked, she answered politely, '*Pardon, monsieur?*' For ten seconds or so Corporal Shillitoe racked his brains in search of an explanatory French phrase, but not finding one, addressed the soldiers generally: 'Is there any fellow here who knows the lingo for two yellow-haired kiddies, or where they're to be found?' he asked.

'You don't want to know much French to find *them*, corp.,' said a sergeant with the Mons ribbon on his tunic. 'The only yellow-haired kids in this town that I know of are Suzette's, and here's Suzette herself.' He turned to the still smiling Frenchwoman and asked, 'Le'p'tees ongfongs?'

'*Ô!—oui—certainement!*' she cried, and disappeared into an inner room, returning in a moment with a fair-haired child on each arm.

'Dashed if I didn't think so the minute I set eyes on her!' remarked Corporal Shillitoe. 'Saw the kids this morning as I drove the Black Tiger through. I've got a couple at home the very images of 'em—boy an' girl, just the same size. Haven't seen 'em'—his voice broke slightly—'for more'n two years.—Donny moy, madame; just let me hold 'em an' feel 'em—just a minute?' And he stretched out his arms.

She understood the action, if not the request, and gave them to him one at a time. They were not in the least shy. 'Jean,' she said, as he took the boy, who was seven, and 'Petite Suzette,' as she gave him the girl, who had seen five summers. Very like his own Sammy and Lou they were, as he had last seen them playing in the orchard, and tears trickled down the corporal's face as he cuddled them to him. None of the soldiers laughed; not one smiled even.

'They've got no father,' said the sergeant gravely. 'He went West at Verdun.'

'Mine have got no mother,' rejoined the corporal. 'Their granny's lookin' after 'em.'

'Suzette's a widow,' the sergeant went on, and there was a twinkle in his left eye. 'And you can take it from me, corp., as there's no end of our chaps would give all their back-pay to be a second father to them kids; but Suzette isn't taking any. Still, you might try your luck. I'm a married man myself, or—— That's about how it stands, isn't it, Suzette?'

'I—not—know—vat you speak,' she answered, blushing, as she relieved Corporal Shillitoe of the children, he having kissed both of them a dozen times and given each a franc. Then, his arms being free, he wrote on a page of his pocket-book, tore out the leaf, and gave it to her. 'I am coming again soon, if I don't get killed,' it

read, and was signed, 'Corporal Samuel Shillitoe, Chauffeur for General Ridgeton.' Then, forgetting all about the beer he had ordered, and with a 'So long, you chaps,' he left the *estaminet*, and presently drove the great car off to the base, which was only about two miles beyond La Lisière.

II.

That is how the acquaintance began, and as the general's car had really been sent back because it was much too big to navigate the trench-scored country then held by the division, Corporal Shillitoe had plenty of leisure to continue it and improve upon it. Sometimes on foot, sometimes in the car, he visited the *estaminet* almost daily. He had ascertained that Suzette, otherwise Madame Cordonnière, was the trusted *fille de café*, and not the *maîtresse*, and that she had an hour off every afternoon, which she devoted to her children. South of La Lisière there still remained a quiet road or two not congested with war traffic, and there the corporal took little Jean and tiny Suzette for rides, which were great fun, and did him as much good as 'le'p'tees ongfongs,' for his home-sickness departed. The little ones—their mother's own, and full of mischief, especially Jean, who was a terror—called him Sam-mee, which singled him out from the other British soldiers they knew, all of whom were Tom-mees to them. And one day, by dint of signs and gestures, he persuaded Suzette to accompany her children, when he had the surprise of his life. A Parisienne, and a *modiste* before she married Jean Cordonnière, she knew how to dress with effect. 'Looks like a duchess,' the proud corporal told himself as she sat beside him in the car. And so Corporal Shillitoe lost his heart completely, the result being that the general's great Italia was to be found in the small square near the *estaminet* at almost any hour of the day thereafter.

He loved her, and he wanted to marry her; but how was he to tell her so? Of course, like other British soldiers serving in France, he was acquainted with a number of sentences signifying admiration and love, but he was afraid to make use of any of those he knew, for fear that they might not be quite nice; so, out of delicacy, and being thoroughly in earnest, he decided to make the attempt in eked-out English, and trust to his luck. When he carried out his intention—which, by the way, was not during Suzette'e first or second joy-ride in the big Italia—he went straight to the point. She was seated beside him, the children being in the tonneau, when he opened the throttle, so to say: 'I have got a good home and a house—bong maisong—in England—*Angleterre*,' he said, very slowly and distinctly. 'I should be a very happy Johnny if you would marry me. Will you, Suzette?'

She caught at the word marry. '*Ô, non, non!*' she cried. '*Il est mort, mon pauvre mari* —vat you say—dead.'

Corporal Shillitoe did not understand that Suzette thought he was asking about her husband, and had told him that poor Jean was dead—as he already knew. On the contrary, he jumped to the conclusion that her words meant she could never marry him because her heart was dead, and for the rest of the ride he was very silent, thinking. He would try again, certainly, but he would make sure next time by putting the question by proxy, if he could come across the 'Old Contemptible' sergeant who had so quickly found the children for him. In this he was fortunate, for he met him the same evening in the *estaminet*. Nothing loath, the sergeant essayed the task with a grin.

'*Madame Cordonnière—ma chérie*—Suzette,' he began, with an impressive wave of the hand, '*voilà le bon garçon—très bon homme*, and no error! Well, he—*il*—wants—*manque—vous lui épouser. Que dire?*'

A good effort, no doubt, but Suzette did not say anything, although it was plain that she understood, since she blushed like a peony and ran away laughing. Corporal Shillitoe, who had never heard of what happened to Miles Standish, Captain of Plymouth, in like circumstance, looked disappointed and felt aggrieved; but what could he have expected when proposals by proxy even as a royal privilege have fallen out of fashion these many years?

'Didn't seem to work, old man,' he remarked to his grinning interpreter.

'That's all you know about it,' returned the veteran confidently. 'You wait. Billy Clarke —he's a second-lieutenant now—asked her once. She boxed his ears—a regular right-and-lefter! She didn't box my ears, nor yours, corp. You wait. She put the red flag up all right. To-morrow she'll waggle a white un an' whisper "*Kamerad*" in your ear. You'll see.'

III.

But Corporal Shillitoe did not see a sign of surrender when he called the very next day to take the children for a ride; indeed, he scarcely had a glimpse of Suzette, for either she was desperately busy in the kitchen, or she pretended to be, a state of affairs that continued for a whole week, when the unexpected happened, as it usually does; otherwise it would neither be unexpected nor a happening.

'The general wants his car just as quickly as you can run it up,' a base orderly in charge of the telephones told him one morning. 'Better look slippy. There's something doing. Fritz on the rampage, they say.'

Within five minutes Corporal Shillitoe and the big Italia were off. The uproar away at the front was louder than it had been for some weeks, and the increased bustle in La Lisière indicated an attack somewhere, but of course it was quite impossible for the corporal to run through the town without calling at the *estaminet* to say *au*

revoir to Suzette, whether busy in the *cuisine* or not. As usual, he left the car in the square near by. No sooner had he gone than Suzette's fair-haired monkeys turned a corner and stopped. They knew the car, naturally, and had come to look upon it in some sort as a monster toy of their own.

'We will get in,' said the bold Jean. 'We will lie down so that Sam-mee shall not see us. Then we will frighten him. Oh yes, we shall make him jump. Come on, Suzette!' He opened the door of the last compartment, which was full of rugs, lifted his sister in, and hid himself and her in the rugs. The corporal came back quickly, as Suzette was absent searching for 'le'p'tees ongfongs,' who had strayed, he was told. He cranked up the engine and jumped to the driver's seat. The great car gave a monstrous snort and was off, not exactly like a flash, but as fast as he dared drive it through La Lisière. Out into the country he dashed, and the nearer he drew to headquarters the louder and more continuous the firing became. He could see the Hun shells bursting on the ridge whither he was bound. Presently he began to meet ambulances—a string of them. 'What's up?' he shouted to a driver. 'Attack in force!' was the reply. Then shells began to burst on the road in front. A lorry going up was hit close to him, and overturned into the ditch. At top speed, which was sixty miles an hour, he pressed on, for the Black Tiger was not a patient man. Finally he ran off the road upon a grassy slope, and pulled up at the headquarters hut.

A dark-featured, black-moustached officer, followed by his staff, rode up at once. 'You've been a deuce of a long time on the road!' he roared. 'And now you've come, the confounded car's a mile too big for the job. But we'll have to make the best of it, I suppose!' And he sprang from his horse. 'Jump in, Talbot.—Murdoch! We've no time to waste!' Next moment he was in the car, the end compartment.—'The devil! Here, you, corporal; what's this? What the dickens d'ye mean?'

This was a pair of yellow-haired children, crouched in the bottom of the car, terrified and sobbing. 'Sam-mee! Sam-mee!' wailed Jean, no longer bold.

Corporal Shillitoe came with a jump, looked, and gasped. 'Oh, my God!' he cried. 'The kids!'

'Whose kids?' thundered the Black Tiger furiously.

'Suzette's,' faltered the corporal. 'I didn't know, sir—hadn't no idea!'

'Suzette's!' echoed the Black Tiger, and a humorous look came into his eyes. He hummed a line of a song he had heard—in a theatre—before the war: '"I am the husband of Suzette—of Suzette—of Suzette! I am the"—— Hallo!' as another much lighter car ran up snorting. 'This will suit me better. Take Suzette's children out of here!—Damn!' as a whiz-bang exploded within fifty yards. 'Take them out of this, I say! We're falling back, man! La Lisière will be under shell-fire to-morrow if we fail to hold them.—Blake, I want your car!—Off you go, corporal! Take—them—away!'

Corporal Shillitoe needed no further bidding. Swiftly he moved the children forward in the tonneau, wrapped them up again in the rugs, laid them on the bottom of the car, sprang to the wheel, made a quick turn, and was away, this time really like a flash. It was a fearful journey. Scores of shells were falling on the road now, and the corporal was terribly afraid—not on his own account. He dared not look back, but he remembered what Suzette had said one day when Jean had cut his finger: '*Courage, mon petit!*' and his voice punctuated the explosions: '*Courage, mon petit!* Sammy's here!—*Courage!* Sammy's here!' And so they ran into La Lisière.

This time, and for the first time, he stopped the car at the *estaminet*—would have halted there if in so doing he had held up the field-marshal himself—stopped the car, sprang out, picked up the bundle of children, rugs and all, and carried them within. They had stopped crying. Suzette, her eyes red and swollen with weeping, rushed to meet them, excited, voluble. Round the three she flung her arms, kissing them impartially, crying and laughing by turns.

Corporal Shillitoe had travelled fast, but the news had arrived at greater speed, for a telephonist had witnessed the discovery of Suzette's children at headquarters, and had sent full particulars, so the corporal had little to explain. He was a hero. Suzette's hero. He had brought 'le'p'tees ongfongs' safely out of a terrible battle, and his reward must not be withheld. And so Jean the bold and little Suzette play happily now with Sammy and Lou in a Surrey orchard, where shells and bombs never fall, and never have fallen.

SOME CURIOUS CORNERS OF THE 'KINGDOM' OF FIFE.

By W. T. LINSKILL, President, St Andrews Antiquarian Society.

APART from St Andrews, the cradle of Christianity in Fife, there is much to attract (both from the antiquarian and from the religious point of view) in the 'Kingdom's' beautiful, old-world villages, such as Crail, St Monans, Anstruther, Kilrenny, to name but a few of the gems clustered in the 'East Neuk.' Old ruined buildings, all over the county, take one very far back in the history of Scotland.

St Monans Church, *once* beautiful and ornate,

rises beside the lovely Firth of Forth. There is a tradition that the perpetual lamp burning before the Holy Sacrament served for two purposes in St Monans—namely, as a mark of reverence for our Lord's presence, and as a light to guide the pious fishermen of those bygone days safely into harbour.

Old Abercrombie Church has an interesting legend attached to it. Dedicated to St Mary and St Margaret, it appears to have been a parish church as far back as 1174. It is beautifully situated in romantic surroundings, but has long been a ruin. In the twelfth century, on the death of Sir Humphrey Abercrombie, failing male issue, the estate fell into the possession of two lovely sisters, Mary and Margaret, only daughters of the baronet, and apparently they built the church, and dedicated it to their patron saints. Both fell in love with their handsome cousin, Philip de Candela. He chose the soft-eyed Margaret, and they were married by the hermit, St Monan of Pittenweem. Naturally, the sisters quarrelled, and vowed never to meet again. Candela was killed fighting in King David's army; Margaret became insane, and was taken back and forgiven by Mary. After their reconciliation Margaret recovered her reason. One day the beautiful sisters were attending mass in Abercrombie Church, when a strange thing happened. As the two knelt before the altar to ratify their reconciliation a fearful thunderstorm came on, and when Bishop Arnold of St Andrews bent to give them his benediction, the sacred edifice was filled with a blaze of lightning and the roar of thunder shook the walls. The sisters remained kneeling and silent. The bishop tried to raise the penitents, but they neither moved nor spoke. Awe fell on all present, for death was there. Mary and Margaret, forgiving and forgiven, had passed away before the altar. And, as M. F. Conolly says in his *Fifiana*, 'doubtless angels and redeemed spirits had heralded them to the mansions of the blessed.'

Now for my favourite village, Kilrenny. The old church was dedicated to St Iræneus, Bishop of Lyons, locally called St Renny. Of this old church only the tower and the spire now remain. At the end of the modern building is the Beaton Vault. In former days, no doubt, this vault was beneath the apse, or chancel, of the early building. Cardinal Beaton is believed by many to lie within that vault. After the tragedy at St Andrews, it is said that the cardinal's body lay in salt for nine months in one of the castle dungeons, after which it was taken to Blackfriars Monastery in South Street. Conolly, in his *Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Men in Fife*, says that 'at the time of the cardinal's death John Bethune of Balfour, Markinch, Fife, his cousin, was keeper of the castle of St Andrews, and under his directions the body of the cardinal was conveyed to Kilrenny and buried in the family vault.' This ancient monument stands in Kilrenny churchyard, at the east gable of the church, with the arms of Bethune of Balfour finely sculptured thereon: 'Thus perished in the fifty-second year of his age, and seventh of his primacy, an eminent man of Fife, an illustrious Scotsman.' It would be a matter of great historical interest reverently to examine the vault and ascertain if the coffin of the murdered prelate lies within it, as there has been much discussion on the point.

Dairsie Church is another interesting building. It was erected by Archbishop Spottiswoode (died 1639), who was buried with great ceremony in Westminster Abbey, four hundred candle-bearers being present, and many prelates.

Ceres is a 'real bonny' village, and the dancing-tune of 'Ceres Green' is a great favourite at St Andrews Lammas Fair when the lads and lasses disport themselves in Church Square. Formerly, in a sort of outhouse (which may once have been a Mortuary Chapel) in the kirkyard, lay exposed to view the coffins of the brave John, twentieth Earl of Crawford and Lindsay, and his young wife, with the earl's heart in a casket between the two. On the coffins and the casket—I have a picture of them—was the family coat of arms. I am thankful to hear that all have now been decently buried. The earl, who had a distinguished military career on the Continent, died of wounds in 1749, aged forty-seven. His coffin, his wife's, and the heart-casket were covered with red silk plush. The humble building in which they lay so long appears to be a wing or a side-chapel of some earlier ecclesiastical building, probably the pre-Reformation church. Why they lay so long above-ground in this little building I know not. There may have been some quarrel or misunderstanding, or, as in many other cases, the earl may have objected to be put below the ground. I have heard of numerous curious places where people have ordered their coffins to be deposited after their death. One man was placed on the roof of his house, and another left instructions that his coffin be deposited in his summer-house and a high wall built round it. The Haunted Tower, St Andrews, offers an example of coffins being placed in a built-up chamber—not below-ground.

As for the casket, years ago heart-burials were very common. Devorgilla had the heart of her husband, John de Baliol (died 1269), buried in New Abbey, which she erected by the Solway, near Dumfries. (Hence its name, 'Sweetheart Abbey.') Their son's successful rival, Robert the Bruce, ordered his heart, after his death, to be taken in a handsome casket to the Holy Land. It was being carried to Jerusalem by Douglas when he was attacked *en route* in Spain and slain by the Moors. The casket and the heart were afterwards discovered by his friends, brought to Scotland, and interred in Melrose Abbey,

where they now lie. (The king's body was buried in Dunfermline.)

I try not to get too enthusiastic about things and places, but I must admit I am passionately fond of Crail, perhaps because I have always gone there under favourable auspices. Every year old Tom Morris and I used to have a round on the beautiful links at Balcomie, and I sha'n't forget in a hurry the occasion when I journeyed to Crail with a priest, a minister, and a workman to explore the Caiplie Caves. Much has been written about Crail, and I commend to my readers' notice that excellent novel entitled *May* by Mrs Oliphant. Crail existed long before the eleventh century, and its Provost holds by royal charter the title of Vice-Admiral of the Forth. It was made a royal burgh by Malcolm Canmore, the husband of St Margaret; and their son David I. built a castle there at the top of Nethergate Brae, which for long was a royal residence. William the Lion granted a charter to good old Crail, which he sealed. Robert the Bruce likewise granted a charter in 1306; another followed, signed by Robert II.; and in 1553 Mary Queen of Scots signed the last charter, granting to Crail many liberties.

On Sunday a free market used to be held regularly at Crail, and people flocked to see it from all parts of the East Neuk and elsewhere. Merchants, venders, purchasers, thronged the usually quiet streets, and we learn that the St Andrews and other roads were crowded with merry folks hastening to the fair. This free market continued until the Reformation gradually suppressed it, but it died slowly and reluctantly.

It was from old Balcomie Castle, at Crail, that Mary of Guise, the queen-mother, after her voyage from France, came to St Andrews to marry James V., 'the gude-man of Ballingeich,' at our noble cathedral, then standing in all its majestic splendour.

In Conolly's *Fifiana* is an excellent account of the venerable church of Crail (1310), and of its ornaments, books, and vestments, which in the ancient days of the faith must have been very handsome.

Leuchars old church (1244) is a splendid specimen of Norman architecture, at one end. The west part is modern.

Alloway has its Burns's Cottage, and Perth its Fair Maid's House; but Fife, too, has its humble homes of literary and historic interest.

Kate Dalrymple's cottage on the Cameron Burn, close to the St Andrews water-reservoir, is but a ruin. Her wraith is stated to hover in the vicinity. The tune of 'Kate Dalrymple' always brings to my mind my very old friend, the Scots comedian, R. S. Pillans, and his famous song of 'Auld Reekie,' set to that air.

Maggie Lauder's house at Anstruther reminds one of the grand old song in her praise. Rab the Ranter, who appears in that song, was no less a personage than King James V., who was always going about in various disguises, and on that occasion assumed the character of a piper. No doubt he went to Anstruther either from his palace at Inchmurtach or from St Andrews. When at Anstruther do not forget to visit the old house where the 'Beggar's Benison' sprees were held and attended by the *élite* of Fife.

Nestling under the shadow of Balcarres Craig lie a few bonny cottages, on the old road to Elie. One of them is said to be the dwelling of Auld Robin Gray. It was the young daughter of the fifth Earl of Balcarres, Lady Anne Lindsay (afterwards Lady Anne Barnard), who wrote, at Balcarres, the beautiful and well-known ballad of that name.

At Largo we find the birthplace of Alexander Selkirk, or Selcraig, the original of Robinson Crusoe. A St Andrews councillor tells me that Selkirk was an ancestor of his. In the Crusoe Inn are the flint-lock gun, the chest, and the drinking-cup that Selkirk, *alias* Crusoe, had with him on the island of Juan Fernandez. When he returned home to Largo after his long solitude, he naturally shunned society for a while. I suppose he got 'jumpy,' and so went and took up his residence in a lonely hut in lovely Keils Den. He married, I believe, one Sophia Bruce; and they lie peacefully at rest together in Largo Kirkyard.

There are many historic old houses and cottages round about St Andrews and elsewhere in Fife that remain forgotten and neglected. More 's the pity! Things above-ground should not sink into oblivion; things below-ground *must* be brought to the surface if possible.

Wonderful county, Fife, for coals, auld castles and houses, churches, caves, underground passages, and golf-courses!

THE NIGHTINGALE.

MAGICIAN of the slender throat,
Whose whispered song on softest note
Has oft my inmost being stirred,
What spell is thine, oh plaintive bird?

When in a haze of dusky gold
Day creeps away, her story told,
And in a silence tense, elate,
The heavens enthralled and breathless wait,

A silver song, unearthly, breaks
The silence, and the sleeper wakes
To wonder at the silken thread
Of sound, and dream of love, long dead.

Each poignant note, with plaintive sob,
Vibrates upon the air, to throb
Within my soul: a song that sears
My heart with pain too sad for tears.

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THE PROVERBS OF SCOTTISH HISTORY.

By CHARLES MENMUIR, M.A.

THE history of Scotland is phenomenally rich in examples of proverbs and proverbial sayings inextricably entwined with noteworthy events and great personages. Indeed, it is doubtful if the annals of any other country can yield a list of proverbs comparable to that which may be compiled from the stormy story of the Scottish nation. Sufficient attention has not, as a rule, been given to this bypath in Scottish history, but the significance of such sayings, as they gleam amid the somewhat drab warp and woof of affairs, is none the less obvious.

Sometimes they give the gist of a notable incident, or, it may be, say the last word upon a period, far-reaching in its influence upon future generations; now and again they cast a valuable side-light on the inner meaning of deeds which might otherwise be easily misconstrued by the modern mind. At other times they are more purely personal, and depict for us with graphic and unerring touch the character or the idiosyncrasies of one or other of the chief actors who held the stage at certain thrilling moments. Some of them, also, are characteristic in the manner in which they hit off national virtues or failings; and there are few—if any—that are not racy of the soil from which they have sprung. It may be said of them, as a whole, that they are in very truth supreme instances of the apt use of the just word or phrase upon which our French friends lay such great stress, and in the employment of which they easily lead the world. It may not be altogether out of place to suggest that 'the auld alliance' between Scotland and France may have had a considerable influence in fostering this native readiness north of the Tweed to connect the memorable deed or individual with an equally memorable and fitting phrase or sentence.

Unfortunately there is much matter for regret in the circumstance that so many of these 'jewels five words long' have lost their hold in the common speech of the people, and are familiar now only to the student or the reader who has given days and nights to the chronicles of Scotland. The restoration of such bywords to their former vitality is now almost past praying for; but their historic value, considered even from the modest point of view of their aid to memory alone, makes one desire that their passing into oblivion should at least be retarded as long as possible.

In setting forth here notable illustrations of this proverbial usage, which is so marked a feature in Scottish historical records, it is not the writer's aim to give anything approaching a complete list of these sayings. Readers who may be disappointed at the omission of examples which they personally consider peculiarly happy will, it is hoped, forgive all shortcomings in this respect, and not too severely blame the scribe for any apparent wilfulness of selection. Several reasons are at hand to account for the absence of a goodly number of suitable instances that might have been given to back up the contention advanced in the opening sentence of this paper. Limitation of space might be pleaded. Many illustrations were intentionally put aside because they appeared more local than national in their usage, although certain local proverbs are amongst the best of their kind, and in some ways have a far wider application than their mere wording would imply. The temptation to include these was well-nigh irresistible, and one at least may be admitted here as typical of quite a number of others of a similar character. 'Ne'er misca' a Gordon in the raws o' Stra'bogie' is redolent of the old clannishness which was a fruitful source both of weakness and of strength throughout the turbulent pages of the history of the Highlands of Scotland. The saying, indeed, voices the universal feeling that it is always the safest course not to speak ill of a man among his friends.

No reader of Scottish history can have failed to be struck with the almost fiercely dramatic element that throbs in so many of the chief events. The native of a country whose history has run in more pleasant places may sneer at a rudeness which often borders on savagery, and feel dislike for the frequent display of passions all too primitive for the more conventional taste; but he cannot deny the splendid and hardy vigour of Scotland's story, and he cannot refuse to recognise the indomitable spirit that explains, if it does not always excuse, the grim doings of a bygone age. It is this feature in Scottish history which lends itself so readily to the laconic emphasis of so many of our historical proverbs and sayings.

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When the Scottish nobles were sick to death of the régime of Robert Cochrane, the favourite of James III., they determined on ending or mending matters. In one of their discussions Lord Gray recalled the well-known fable of the mice who hit upon the plan of putting a warning bell round the neck of their enemy, the cat. 'Wha daur bell the cat?' he bluntly asked the company. Archibald Douglas, the powerful Earl of Angus, accepted the challenge; arrested Cochrane and other minions of the king, and hanged them over Lauder Bridge. Since that far-off day (1482) Angus has been known as Archibald 'Bell the Cat,' and Lord Gray's question is still a common one on the lips of a Scotsman desirous of knowing who will face some risky or disagreeable task.

A less familiar allusion traces its origin back to Bruce. This is the saying, 'Ye 'll hae made anither Lord Soulis mistake.' When complaints were made to the king about this nobleman, Bruce incautiously told the aggrieved parties to boil the offender if they pleased. They took the king at his word, and 'to mak siccar' they first of all rolled Soulis in a sheet of lead. The phrase was once in common use when rash advice was given to anybody who might be only too ready to carry it into effect, but it is now obsolete. Sir Walter Scott, who saved many sayings of a like nature from total oblivion, embalmed it in *Guy Mannering*.

Another saying which dates from the same period in our history is that alluding to the betrayal of Sir William Wallace (1305). Such was the horror of the people at Sir John de Menteith's act that it was usual for many centuries in Scotland, when handing a bannock to a Menteith, to give it the wrong side uppermost. The proverbial phrase was: 'The wrang side o' the bannock to a Menteith.'

The French guillotine had an ancestor in the 'Maiden' of Scotland, a word which still retains this special meaning in the sentence: 'He that invented the maiden first handselled it.' This machine for executing criminals is said to have been introduced into Scotland by James Douglas, Earl of Morton. This nobleman, who was regent of the kingdom during part of Queen Mary's reign, was himself beheaded by the 'Maiden,' which is now preserved in the Antiquarian Museum in Edinburgh.

The still familiar proverb, 'Better bairns greet than bearded men,' is generally supposed to have been addressed by Knox to Queen Mary on one memorable occasion after he had moved her to tears by his strong condemnation of her religious views. The tutor of Glamis is sometimes credited with using the same proverb to King James VI. when he burst into tears on finding himself a prisoner after the Raid of Ruthven (1582). Knox's name is also connected with an equally well-known saying, applied to him by the Earl of Morton just mentioned. This was the fine and striking eulogium which the earl, when regent, delivered over the grave of Knox: 'There lies one who, neither feared nor flattered flesh.' This is the actual version as it is recorded in Melville's Diary, but the more frequent and later wording of it runs: 'There lies one who never feared the face of man.'

'Out in the '45' is another of these old expressions still significant to most Scotsmen, but 'The mair mischief, the better sport,' which dates from the same time, may be less familiar. Its historical application is to Lord Lovat, who was deeply implicated in the last Jacobite Rebellion. On the day of his execution the guards, on entering his cell, told him that the platform erected to give the public a good view of the procession to Tower Hill had collapsed. Lovat's grim comment was, 'Weel, weel, the mair mischief, the better sport.'

The administration of justice in Scotland was frequently very partial in early times, and there are at least two proverbial sayings which bear this statement out. When the iron hand of Cromwell was felt throughout the British Isles, he sent English judges to Edinburgh to try cases. A Scottish judge of the old school expressed his opinion of the new-comers in these words: 'Deil mean them for justice, a wheen kithless loons.' For long afterwards this sentence, shortened to 'Deil mean them,' was current in common talk. As the old Scots judge uttered it, however, it shows clearly enough how the native judges had been accustomed to favour their relatives and friends. (This partiality, as a matter of fact, flourished down to the Union in 1707; and Scott, in his *Bride of Lammermoor*, makes use of a kindred saying in reference to the existence of this state of affairs: 'Show me the man and I 'll show you the law.')

'Jeddart justice,' meaning first hang a man and then try him, has survived down to the present day, and may still be heard in use when occasion arises. It is held by some to have originated in 1574, when the Regent Morton visited Jedburgh and executed with scant ceremony a large number of his political opponents. Another explanation of its origin that is sometimes given may be stated here because of its sardonic humour. The trial of a number of persons was in progress, and the jury were divided as to their verdict. A juryman, who had not been missed while the discussion was going on, was noticed to be sound asleep in a corner. The others promptly awoke him, and when they demanded his opinion, it was hurled at them in the words, 'Hang them a'.'

Scotland, however, did not have a complete monopoly in this rough-and-ready method of dealing out justice, for it may be noted that Lydford, in Devonshire, could claim, on the strength of its couplet,

> First hang and draw,
> Then hear the case by Lydford law,

to be no unworthy rival of the ancient burgh of Jedburgh.

Another phrase dealing with the same grim question of hanging is the simile, "As high as Gilderoy,' which may still be heard in use, amongst older folks at all events. Gilderoy was a notorious Aberdeen freebooter in his day, and, along with his band of outlaws, was eventually hanged in Edinburgh about the beginning of the seventeenth century. To mark his position as leader, he received the somewhat dubious distinction of being hanged on a higher gallows than the others.

When Cardinal Beaton was murdered, his body was preserved in salt by the conspirators during the time they held St Andrews Castle against the forces of the Government. A rhyme, for long familiar, in Fifeshire especially, referred to this incident. It ran as follows:

Marry, maidens! marry, maidens! marry, maidens, now!
For stickit is your Cardinal, and sautit like a sow.

The insinuation as to the Cardinal's private life which is contained in this couplet was generally accepted as doing but scant justice to the many gallant affairs which Beaton apparently found leisure to indulge in, even amid the affairs of State, in the handling of which he was so great a master, as is now acknowledged by our most recent authorities upon Scottish history.

Space forbids our dwelling at length on a long array of such sayings, although in themselves they are well worth more than a passing glance. Amongst them may be mentioned 'Falkland manners" (the old courtly manners associated with Falkland Palace); 'An Admirable Crichton;' 'A regular Pate Stewart" (an evil taskmaster); 'Every man for his ain hand, as Henry Wynd fought;' 'Earl Percy sees my fall!' (often applied to cases where an old rival is witness of his opponent's discomfiture); "Comes Liddesdale's peace when Armstrongs cease;' 'Another for Hector;' and 'Ding doon the nests and the rooks will flee awa',' the very expressive proverb which describes so aptly the fury of the Reformers in their destruction of the architectural splendours of the Roman Catholic Church.

Many of the above occur in one or other of Scott's masterpieces, and to give anything like an adequate idea of his use of such illustrative phrases would require an article in itself. In *The Black Dwarf* he preserves for us the old adage, 'All evil comes out o' thereaway,' which was generally on the lips of Borderers whose lives were passed in continual and imminent danger from their neighbours beyond the Cheviots.

In *The Fortunes of Nigel* will be found the dictum attributed to the fourth Earl of Douglas, nicknamed 'Tineman' (that is, 'the loser'), because of his many lost battles, who was wounded and made prisoner at the battle of Shrewsbury (1403): 'He sits fu' close that has riven breeks.' If the 'Tineman' did really make the remark in such circumstances as he found himself at the close of the fight, it certainly shows that he was something of a philosopher as well as a doughty fighter.

Scott's favourite amongst all these old sayings was the beautifully worded sentiment, 'It were better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep,' and he employed it more than once to express the superiority of a free, open-air life over that of a city. It will be found so applied in *The Fair Maid of Perth*. Originally it was attributed to the Douglases, but many another Border chief adopted it to asseverate belief in the truth of Bruce's opinion that the woods and the hills of their country were their safest bulwarks, instead of fortified places, which the English were more accustomed to assaulting or defending.

In acknowledging our debt to Scott for the preservation of many of these, it may be permitted to quote another which he employs with great effect in *The Heart of Midlothian*. There he pawkily informs us, 'Naebody's nails can reach the length of Lunnon.' This was a proverb that was much in use in the years after the Union in 1707, and it recorded, somewhat regretfully, the fact that the bribery which had previously been influential in Edinburgh could not afterwards be employed with the same results in distant London.

Quite a considerable number of these proverbial sayings refer particularly to our turbulent Border history. 'To tak' Hector's cloak' may be cited here as a good example. Its origin can be traced to the flight into Scotland of Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, after his ill-fated share in the 'Rebellion of the North' in 1569. In the course of his wanderings he sought refuge with Hector Armstrong, who basely handed him over to the Regent of Scotland. The fate of the betrayer is said to have been such as he merited. As an old writer puts it, 'This Hector, from being a rich man, fell poor of a sudden, and was so hated generally that he never durst go abroad.'

'The Douglas larder,' an expression employed to indicate a reckless waste of provisions, is said to have originated in the action of Douglas when he recaptured his castle from the English in Bruce's time. When he had again become master of it, he deliberately destroyed all the liquors and provisions stored there, so that they might not benefit the enemy if again successful in attacking the castle.

'Macfarlane's Lantern,' a well-known Border synonym for the moon, is eloquent in its hint as to the ways and means the early Borderers adopted in earning a livelihood. The Macfarlanes may have been more than usually notorious in these night raids, but the other clans followed their example readily enough.

It is interesting to recall that the Scotts of Harden, from whom Sir Walter was proud to trace his descent, had as their family motto, '*Cornua reparabit Phœbe.*' This, along with their coat of arms, which was a crescent moon, proves conclusively that they considered they had as good a right as any to share in the benefits of 'Macfarlane's Lantern.'

Not one of the phrases scattered throughout this paper stirs the blood or warms the heart of a Scotsman as that which has come to be regarded as the most characteristic of all. I had the privilege of hearing it used with telling effect not long after the war burst upon us. The occasion was a great recruiting rally in the City Hall of Glasgow; the speaker was Sir Samuel Chisholm, the city's 'grand old man,' one of the most picturesque personalities of the West of Scotland, and a perfervid Scot withal. As he closed a ringing speech with the trumpet-call, 'Scotland for ever!' the audience rose to him in a wave of enthusiasm which proved that a Scottish heart 'aye warms to the tartan.'

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE sun took no gallant stride into his own that morning; the opening of his blood-shot eye was more like daybreak in mid-December than in June.

Burning fringes of clouds, lance-heads of fitful flame piercing the smoking mists round the high tops, strange warring splashes of black and crimson, all wrought an effect of a huge chromatic error in the sky. There was something sinister and minatory in it, the suggestion of an unseen, watchful Evil, the eternal struggle behind the veil between the Powers of light and darkness. But the sun steadily gained strength, the cloud-battalions retreated stubbornly, fighting every yard, until at last they wavered and broke. Triumphant Day drew a deep breath as the light streamed down to the valleys.

Where we lay we commanded the view of the Corrie's entrance, sentinelled on our right by The Knuckle, on our left by a slope leading up to a steep granite escalade, well named in the Gaelic *Faradh 'ghobhar* ('The Goats' Ladder'), and beyond it a section of the Pass, its background the red mass of Ben Muich Dhui, in strange contrast to the black, stern precipices of Braeriach behind us.

Once or twice a curious sound like a far-off salmon-reel—the *chirr-r* of the ptarmigan—reached us, but we knew it came from Duncan. It was a prearranged signal, to tell us that our men were all posted and ready. Duncan and Finlay were in a hollow over the ridge on the crest of The Knuckle, Rob Macbain four or five hundred yards higher up on their right, while Matheson and Angus, half a mile away on our left, watched the Pass to the north.

Spying was now possible, and almost at once I saw something stirring in the waste below Ben Muich Dhui. It proved to be a herd of deer, moving quickly. In a minute or two they stopped and turned head to wind. Plainly, something had alarmed them, for they bunched together restlessly, while a big stag—the leader of the herd—kept a wary look-out above them. Suddenly the sentinel wheeled round and trotted down to the main body, when they all went off at a great pace, and swinging abruptly to the east, disappeared over a ridge. Eagerly we spied for signs of the cause of their manifest disquiet, but the mountain-side was empty.

'If there's any one there, he is taking cover or coming down one of the corries,' said Keene-Leslie, his eye glued to his glass. Presently a couple of brace of ptarmigan shot across the Pass in quick succession. Ten minutes passed while our glasses ranged the distances. Happening to look at Macbain's hiding-place, I caught sight of the crook of his staff showing cautiously above the rock where he was posted—a signal that he had something to communicate. I told Tony, and with our glasses we picked out Macbain behind the rock. He pointed towards the base of Ben Muich Dhui. We had not looked for an approach from that quarter, but Macbain was high up, and had keen stalker's eyes. After a few seconds' spying I caught my breath, for my glass revealed, beyond doubt, the figure of a man moving along the lip of a gully between the Ben and the Pass. Against the dark background of the rock-face, he was difficult to follow, but when he came to a scree strewn with lighter-coloured granite he leaped into clearer focus—a tall man picking his way leisurely among the boulders. He halted for a moment, looked about him, and began to clamber down the gully until we lost sight of him.

'Didn't expect to see anybody from that quarter, Neil. A wandering tourist, maybe,' was Tony's comment. 'We 'll soon find out, for he is probably heading this way.'

We had not to wait long, for the solitary man suddenly reappeared, and again halted. I got him in a good light, and could see him looking around him deliberately once more, as if taking his bearings. He was too far away for me to seize any details, but soon he started again, and a light-gray patch threw him into sharp relief. He showed for an instant or two only, but long enough for me to make out a tall figure. Tingling with excitement—for I was

certain that I had seen him before—I steadied the glass and followed his progress. The man came straight on, with no attempt at concealment. Soon he stepped into a clear pool of the young sunlight, and in an instant I recognised my jailer of No. 9 Duff Avenue, the leader of the gang who had kidnapped me in London!

'Our man, Tony,' I whispered with grim elation. '"The Searcher"! Guidotti!'

Keene-Leslie watched him through his glasses, and made no reply for a long time. At last he turned to me. 'This is interesting, Neil. But I'm puzzled.'

'Puzzled?'

'Yes. I confess I looked for somebody else, some one bearing no resemblance to the amiable Guidotti. . . . He may have an accomplice. I wonder! . . . He seems profoundly interested in mountain scenery. He is using a field-glass.'

Sure enough, Guidotti was spying, and with care and deliberation. Well out of sight round the corner of the boulder, we watched his every movement.

Suddenly he dropped to the ground, instantly to resume his spying, keeping his glass steadily on the Pass to the north.

We turned our glasses to the foot of The Goats' Ladder, and almost at the same instant picked up a dark speck out of colour with its granite-strewn base—a deer, or perhaps a mere trick of the eye, I thought, until the speck moved. It was a man, and, unlike the first-comer, this one was covering the ground quickly. He never halted for a breathing-space, but rounded the foot of the Ladder, and came steadily on towards us. After a long look, Keene-Leslie lowered his glass.

'At the rate he is going,' said he, 'the new-comer will be here in a quarter of an hour, and friend Guidotti, who is watching him, will probably join him. Have your revolver ready.'

The man never slackened his steady rate of progress, the hidden watcher covering him all the time with his glass, while we spied them both. Ever onwards he pressed, with hardly a glance to right or left. Guidotti now commenced to follow him stealthily, crouching behind boulder after boulder. On came the new-comer, manifestly unconscious of the eyes watching him in the lonely wilderness. Whoever he was, this was no hill-climber out for pleasure, but a man plainly in a hurry, and making for a definite objective. Leaden minutes crawled by before the range shortened sufficiently for me to get a good look at him. I lowered the glass, astonished but relieved, and looked at Tony. The man was Dr Hall!

'He is looking for us. Something must have happened. Shall we hail him?' I whispered.

'All in good time,' said Tony, his eyes glued on the two men. 'Look! He is coming towards us.'

I took up the binocular again. The doctor was now breasting the slope towards the Chanter. Fifty yards from the rock-pillar he halted, his eye searching the empty-looking solitude. What he did not see was the figure behind him, crouched, stealthy as a panther, slipping, a foot at a time, from boulder to boulder, with so uncanny a skill that, had I not known, I should have been unable to distinguish it from the rocks. The shoulders never showed, but every now and then an inch or two of its head or the white of its watching eye told me that it was coming nearer, and I knew, with a strange certainty, that the two men were enemies.

The doctor reached the Chanter, where he halted, and stood leaning a shoulder against it, resting. The pillar was now between him and the watcher, who instantly seized his opportunity. Swiftly and surely he picked his way to within thirty yards of his quarry, who, all unconscious of the hidden presence, was still standing beside the pillar. Then Guidotti rose to his full height, and stood motionless as a statue. My heart was drumming. Another moment and I should have shouted a warning to the doctor, but at that instant he swung round and the two men's eyes met. The doctor reeled back, holding a hand in front of his face as if to shut out a repellent vision. Not a word passed. Guidotti held himself erect, his arms folded, a scornful and Mephistophelian domination in his eye. The doctor was swaying slightly, a steadying hand outstretched to the rock, his face gray and shrunken. With a dawning sense of horror, I saw that he had a beaten look.

My racing thoughts were checked by a quick movement from Guidotti. Instantly the other threw up his hands and held them above his head, his eyes fixed on the gleam of a revolver in his enemy's hand. The echo of a laugh floated up to us. While one might have counted ten neither of them moved. . . . Then the covered man walked forward towards the tall figure, and halted in front of him. Guidotti, revolver still levelled, deliberately searched his captive. I saw him take something from him, and in the stillness we caught, for the first time, the sound of their voices. They were too far off for us to make out the tenor or even a single phrase of what passed between them, and there was little in the strict sense of conversation, for the tall man dominated, his voice level but insistent, the doctor speaking at rare intervals.

'I would give a good deal to hear what courtesies are passing,' whispered Tony.

Suddenly a word thrown at the other by Guidotti rang out twice, clearly and distinctly. The word was '*Traditore!*' and in a second, like a flash of lightning at black midnight, the truth blazed on me. I *knew*, and the revelation sent a current of ice through my blood. Stabbed into my brain in that instant, I knew that 'The Searcher' at The Bield was none other than the

man who called himself Dr Hall, and at the sight of the smooth villain a masterful wave of wrath almost lifted me to my feet. But Tony's cool and steady hand gripped my wrist, and there was a triumphant spark in his eye as he bent forward and whispered, 'Now you know, Neil! But—steady! And fire if either attempts to bolt or resist after I challenge them. See! They are moving. They can't escape. Our men will get them on the flanks, but when they discover this—look out for trouble.'

Guidotti, revolver in hand, was walking behind 'The Searcher.' They had reached a point about half-way between the Chanter and The Knuckle, when the man in front stopped and pointed to The Goats' Ladder. Guidotti gave a gesture of assent, and the two turned towards The Ladder, and having gained the level ground by the burn, crossed it by some stepping-stones.

Their détour brought them near where we lay, and now and then a word, borne on a light wind, reached us.

(*Continued on page 519.*)

HOW HONEY-BEES DEPOSE ROYALTY.

By Canning Williams.

WHAT can be said of the intelligence of insects which murder their mother—her upon whom the prosperity, if not the very life, of the home depends—and then, immediately after committing the crime, run about in a state of panic and despair, bemoaning their self-inflicted loss? Most people would reply that creatures which acted in so insane a manner could not possess intelligence at all, and some might be disinclined to believe that insects could be guilty of such extraordinary behaviour. It sounds altogether too human in its utter foolishness to be true. And yet that wise little bundle of nerves and animation, the honey-bee, is addicted to these strange acts of frenzy when her domestic arrangements are rudely upset. Perhaps it is a form of hysteria, for, as every one knows, creatures of a delicate and high-strung nervous organisation are liable to singular aberrations.

The death of the queen, or mother, is brought about by suffocation, assisted possibly by starvation. A knot of bees, about the size of a walnut, surrounds Her Majesty, and literally hugs her to death. The procedure is known among bee-keepers as 'balling' the queen. It would seem to the lay mind to be an easy and expeditious thing for a single bee to be appointed executioner, and for her to compass the death of the head of the hive by a sting-thrust or two and a particle of poison; but, for some reason best known to themselves, the bees—such thrifty economists in so many other directions—do not adopt this speedy and business-like method. It is as though no individual bee had the moral (or immoral) courage to be the sole assassin, even under orders, or to bear the onus of the crime, and so two or three score of arch-traitors—the Bolshevists of the colony—associate in the deed. At any rate, that great student of bees, Maeterlinck, takes this view. He attributes the balling of the queen to a law which 'invests her person with a sort of inviolability,' and prohibits the direct assault of any one bee. 'No bee, it would seem,' he says, 'dare take on itself the horror of direct and bloody regicide. Whenever, therefore, the good order and the prosperity of the republic appear to demand that a queen shall die, they endeavour to give her death some semblance of natural disease, and by infinite subdivision of the crime to render it almost anonymous. . . . They will thus form a sort of living prison, wherein the captive is unable to move; and in this prison they will keep her for twenty-four hours, if need be, till the victim die of suffocation and hunger.'

The act committed, a strange agitation takes possession of the bees. All work stops. The nectar may entice ever so seductively, but it is ignored. Their grief is so great that it even overpowers their greed. They rush about the combs and the floor; they explore the entrance-porch and the alighting-board; they run up and down the front and the sides of the hive; in short, they search for their mother in every likely and unlikely place, and all the time her lifeless body lies in the citadel, soon to be cast as rubbish to the void. The commotion gradually subsides, and at the end of two or three days all signs of agitation have disappeared. But the colony, without its queen-mother, is in a stricken, hopeless condition. The erstwhile industrious workers are disposed to linger and idle round the cabin door, and a general air of listlessness and indifference pervades the once busy place.

If there are in the hive eggs, or grubs (larvæ) not more than three days old, the bees set to work to construct royal cells (in shape something like an acorn), and to rear a few queens; but before a queen is reared, fertilised, and laying, a month or more may pass away, and in that time the colony rapidly dwindles in population, and may become so weak as to necessitate its being united with another hive. Time can, of course, be saved by introducing to the stock a fertile queen. Experienced bee-keepers take care to have, in miniature or 'nucleus' hives, a few young laying queens on hand in readiness for emergencies of this kind; and those who are not so provided are usually able to purchase

queens from dealers during the summer and autumn months.

The introduction of a new queen to a queenless stock is a "ticklish" business, and even experts sometimes fail in the attempt. If the greatest care is not taken, the experiment may result in disaster—in a repetition of the fatal 'balling' procedure. The longer a hive is without a queen, the more difficult it is to introduce one successfully. It is not easy to square this fact with the reputed intelligence of the bee, but so it is.

Let us imagine that the bereaved apiarist, in return for, say, ten shillings, has received a young fertile queen by post. She has arrived in a small wooden cage consisting of three apartments connected with each other by small tunnels or openings. The queen and about a dozen attendants to feed her and keep her warm are in possession of two of the apartments, while the third is filled with food, consisting of a paste or candy made of icing-sugar and honey. The bees are confined by means of a piece of wire gauze tacked on to the box. At the end of the cage there is a small hole which gives access to the food from the outside. The bee-keeper goes to the hive into which he intends to introduce the new arrival, and carefully cuts out all the queen-cells which the bees have formed, for a colony is always less inclined to accept an alien sovereign if it has commenced to rear queens of its own. He then places the cage, gauze side downwards, immediately over the space between the two middle combs, covers up warmly, and, if he is wise, leaves things severely alone for a week. The bees at once become aware of the presence of the strangers by their odour, and a fiercely hostile attitude is taken up towards them. Infuriated but vain attempts are made to attack the new-comers, who, in their narrow prison, and in the midst of hundreds of bees clamouring for their lives, must experience anything but a happy time. If a prisoner should chance to poke her leg through one of the openings in the gauze, it is immediately seized in the strong mandibles of one of the storming-party, and a tug-of-war ensues, which sometimes results in the limb being forcibly torn away. Queens have been known to lose a limb in this way, but they seem to manage as well on five legs as on six.

While this has been going on, a few bees have discovered the way to the candy, and are busily engaged, one at a time (for the passage is too small to accommodate more than one), in consuming it and, all unknown to themselves, preparing a way of escape for the queen and her retinue. After a dozen hours or so have passed, hostilities moderate, the bees in the cage begin to lose their own odour and to acquire that of the denizens of the hive, and before long a feeling of cool indifference takes the place of the former hot enmity. This in turn is followed by a sentiment of distinct friendliness, some of the younger and more amiable bees even going the length of offering food to Her Majesty, and she, nothing loth to exchange candy for honey, accepts the gift with, doubtless, becoming grace. Still the excavators are proceeding steadily with their tunnelling, and at the end of about thirty-six hours from the time the cage was placed in position a clear passage has been made, and the queen and her attendants find their way along the corridor, and enter the hive proper. This is a critical time. A few crusty old spinsters (the older a bee becomes, the more waspish it grows) are disposed to show Her Majesty the cold shoulder, even if they are not so rude as to commit acts of open violence; but if the queen behaves herself with dignity and quietness, not arousing opposition by excitable behaviour, or inviting attack by manifesting cowardice, the chances are that she will be accepted, and will soon enjoy all the rights and privileges of her position.

Now, it is natural that the bee-keeper, especially if he is a beginner, should be anxious to find out whether or not the new queen has been received in a friendly spirit; and if he allows his curiosity to get the better of his judgment, he will probably open out the hive and 'have a look.' He lifts out frame after frame of comb, and searches with a quick eye among the dense population for the long body of the mother-bee. Ah, there she is! What a beauty! But he notices that she is being harried about the comb, and that one or two bees are biting her wings and trying to get on her back. He is alarmed, and, with visions of 'balling' in his mind, he hurriedly returns the comb, and puts on the 'quilts' and the roof. But the mischief has been done. Even now, as the bee-keeper, with knitted brow, is regretting his untimely interference, the bees are at their deadly work; the ball is growing in size, and the queen is being locked in a remorseless embrace, and in that fatal grip she will be held until life departs.

I have had personal experience of the balling of queens. A year or two ago I purchased from a breeder in Italy a native queen, which duly arrived by post in good condition. The cage was placed over the queenless stock in the manner already described, and seven days later an examination was made. The bees had eaten away the candy, and were passing in and out of the cage; but the queen was still in confinement, the passage probably being too narrow for her to pass through. I therefore removed the wire gauze, and returned the cage, with its inmate, to its former position. An hour or two later I was sitting near the bees, enjoying the soothing effect of their humming, when I saw a young virgin queen come out of the hive next to the one where I had introduced the Italian, and, after a short flight, enter the Italian queen's hive in mistake for her own. I knew what would

happen if the two queens met—there would be a duel to the death; so I sprang up, and, without bothering about smoke or veil, immediately opened out the hive with the intention of catching the interloper. On removing one of the combs, I saw thereon a tell-tale bunch of bees, and, on parting them with my finger, exposed the bright-yellow body of the Italian queen. They were in the act of balling her, and had probably been subjecting her to their murderous attentions from the moment I had replaced the cage. I seized her by the wings—in my excitement taking no heed of the stings inflicted upon me by some of the malefactors—and placed her in a matchbox. I then found the princess, and returned that wandering maiden to her rightful quarters. Next I filled an egg-cup with honey, immersed the Italian queen completely in it, and poured honey and queen into the hive. The bees at once began to 'clean' Her Majesty, and by the time the process was finished they had abandoned their grim purpose. Possibly they thought that so 'sweet' a queen should be spared. If it had not been for my having seen the princess enter the wrong hive, the Italian would probably have succumbed to suffocation. I say 'probably,' because it sometimes happens that the bees do not carry out their plan to the bitter end, especially if, as in the case mentioned, the queen has been caged for several days, and so has acquired the family smell.

It is not an easy thing to disperse a ball of bees and rescue the queen uninjured. If smoke is used, the already irritated creatures are made more angry, when, forgetting their strange etiquette to royalty, those nearest to the captive are apt to use their stings with quick and deadly effect. A good plan is to insert a piece of thin card under the ball, raise it gently, and drop the bees into a basin of tepid water. The murderous design will at once be abandoned, and the queen may be rescued none the worse for her bath. Another method is to carry a small oil-can with a spring bottom (such as is used for oiling sewing-machines), filled with thin syrup. A ball of bees, on being discovered, should be well saturated with syrup, and the hive closed. The bees will then break up the party, and give attention to their own and the queen's toilets, and in this peaceful occupation soothe their savage breasts.

Bees are specially prone to attack the queen if their domicile is disturbed just as she is settling down in the spring to her business of egg-laying. At such times they strongly object to a rude interference with their domestic arrangements, deeply resent their nurseries and storehouses being peeped and pried into, and are greatly disposed to wreak their mad vengeance upon the poor innocent queen. A bee-keeper 'manipulates' at this season at his peril. More queens are balled in the spring than at any other period of the year, and it is just at this time that queens can least be spared. Let me give another personal experience. On the 22nd of April 1916—a warm day—I transferred a stock of bees from the hive in which they had passed the winter, and which badly required spring cleaning, to a new hive, dry, comfortable, and in every way a most desirable residence. I did it with as little disturbance as possible, for I knew it was an operation not unattended with risk. Two days later I was brushing up some dead bees near the hive, when I saw—could ingratitude go further?—the lifeless body of the queen. I picked it up, more in sorrow than in anger, and proceeded to examine the hive. Yes, there was no mistake about it; the queen had been killed as the result of my moving the bees to more salubrious quarters, and the absurd insects had already taken steps to repair their loss by constructing queen-cells. Queens were not to be had for love or money at that time of year; so, in order to keep the colony going, I helped it occasionally with a comb of young brood from other hives. It was the 26th of May before the new queen was laying, and thus five valuable weeks had been lost, all as the result of my having done the 'flitting' too soon. Had I waited a few weeks, and moved the household on a bright, warm day when honey was coming in freely and brood-rearing had been well established, there would have been no such calamitous sequel.

Bees depose their sovereigns in other ways than by balling. The honey-bee itself is a short-lived creature—in the height of the summer it works itself to death in about six or eight weeks—but the natural life of a queen extends to several years. She is at her best, however, in the second summer, and bee-keepers who are abreast of modern practice rarely keep their queens after the second season. If left to themselves, the bees will supersede a queen as soon as she shows marked signs of failing fecundity. The edict goes forth, in the strange, mysterious way of the hive, that the queen, from whose teeming flanks hundreds of thousands of eggs have fallen, is to die. A few royal cells are formed, and in due time the first princess emerges from her cradle. She at once begins to kill her hapless sisters—a tragic piece of work in which she is assisted by the workers; but, until her strength shall have increased somewhat, she avoids a direct meeting with the reigning monarch. A few days pass, and then, not only ready but eager for the fray, the now strong and active princess challenges her mother to mortal combat. The old bee is aweary; she is worn out with almost unceasing egg-laying; her body has lost its youthful agility. Though at the sight of her rival a little of the old martial spirit rises in her, and she for a time wards off the furious onslaughts of her antagonist, she fights a hopeless battle, a forlorn hope, and presently, paralysed by a deep thrust from her adversary's

keen scimitar, she ceases the unequal conflict, drags her heavy limbs across the combs which formerly she traversed so proudly, and which her life's labour has peopled so often, and presently falls dead to the floor of the hive. Then the undertakers set to work, and the body is cast out into the outer light. Thus in the world of the honey-bees, as in that of men, the grim spectre of Tragedy lurks behind the throne!

THE MAN WHO LOVED LONDON.

PART II.

BY Monday morning, when he returned to town, the First Commissioner of Works had forgotten all about the man who loved London, and as he was almost immediately plunged into a violent controversy with a Metropolitan member of Parliament who complained that buttercups and daisies were beginning to grow scarce in Hyde Park, and blamed the Board of Works for shameful neglect, the subject of ugliness faded from his mind. In fact, it never occurred to him again until the beginning of the following winter, when his official senses suddenly received a violent shock. He was sitting in his private room at the Works and Public Buildings Department at Storey's Gate, when there entered to him an important personage, the Assistant-Bailiff of the Royal Parks, upon whose face were written the tidings of a catastrophe.

'I have a most serious matter to report,' announced this gentleman. 'During the night some evilly-disposed person or persons have knocked off the head of the statue of Queen Victoria which stands between Kensington Palace and the Round Pond. Certainly,' continued the speaker, 'it was not an object of any great pretension to distinction in art, but what is really of importance is the principle of the thing! It would seem to have been the work of some vandal'——

'You're quite sure it wasn't a high wind?' asked Mr Jenkinson-Pelham with anxiety.

'There was no wind at all last night,' answered the Assistant-Bailiff. 'And the deed was done with a large sledge-hammer. In fact, the sledge-hammer is downstairs in a taxi-cab.'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham meditated, considered, and picked up a large sheaf of documents which he always kept at hand in order to frighten callers with. He waved the sheaf at this caller. 'Let every proper inquiry be made at once,' he said. 'As you see, I am much engaged.'

The Assistant-Bailiff went away, and Mr Jenkinson-Pelham put his sheaf aside and picked up the *Times*. Even then he did not connect this outrage with the old gentleman of the blue spectacles. But presently a messenger entered with a telegram, over which the First Commissioner bent with wonder. As soon as he was alone he muttered the wording: '"I warned you of what would result from your inaction. Now take heed and follow up the good work. Otherwise it will be continued by the Man who Loves London."'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham sat upright in his chair and gasped for breath. His memory immediately recalled the beautiful May morning, in the neighbourhood of 'The Dish of Trouts,' the grave accents of the old crank, and his preposterous notions.

'So the old—old reprobate really meant it!' he soliloquised. 'And he's begun! What an awful business! Who knows what he may not do? Let me see, now—didn't he say he lived somewhere near me? I wonder if I could have him found, and locked up as a madman. Of course, he's a raving lunatic!'

Later in the day, when he had lunched at his club, the First Commissioner of Works went over to New Scotland Yard and had a little chat with a high official. Thence onward several remarkably acute detectives sought the Kensington district for a benevolent old gentleman who wore blue spectacles and carried a large cotton umbrella, and was likely to be found in the neighbourhood of any modern specimen of the sculptor's art. Their various searches proved quite empty of result, and at the end of a week another disturbed-looking official came into Mr Jenkinson-Pelham's private room.

'The statue (by Scraper, R.A.) of the late Field-Marshal MacGrowther, in Waterloo Place, has been shamefully maltreated during the night,' he announced. 'The plumes of the cocked hat have been broken off, the nose chipped away, and one leg is gone from the knee downwards. It was the leg on which the Order of the Garter was displayed. A sledge-hammer was lying at the foot of the injured monument. It is downstairs in a taxi-cab.'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham got rid of this informant in his usual fashion. But when he had gone, he did not pick up the *Times*. Instead, he cowered in his comfortably padded chair, waiting for what he knew would be sure to come—another telegram. Within half-an-hour it came, and he opened it with trembling fingers, and read it with starting eyes: 'This is nothing to what will happen. You had better begin your work at once. Otherwise it will be

done for you, most drastically, by the Man who Loves London.'

This message acted on Mr Jenkinson-Pelham like a cold douche. He rose, assumed his fur-collared overcoat, went away to New Scotland Yard, and a little later drove with a detective to a suburban post-office, at which the telegram had been handed in at precisely 10.53 that morning. He and the detective took a spectacled lady who was in charge mysteriously aside, and held the telegram in front of her nose.

'Can you tell us,' asked the detective, 'who sent this wire from your office this morning? I mean, can you describe the sender?'

The spectacled lady immediately found speech. 'Certainly,' she answered. 'I remember the gentleman very well—an elderly man, attired in a blue-serge suit.'

'Bearded, and wearing blue spectacles,' demanded Mr Jenkinson-Pelham eagerly; 'and carrying a large—a very large—umbrella?'

'Not at all!' replied the lady. 'He was clean-shaven, except for a gray moustache; he wore a monocle on his right eye; and he carried a very handsome Malacca walking-cane.'

'I see it—I see it!' exclaimed Mr Jenkinson-Pelham. 'The miscreant has shaved himself! At any rate,' he added anxiously, 'he looked like an antiquary?'

'On the contrary,' said the spectacled lady, 'he looked like a half-pay colonel.'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham and the detective went outside to their taxi-cab. The detective, once they were inside it, tapped the side of his nose. 'I see what it is, sir,' he said confidentially. 'There's more than one of 'em in at this job. It's a gang! Of course, this address that he filled up in there at the back of the telegram-form is "all my eye." There ain't no such hotel in all London as the Hotel Musidora, Strand. That's a fake. The next thing, sir, you'll have a letter demanding money.'

But the next thing—of importance—occurred a week later. The First Commissioner of Works, entering his department at his usual hour one morning, was met by his secretary, who was evidently brimful of news. It was with a visible effort of self-denial that he bottled it up.

'There's the treasurer of St Paul's Cathedral and a City police-inspector waiting to see you,' he announced. 'They've been here twenty minutes. Shall I bring them in?'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham sank into his chair and waved a hand. It was with a sinking heart that he looked up at his two visitors. They advanced upon him, eyes fixed and heads erect. The treasurer of St Paul's, a severe, ascetic-looking clergyman, wore a vinegary aspect; the City police-inspector appeared to be nerving himself to a stern effort.

'What—what is it?' gasped Mr Jenkinson-Pelham. 'Not'——

'Mr First Commissioner of Works,' said the treasurer, gravely resting the tips of his black-gloved fingers on the outer edge of the official desk and leaning forward towards its occupant, 'I have waited upon you, in company with this officer of the City police, to acquaint you with a grave outrage. During the night which has just passed, the statue of her late sacred Majesty, Queen Anne, which stood in our churchyard, was blown to fragments!'

'Blown!" exclaimed Mr Jenkinson-Pelham. 'Do you say blown?'

'With such force that one fragment penetrated the window of a tea-shop half-way down Ludgate Hill,' answered the treasurer, 'destroying various matters of confectionery, left in the window from yesterday, and a large brass urn.'

'That fragment, sir,' remarked the police-inspector, 'I picked up with my own hands. It was still warm.'

The three men looked at each other.

'You have no clue?' at length asked Mr Jenkinson-Pelham.

'None, sir!' answered the police-inspector. 'Not the least! The bomb, or infernal-machine, appears to have been placed within the railings which surrounded the statue. The explosion took place at three minutes past six o'clock. A great many windows in the surrounding shops and warehouses are broken. One early bus horse received a wound in the chest. A donkey, driven by a man from Whitechapel, had a piece cut clean out of its left ear. Several people were knocked down. One of my men, on point-duty at Ludgate Circus, was so affected—nervously—that he has passed out of one fainting-fit into another ever since. As for the statue itself, sir, it appears to have been reduced to powder.'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham put the tips of his fingers together and his head on one side. He glanced furtively at the ecclesiastic.

'So far as my memory serves me,' he observed, 'that particular statue was a remarkably ugly and inartistic piece of work. I believe remarks to that effect have been made from time to time. I have a dim idea that I have heard the statue jeered at—ridiculed. I'——

'Mr First Commissioner of Works,' said the treasurer, in tones of measured severity, 'that is not the point. I am not a judge of art, and I dare say that the statue in question was sufficiently hideous. The point is—if these outrages continue, what about the safety of our national Cathedral? When an outrage of this sort is committed on our very doorstep, what, I ask, is likely to happen next? The miscreant will—may, at any rate—endeavour to blow up the Cathedral itself!'

'I apprehend your meaning,' said Mr Jenkinson-Pelham. 'Yes—this is really becoming a

serious matter. I shall have to mention it—delicately, you know—to the Prime Minister. You are quite sure it was a bomb?'

'Perhaps, sir, you would like to inspect the fragment which flew into the tea-shop?' suggested the City police-inspector. 'It is downstairs in a taxi-cab.'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham produced his magic sheaf of official documents and became very busy. But when the visitors had left him, he nerved himself to receive the inevitable telegram. It did not arrive on this occasion until the middle of the afternoon, and he noted at once that it had been despatched from Calais: 'On my way to secure a most valuable and effective new explosive. You wait until I return. Then you will see what can be done by the Man who Loves London.'

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham now felt that this was one of those jobs which no man can be expected to tackle single-handed, and he made a clean breast of everything to his colleagues of the Cabinet. But there was just then a most important Bill under discussion, on a subject of vital interest to the nation, concerning the cruelty of asking broody hens to sit on artificial eggs until a proper supply of real eggs could be supplied to them, and the Cabinet brains were so engrossed in considering its numerous clauses that the First Commissioner of Works received scant attention, and was left to do what he could. Mr Jenkinson-Pelham did what he could—he had the ports watched, and circulated various descriptions of the old gentleman. But nothing happened. Several weeks passed, and he began to cherish a hope that the man whose love of London assumed such uncomfortable forms had either been incarcerated as a maniac on the Continent, or had suddenly come to his senses.

February came, and with it the opening of a new session of Parliament. The Bill for treating Sitting Hens with Proper Humanity was in Committee, and the House of Commons was crowded. On the most eventful night of this historic debate, the Prime Minister was in the midst of a glowing peroration, which was rapidly drawing tears from the eyes of his audience, when an infernal roar and the shock of a terrible explosion threw him half-way across the table, extinguished all the lights, and whisked the Speaker's wig off his head. There were loud cries, and there was terrible confusion, and Mr Jenkinson-Pelham does not know to this day how he found his way to the open air. But there he was at last in the half-light of Palace Yard, clutching at various arms, and hearing great shoutings on every side of him.

'It's Charing Cross Railway Bridge! Charing Cross Railway Bridge has been blown up! Charing Cross Railway Bridge! Blown to atoms!'

It might have been about two hours later that Mr Jenkinson-Pelham was taken by a detective to look at a body which the river-police had found placidly floating on the Thames—the body of an elderly gentleman whose right hand still grasped a slow-match. The detective looked at it, and then at the First Commissioner of Works.

'That him, sir?' he asked.

Mr Jenkinson-Pelham heaved a mighty sigh, and threw his grammar away. 'That's him!' he said. 'Thank Heaven!—at least, I mean I'm awfully sorry, but—oh yes, that's him!'

He went away then, and sought the chairman of the railway company whose property had just been scattered in fragments all over Lambeth and Westminster. The chairman's jaw dropped when he saw Mr Jenkinson-Pelham's eye.

'Look here!' said Mr Jenkinson-Pelham in tense, staccato accents. 'A word with you! Do you intend, sir, to rebuild that infernal railway bridge of yours? You do—naturally. Then let me tell you, sir, that before you do so you'll call in a committee of the best artists we've got, and you'll rebuild that bridge in strict accordance with their designs and wishes, and you'll make it, sir, a thing of Beauty—Beauty, do you hear? Damn its usefulness! That bridge, sir, has got to be the first stone of a new and lovely London! Mark me!'

Then Mr Jenkinson-Pelham shook his fist and departed. The chairman, pulling himself together, went home and told his wife that one result of the explosion was that the much-respected First Commissioner of Works had gone quite mad.

THE END.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XXII.—THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

THE extraordinary thing in our hut was that the quietest and most decent member of our little society was, in reality, the most powerful. This was Billy Greens, generally known as 'The Padre.' In controversy Ginger or Tosher could simply bowl him out, but there was a sweetness and a kindness about him that made him a very dear pal. He was always so broad, ever willing to understand us, but quietly and effectively he was pitting his moral weight against our immoral and careless code. Billy had no physical strength to speak of. It was really a shame to see him in khaki, for temperamentally he was unfitted for the awful strain.

But he was there of his own choosing. As he always said, 'It is a holy war.' This gave him a great standing. He was fighting for a moral cause, and we did think him a cut above the ordinary parson.

Billy Greens was a 'white man.'

His strength lay in his private conduct, which was above suspicion. A fair sportsman, in a 'rag' he took his punishment. We never heard him speaking about 'the Cross' or 'salvation,' but in his own charming way he would lug one or more of us out for a walk, and land us in the Y.M.C.A., where he regaled us with refreshments and kept us to hear the entertainments. And the most amusing thing was that he and Ginger (the so-called Rationalist) were the best of pals. Ginger, however, was no Rationalist; he was just an argumentative beggar, so brilliant that he could flatten every one of us out. At all hours of the day and the night Billy and Ginger were going it, but it was quite evident that the padre was coming out top-dog, and taking the sting out of Ginger's oratory. As a matter of fact, after they had lived three months together, Ginger ceased to batter the Church, and often helped his clerical chum to get up concerts for the Y.M.C.A.

The padre was making good.

Even old Tosher, the dear old dollar-loving Canadian, was a champion of the padre. He was so powerful in the physical sense that he elected himself as a bodyguard. When there was a rough-and-tumble on, Tosher always rescued the gasping curate. There was something real good in the Canadian. If he was no great Christian, he was the best-hearted man in our platoon, and certainly the bravest of the crowd. His M.M. and D.C.M. were evidence of that. And if he did blow his own trumpet, it was not meant seriously, for Tosher, like all Canadians, was fond of 'chewing the rag.' The padre made it his business to take Tosher round all the nice people; indeed, he got Tosher fixed up with a neighbouring merchant's daughter, a most charming girl.

Tosher ceased to violate the moral code.

So far as Beefy and I were concerned, the padre had a lot of work to do. But he kept at it in his own quiet way, and although we never said it, we secretly felt in touch with a better man, and we always accepted a good deal of his advice. Billy worked on 'the chum principle.' He simply wormed himself into our confidence, with the result that we never cared to offend him. When he called me 'John,' there was something so very paternal in it that I became submissive, and a supporter of Billy, if not a perfect ornament of the Church.

The padre was smashing our lax code.

'You know, John,' he said one night, 'I shall be sorry to leave here.'

Why?'

There 's a lot of good work going on.'

Oh!'

'You fellows are not what you were. There 's not half the filthy language or the false bravado there used to be. None of those disgusting photos are around now. And nearly all the boys read in the hut at night. They 're *thinking*, and that 's all we want them to do.'

'What 's done it?'

'Well, the fresh air, the games, the discipline, and the general goodwill. The commandant, of course, is an asset. He 's such a dear old man that they feel they must be decent. And unquestionably Captain Cheerall has been an enormous influence. Just look at all those fellows swotting up military history,' he said, pointing to the crowd with their noses well down on books.

'You like army life, then, padre?'

'Not a bit of it. It has great good in it, and great dangers. All depends on the men you live with. Of course, this is an educated crowd, and they are easy to handle. But I had an awful time in the ranks. And yet I wouldn't have missed this war for worlds. My eyes are open now. I have seen the good in men, also the bad. And I hope it will help me in the future.'

'Do you think we 'll be the better for this war—I mean, in the moral sense?'

'That 's a big question. I think all the educated men will reason more, and I believe they will glorify the home and a good woman. But for the great crowd I 'm not sure.'

'Why?'

'Well, war loosens things. Women go wrong, and the marriage vows get broken. Men in the ranks are like children. One fool can contaminate a thousand. That 's the danger. Still, if we can educate them, and if the parsons will work, we can keep the Old Land going. And, of course, the Y.M.C.A. is a powerful force. I tell you, John, if we had had no Y.M.C.A. in this war, the army would have been a hotbed of drunkenness and immorality. Kitchener was the man who saw this at the beginning. By Jove, that *was* a MAN!'

'You 're a Kitchener youself, Billy.'

'Why?'

'It 's you that 's cleaning this hut up. You 've been a good pal, and we shall be sorry to leave you.'

'Not I, John! Not I!'

'Who, then?'

'The Spirit of God. Good-night, old boy.'

As he walked away a lump came into my throat. I 'm a sentimental ass, I know, but still *that 's* the sort of padre for AFTER THE WAR.

(*Continued on page 522.*)

WIRELESS MESSAGES.

III.—UN JOUR MAIGRE.*

By Mrs W. F. Irvine Bell, Author of *The Forester's Girl*, &c.

I.

'*ANGUILLES! Anguilles! Voulez-vous de bonnes anguilles?*' The cry, echoing in shrill but not unmusical treble up and down narrow, sunless streets, rings in my ears as, *Le Matin* under my arm, I cross from the diminutive *librairie*, with its rows of yellow paper novels, comic post-cards, and newspapers still smelling of the Paris presses, to the generous portal of the ancient 'Bras d'Or,' in the seclusion of whose shaded garden I am to breakfast. Waiting there for blue-eyed Gabrielle to appear with the shining tray, I notice her *patronne*, smiling and *chic* in morning-gown, a spacious basket slung on her plump, bare arm, emerge from the regions of the kitchen hidden away in the depths of the old house, and hasten to the street entrance. Instantly my mind leaps to a conclusion—Wednesday—meatless day—*eels!* I follow mine hostess, and find her standing before a long barrow through whose cracks trickle salty tears, as though in sympathy with heaving masses of damp cloths which cover its stained surface.

Forthwith begins a brisk barter between madame and the owner of the barrow—an old woman, clad in the sombre black dress and shawl of the Normandy peasant, an all-enveloping apron girt about her waist, whose proportions, as well as the rest of her muscular frame and her weather-beaten features, would rival those of a Newhaven fishwife. Dexterously whisking open the confused heap of cloths, she displays, without permitting to escape, her squirming victims, which, thus ruthlessly exposed to the light of day, frantically endeavour to bury themselves in the wet sand which has kept them moist and cool since low-tide of the previous evening. '*Très bonnes, madame—toutes fraîches! Voyez-vous? Toutes vives!*' she declaims, while with coarse fingers she grasps the hapless eels and piles them on the scales. Such an expression of terror gleams in those scintillating round eyes that I speedily betake myself to coffee and bread-and-butter, with the comfortable reflection that *this* meal at least costs neither suffering nor fear.

With the hour of noon arrives *déjeuner*, and, sentiment notwithstanding, it is with no lack of interest I scan the menu, and concede tacit admiration to the ingenuity of the *chef*. *Hors d'œuvres—crevettes*—pink, salty, and alluring. Next—*anguilles!*—all resemblance, however, to those brilliant, electric creatures lost in a shroud of crisp, brown 'fry.' But I don't eat eels even on *meatless* days, so I wait for the next number on the programme—*moules marinières*, black shells widely gaping in a hot element of flavours strangely foreign to that of the unlucky mollusc. These are followed by *raie—raie au beurre noir—raie à la sauce blanche*—and again a cunning camouflage of divers things, beneath which, you may be certain, lurks the inevitable *raie!* Ere the exigencies of housekeeping took me daily to or past the *poissonnerie*, the long, low building whose red-tiled roof and ever-lingering smell of fish are leading features of the busy *quais*, I used to marvel that the supply of *raie* never failed—on the *menu* it *never* did! But a few visits to the fish-market soon set one's mind at rest on that point—boxes full, baskets full, boats full of *raie—raie—raie*, from the giant of its kind, weighing many kilos, to the Benjamin of the tribe—a sweet, nutty little individual whose humble price and succulent qualities make it a welcome addition to the larder in times when sole are eight francs a pound, and turbot not to be even looked upon, except with one's purse safe at home!

II.

A fascinating place is the *poissonnerie* of our little *ville*. There, upon broad, well-scrubbed counters, lies the rich harvest of the sea, with gleam of colour and flash of fin—red and silver, dun-colour and gray—and small mountains of translucent shrimps waving innumerable legs in vain search for the comforts of home! Here is a pile of dark, rough-ribbed oysters, close-lipped and motionless, on a bed of dank seaweed; there are the ivory tints and graceful coils of giant whelks, with, maybe, the pinky 'arms' of a hermit-crab, feeling about for the missing rock, and carrying his stolen house hither and thither through a veritable menagerie of sea-beasts. Not far to seek, too, together with the popular sand-eels, are great congers, and *chiens-de-mer*, and at certain seasons the delicious *coque Saint Jacques*—'cut-fish' our little *femme-de-ménage* calls them, but as the orthography is beyond her, I give the name phonetically. The state of the fish-market, by the way, and more especially the supplies of shell-fish, I soon discovered to be a better indication of the weather than the best of barometers, and woe betide the housekeeper if a spell of *mauvais temps* coincide with the prescribed trio of meatless days! One learns, for instance, that after a storm and a strong wind 'on shore,' fish will be scarce and dear,

* Previous articles of this series of 'Wireless Messages' appeared in *Chambers's Journal* for October 1918 and May 1919.

but whelks and *coques* are plentiful. With long low-tides comes abundance of *moules*; but when for only a brief while the black rocks are accessible to the mussel-gatherer's knife, it is as well to avoid such wares as the old women may have to offer, for drain-pipes and the jetty timbers are not desirable nurseries even for mussels! A visit to the fish-market should be made when, at high-tide, the laden boats return, for it is then one sees it at its briskest and best.

Those stout, complacent-looking dames whom last evening we saw amicably chatting and jesting as they sat, knitting in hand, on the benches beneath the double row of lime-trees, can they be these eager, assertive women, who now, petticoats girt high, with red faces and loud voices, run along the *quais* to help and handle rope and box—who in the auction-hall hand by vie with each other in sharply contested bargains for *maquereaux* or *merlans*, and drag their baskets of dripping, slippery spoils to their respective stalls in the fish-market? Yes, they are the same; and in this one whose patois, perhaps luckily incomprehensible to us, now rises harsh and strident in angry altercation over a box of salted herring, I recognise my special *poissonnière*—Madame Potin, who in dulcet tones is wont to address me as her *petite jolie dame*, while, with a shrug of her broad shoulders and an indulgent smile, she deducts a few *sous* from the price of a coveted plaice. Behind the stall her slim, pretty daughter, masses of black hair shining glossily, deftly cleans one's fish, searches a capacious pocket in her petticoat for the change, and, if one be in high favour (for even paper is scarce and dear), tears off a sheet of *Le Petit Journal* to line one's basket. Will she, too, I wonder, become coarse and fat, loud-voiced and quarrelsome, as are the older women about her?

Of Madame Potin's stall, however, the presiding genius (lacking which no picture of the *poissonnerie* would be complete) is an old black pug, whose ultra-protruding jaw and small white teeth, broken and irregular as the 'pickets' of a neglected New England fence, demand instant recognition of a not remote bulldog ancestor. Securely shelved high above the medley of fish and folk, he makes his presence known by prolonged, comfortable snores, or by sharp provocative barks directed against less privileged fellow-canines, who, in the jostling crowd below, must take their chance of trodden toes or the onslaught of belligerent 'brothers.' Of the latter, moreover, there may be not a few if, as quite frequently happens, owing to stress of weather, boats from the fishing-town of D—— have run into our harbour. For these fishermen, so I am told, have a special fancy for a kind of large black dog (too exact an analysis of the breed of the canine proletariat along the French coast is not to be recommended!), which voyages with them, and at night is left on board to guard the boat, tied up to the *quai*. This practice, by the way, occasionally has disastrous results upon my slumbers; for if one of these four-legged visitors chance to be a puppy or altogether strange to our *ville*, he will—when his master has betaken himself to some snug *auberge*, and the tide sinking, boat and beast sink with it—set up dolorous howls, unbroken, save for brief intervals, until the next 'high-water,' and with it the return of what Maeterlinck calls his *seul dieu*.

III.

On the morning of this particular *jour maigre*, as it happens, both man and his '*bon chien familier*' are at large, and as I stroll along the *quai*, subtle peculiarities not only in the build and the rig of the boats from D——, but in the appearance and the speech of their owners, set me thinking of the curiously persistent stamp and stability of local conditions, even within the limits of a small area. Variance, however, of their respective patois is evidently no let or hindrance to mutual understanding, for mid the tangle of hawsers and nets, of boxes and barrows, behind the *poissonnerie*, masculine tongues wag as volubly as do feminine ones under the red-tiled roof. A cheerful, cheering scene—with broken lines and blending of soft colours which make me envy an old French artist whose gaunt figure and iron-gray hair, curling on a worn coat-collar, are now familiar objects in my idle wanderings, and whom presently I shall follow to the *jetée*, whither at this moment, folded stool, box, and brushes strapped on his back, he is evidently bent.

Just now, though, my attention is caught by a group of figures and a harmony of tints which surely might have given 'points' to a potter of ancient Greece! A patch of blue sky 'criss-crossed' with the bristling masts and yard-arms of crowded shipping lashed to the *quai* of sand-gray stones, and spread thereon, in flowing folds and wavy lines, a quantity of nets—red-brown, grape-brown, and skim-milk blue. Grouped about the nets for purposes of mending, a small sand-coloured dog in attendance, are an old man and some boys, bright-blue trousers and black sabots common to all, but blouses of tints that blend with, and melt into, each other—terra-cotta, light and dark, clear khaki, and one of an elusive plum-bloom hue which awakens in my mind jumbled reminiscences of Phœnicia and Tyre! What a palette of 'notes' for the old artist had he chanced to look this way! He, however, as I soon discover, is already at work.

The tide, now ebbing fast, has laid bare between the *jetée* and the rapidly narrowing waterway a shoal of shining sand, deeply embedded in which are the bones of the *Charlotte*, a fishing-boat from H——, which, caught in a winter gale, was dashed against the jetty timbers. All that is

now left of the once stout bark (for every portable fragment of the wreck was eagerly auctioned) is the sun-bleached red prow, rigidly pointing towards the harbour it was destined never to reach, a few blackened ribs, and the great iron-shod rudder, the tiller still outstretched for the grasp of a 'vanished hand.' Seated in the shadow of the uprearing prow, stool and water-tin securely planted in the sand, is the bent figure of the old artist, transferring to his block, with rapid pencil and brush, the wind-caught sails and heeling hulls of some belated boats endeavouring to run the channel ere it be too shallow. But tide and time wait for no man, so it is with almost breathless interest that I watch the triangular race now afoot between fishermen, artist, and the forces of nature. While mid the rushing current the old men of the sea, with well-judging hand and eye, tack and trim their wayward vessels, on the momentarily enlarging shoal a 'counterfeit presentment' of the virility and grace of those straining sails emerges from beneath the cunning fingers of the painter. Impressionist? Maybe—yet how accurate and convincing the impression! One seems to hear the creak and complaint of overwrought rope and rudder; to feel the freshening wind which fills anew the sagging sails; to see the swirl of the surging water, and, just beyond the pier-head, the red buoy bouncing on its chain. These wheeling gulls, too, their white breasts and outstretched wings flashing in the sunshine—will they also be imprisoned in this living picture? Yes—a deft dab of his brush, the merest touch of his pencil, and the flight of those wild sea-birds is arrested for all time by the miracle of his art. I fall a wondering as to the destiny of the picture that has grown beneath my eyes. Who the purchaser? Where will it hang? Will some one who loves and longs for the sea and *La belle France* feast homesick eyes upon it—treasure it—hear in his ears the scream of the gulls, the murmur of the retreating tide, the hoarse shouts of the fishermen? Or, as the silver-tongued Martial feared for his *parvum libellum*, does an ignominious fate await it, if not exactly as wastepaper for a cook's pantry, yet perhaps to be tossed about, dusty and dingy, in a neglected heap of forgotten sketches? *Quien sabe?* Ah well! instinctively my fingers search for and squeeze the small gray purse in my pocket. Alas! it *also* feels the 'belly pinch' of many a *jour maigre!* Perhaps as well, then, that at this moment a sudden chill wind whistling down my neck, and a wisp of ragged cloud flung darkly across old Sol's bright face, recall my soaring thoughts to the prosaic consideration that one cannot always count upon summer skies—and I don't possess a mackintosh! One more glance, then, ere reluctantly I turn my back upon the stranger artist and the coveted picture. Shall I come across them again—either?—both? At some Spring Salon *après la guerre?* . . .

IV.

That piping wind which spared my purse, while starving my passion for pictures, proved to be but the first notes of a concerted band, which, before the next holocaust of succulent *raie* had done their 'bit' towards providing a meatless dinner, rushed and roared around our little *ville*. It took us by surprise—us summer butterflies of fluffy frocks and thin shoes—and twenty-four hours of cold, pelting rain driven before a hurricane of wind speedily emptied *plage* and *planches*, leaving them sodden and desolate as the shores of Iceland. As for 'her nain sel', however, it requires much more than 'half a gale' to keep her sanely safe indoors, and so soon as the storm-clouds had, like the Texas cow-boy, 'done their durndest,' and, lightened of their packs, were racing out to sea—gray tails streaming, wild manes tossing—I buckle on an old sou'-wester, relic of other times and otherwhere (*altera tempora—alteri mores!*), button my coat snugly under my chin, and, thus equipped, fight my way up the narrow Rue de la Mer, which acts as a funnel for enfilading winds.

Pausing to recover my breath behind the shelter of the big white Casino, I brace myself to battle with a staggering blast which would thwart me of my goal—the *jetée*, the magnet which draws me, fair weather or foul. How changed the scene since yestermorn! Swallowed the sunny shoal, a few hours syne an artist's novel atelier! Swallowed the skeleton of the sunken ship in an all-engulfing smother of surf and spume! Can those sand-bound timbers still stand firm, or will the rigid helm be forced to respond to Father Neptune's iron grip? For now he is master of the situation, and, in league with Boreas, hurls vast gray-green seas against the jetty, lashing the timbers till they tremble beneath one's feet. Fascinated, exhilarated, I grasp the railing and venture to creep along, to listen to the thunder beneath, to watch the wild clouds overhead, and to hazard a guess as to which of the onrushing waves will outleap its fellows and clear the pier-head. Boom! Splash!—a briny Niagara of shattered foam sends me scuttling back to safety! . . . .

V.

Towards evening, the fury of the elements having subsided, I revisit the jetty for yet another look. Now, however, I find myself not alone. A handful of women, black shawls closely wrapped about strained, sallow faces, strands of hair straggling in the damp wind, firmly grip little children by the hand and stare—stare—stare out to sea. First one, then another, points across the misty, heaving waste of waters; eager questions are asked and answered; and at length even my short-sighted eyes can make out two brown sails detaching themselves from the dim sky-line, then two

more, and again two, until, like a flock of scattered sheep, the overdue fishing-boats come trooping home. How keen the sight (sharpened by who shall say how much of love and apprehension?) of the watchers on the dripping jetty! How like a curtain drops from their faces the tense expression! What a glad light for an instant beautifies even the plainest features and tired eyes as they identify this boat and that! Even the children discover and spell out the numbers on the dark, wet sails. '*Quatre-vingt-cinq! C'est le bateau de Simon Lemazurier!*' '*Trente-huit! Ton grandpère, Jean!*' and Jean's mother, with a sigh of relief and a few words of encouragement to the still expectant women, betakes herself with her little son out of the searching wind to the sheltered harbour.

Even an odd-shaped patch on a sail, a greater breadth of beam, a shorter topmast, slight differences undetected by a stranger, are eagerly sought and loudly acclaimed by the fishermen's families, until one by one the battered little craft have safely crossed the storm-swept main, and, mid shouts of the owners, and answering cries from their womenkind, round the pier-head and run the gauntlet of yawning billows, shifted shallows, and cross-currents which threaten to wreck them at the last 'lap' of the race. '*Mon Dieu!*' cries one poor woman, turning deadly pale and covering her eyes, as the yellow prow and the white water-line of the smallest boat vanish for an instant in the curl of a monster billow. '*Mon Dieu! Les vagues sont si grandes et les bateaux sont si petits!*' But the staunch little vessel gallantly emerges from the underworld of water, and shaking the foam from her glistening hull, darts away, followed closely by a portly craft whose rather clumsy build and top-heavy sails I seem to recognise. '*Voilà!*' joyfully then exclaim in unison the watchers on the jetty. '*Voilà le bateau de Saint Jean Baptiste! Ça va bien maintenant!*' Wrapping shawls and babies more closely, with laughter and chatter they hasten towards the *quais*. One only still lingers—a girl with fair skin and wide blue eyes, upon whose hand gleams a bright new wedding-ring. Her husband's boat—it has not yet come, she explains as I approach and question her. He is young, but lame—'*tant mieux*,' for otherwise he would have been '*mobilisé*.' And his boat? '*Mais oui, madame*,' she replies with a little thrill of pride—it is new, and, though small, is one of the best in the fishing-fleet; but, she adds, turning upon me her great eyes in which are written a nameless dread, '*c'est des sousmarins que j'ai peur pour lui*.' In silent sympathy I wait beside her until winds begin to chill and daylight fades. Then suddenly the gray mantle of the sky is rent, the fiery ball of the setting sun glows resplendent before dropping into a copper-coloured sea, and across the golden wake of his departure flits a tiny speck. '*Mon mari!*' cries the girl beside me. '*Dieu merci!*' she adds softly, crossing herself and turning from the angry sea to face the Calvary high on the harbour hill.

Yea verily—it costs much in war-times to provide the fish for '*un jour maigre*.'

THE WAYFARER.

THOUGH far and wide the wanderer was forced to roam,
At last the long road's leading to the hills of home—
I'm faring towards my true love, though the way was steep and long.
I thought to come with singing, but my heart has hushed my song.
The hedgerows break in blossom, and there's music far and near;
The days have come we used to love, the playtime of the year,
When we were plighted lovers, and my heart was stout and strong.
You bade me blend my singing with the happy woodland throng
When you and I were young, my dear, and life was at its spring,
And glad songs, ay, and proud songs, were the songs I used to sing.

Now you're waiting and you're watching in the same old place;
You are waiting with a welcome on your sweet, pale face.
In the little cottage garden where the green lane ends,
I shall see you at the turning where the high road bends;
You will wave and beckon to me with your wild-flower grace.
I am coming, O my sweet,
But a moment, and we meet;
I shall see my true love waiting when the journey ends.

You are waiting for the lover whom you loved of yore;
But you'll see your gay young lover, O my sweet, no more.
You wait to hear the old songs, but you'll long for them in vain.
I cannot sing the old glad songs, the merry songs, again.
For long the road I've followed since we parted, O my dear;
A steep and stony path I've trod, this many a weary year.
A lonely road I've travelled, in the wind and in the rain;
I come to you for healing, love, from weariness and pain.
A heavy heart, an older heart, a burdened heart I bring.
The songs I'm singing now are not the songs I used to sing.

HILDA SKAE.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE MAN 'JOHN SMITH.'

By FREDERICK SLEATH, Author of *Sniper Jackson*

I.

WHEN the order came sending the 2nd Eastshires back to the trenches for Christmas, every one of them grumbled except the man John Smith.

He was a sniper, one of the finest of a great sniping section. He liked his work; he hated Germans with an intensity that made men wonder—men, even, who had seen wounded chums shot down as they crawled from the battlefield, and many other things not likely to make them think kindly of the enemy; and so his approbation of the order did not come as a surprise to any one.

Not that he expressed his delight in so many words. That would hardly have been wise in view of the keenness with which the battalion had been preparing to celebrate Christmas, the first spent out of the trenches in three years of war. Instead, he settled himself down in a secluded corner of his billet and played his mandoline. And it was the way he played the instrument that told his comrades what he thought. They generally read his moods in this manner. Smith was a man who seldom spoke except to gibe at them.

It was understood that he had a past, the bitterness of which was still with him. Some vaguely associated it with an injury done to him by the Germans; but where, when, and how it had happened they did not know. Others who knew the seamy side of life even whispered that he had 'done time.' There were one or two that connected both rumours. But all kept discreetly silent, for Smith had the reputation of being a dangerous man in a rough-and-tumble.

Smith himself never gave the slightest hint that would lead to a proper understanding of things. In the trenches he sniped and sniped, playing a lone hand, so that no man knew the true greatness of his tally of victims. In rest-billets he mooded alone and played the mandoline.

Sometimes there was such a devil in his music that men listened, and shuddered to think of the evil of his thoughts. Of such an order was his playing on the night it was known that the Eastshires were going back to the trenches three days before their time. Even Old Dan Carmichael, the sniping corporal, who had seen his two wounded sons slaughtered by a German sniper in the ill-fated fighting down by the Petit Bois, remarked on it.

'Dod! Smith 's in an awfu' mood the nicht,' he said to the little circle around him. 'It 's no dacent for a man to bear sic ill-will agin' onybody.'

'I wish he wud stop it,' murmured young Billy Mackie, looking up from a letter which he was writing to his girl. 'He 's fair aff his heid. I simply canna get on.'

But no one ventured to suggest this to Smith. They had all grown to tolerate his eccentricities, not only from the fact that he invariably got the better of them in argument, but also because of his staunchness as a comrade whenever an awkward German sniping-post had to be tackled.

Sometimes, too, the warp seemed to go out of his nature, leaving him normal, ready to laugh with his companions in the little joys of the trench area, ready to help in alleviating general discomforts. The sight of the distant line at night, with its fairy galaxy of star-shells, a cadence from a favourite piece of music, a golden sunset, anything beautiful, would work such a change in him. On one occasion of the kind he had addressed his officer as 'Jackson,' using the surname so naturally that the officer had scarcely noticed the breach of discipline. It had told him what his snipers had known for a long time, that 'John Smith' was merely the pseudonym of a gentleman gone wrong.

This was an evening when the spirit of unrest seemed to leave Smith's soul, for he broke off the wild music he was playing to begin a more popular melody known to them all. Soon they had laid aside the little tasks with which they had been busy to listen to his music; their feet were beating time; one or two of the younger men were humming the tune.

Then the spell was broken in a rising murmur of imprecations. With a touch like that of a fallen angel, Smith had suddenly shivered the harmony into a series of jarring chords in which seemed to find expression all the evil of the ages. Before they had properly grasped what had happened he had packed up his instrument and stolen from their midst.

II.

Perhaps it was well for him that he had slipped away to enjoy his joke in secret. Old Dan

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Carmichael had risen fiercely the moment he disappeared; and Old Dan was the strongest man of the corps. All that evening the strains of Smith's music echoed in their memories, and everywhere they dimly sensed the evil which he had summoned into their circle. It kept them from writing. And men paused uneasily in the midst of a conversation to listen for something that was not there.

The snipers did not readily forgive Smith for his prank. He marched up to the trenches in a file by himself, with none to speak to him. Not that there was much conversation in the section. It was Christmas Eve, and, in addition to their ordinary kit, the snipers were heavily burdened with goods for their Christmas dinner. Even though the day had to be spent in the trenches, they were determined that their long preparations should not be wasted. Rain was falling heavily. The shell-pocked road was difficult to tread. It was a journey of toil for them, cheered only by the thought of the feasting on the morrow.

At first Smith had carried only rifle and equipment. No one had asked him to help in bearing the extra burdens, nor had he volunteered his services. But about half-way up to the firing-line he moved up to Billy Mackie and relieved him of a special cooking-stove, whose weight was proving too much for the young sniper's strength.

After a while, when Billy offered to resume the burden, Smith told him abruptly to go and help Old Dan. It was such little things that made Smith possible in the section.

When the snipers' dug-out was reached, he set up the stove and got it into working order. It was an awkward stove to handle, and he knew its mysteries better than any of them. The snipers began to look at him appreciatively. Smith was evidently going to be on his best behaviour this Christmastide. They wanted him to behave himself, for the officer was taking dinner with them on the morrow, and Smith was an excellent entertainer with song and mandoline.

'Ye 'll mebbe gie us a bit tune on your maundolin, Jone, the morn,' Old Dan suggested to him.

'Sorry, Dan, I can't. I 'm going to be out,' Smith replied.

'You 're no gaun snipin', shairly?' asked Old Dan in wonder. Christmas had always been a blank day for the Eastshire snipers.

'Why not?'

Old Dan could not think of any reason likely to appeal to his comrade, so he kept silent. Smith went to his usual sleeping-place and lay down. He roused himself later to gibe at Billy, who was humming a Christmas carol. Old Dan checked him sharply. Smith rose immediately, snatched up his rifle, and left the dug-out.

'He was juist the same last Christmas,' said Old Dan meditatively, as soon as he had gone. 'He was tearin' mad when the officer sent him on duty doon to the billets.'

'Does onybody ken onythin' aboot him?' asked big Adam Saunders, the ex-gamekeeper, looking up from the dixie of hare-soup which he was preparing for the morrow. 'I doot there 's somethin' in his past that wud mak verra interestin' hearin.'

But nobody knew anything definite. Smith had just come out with a draft. He had always been the same.

III.

Outside the dug-out Smith had paused to test his rifle. The murmur of their voices came out to him. With a start he realised that they were discussing himself. At once he hurried away out of hearing.

A road led up to the firing-line close by the dug-out, swept nightly by the Germans with machine-gun and fixed-rifle fire. Fifty yards farther on was the beginning of a deep, well-made communication-trench. Smith followed the road.

Half-way up, the wicked hammering of a German machine-gun rang out. A rush of bullets sparked off the solid cobble paving in front of him. He slipped off the road into a shell-hole, and the next traverse of fire hissed over him.

A rat, disturbed by the bullets in the midst of its scavenging, hurled itself into the shell-hole for shelter. It cowered down at his feet. A touch of his boot would have crushed the little refugee. Instead, Smith lay and watched the tiny frightened eyes winking at him from the darkness.

When the rat slipped away into the open he rose and resumed his journey. But a hundred yards from the firing-line the machine-gun started to hammer, and again he had to take shelter.

This time the firing was more prolonged. Nearly half-an-hour passed, and bullets still continued to whistle across the road with that irregularity of interval which makes it impossible for even the most veteran trenchman to judge the time of their coming.

Twice he rose in lulls of the hubbub, only to dodge back hastily to cover as the storm broke out anew. At last, tired of the long delay, he jumped up and raced for the firing-line.

He reached it just in time. He felt the deafening rush of a bullet past his ear as he leaped into the trench-bottom.

'Close call that, mate,' murmured a sentry, crouching below the parapet-top.

Without replying, Smith picked a place on the fire-step where he would not disturb the sentry's sleeping reliefs, and sat down to recover from the exhaustion of his race.

'Got a fag to spare?' asked the sentry.

Smith handed him a cigarette. The sentry lit it with a patent lighter, ducking his head behind the sandbags as he took each puff, to shield the glowing end from the enemy.

'How is it you are without cigarettes on the first night in?' asked Smith.

'Dropped my packet in a wet shell-hole.

Won't be able to smoke till the cigs. are dry,' replied the sentry laconically.

'Here, take these,' said Smith, emptying one-half of his case.

'Thanks, mate. What's your name? I'll give them back to you to-morrow morning.'

'Smith,' said the sniper, rising and moving off down the trench.

'God!' muttered the sentry. 'Fancy getting cigs. from him!'

'That you, Smith?' called the sniping-officer as Smith rounded a traverse.

'Yes, sir.'

'Would you mind coming out on patrol with me?'

Smith had come up the line for another purpose, but he readily assented. He liked his officer personally, and also because he was such a tireless and efficient destroyer of Germans. Smith often went out on patrol with him. He knew that from these expeditions came many of the valuable hints the officer gave him as to points worth watching for targets.

The two climbed over the parapet and threaded their way through the wire. The machine-gun fire had ceased. They walked. Less experienced men might have crawled.

But Jackson, the sniping-officer, knew every yard of the No Man's Land, the places where one might go as safely as though many miles behind the lines. Only when within a few yards of the German entanglements did he lower himself to the ground and begin to crawl forward. Smith followed his example.

On reaching the wire belt the officer swung to the right and crawled along its edge, examining its strength and construction. At the entrance to a gap he left his companion, and crawled on alone to the German parapet. Some new work had been done there in the day-time which he wanted to examine. Every night he did this. It was a proverb in the division that the Germans worked in the day-time for Jackson to inspect at night. Every secret of their firing-line was known to him. He could map out the best course for a raiding-party without a moment's reflection, and the raids of the Eastshires were always suddenly conceived operations, surprises even to the men of the battalion, and always successful, no whisper of their coming ever reaching the Germans.

Smith watched his officer in admiration. He saw a dark form crawling over the enemy glacis, only a few yards from him, yet no sound of its passage reached his ears. Then it stood upright, and came stalking boldly back towards him.

'Come along, Smith,' said the officer quite loudly. 'It's just as I thought. The old Boche is holding his line very lightly to-night. The trench is empty. Listen.'

From the distant support-lines came the sound of stringed music and the voices of men singing softly in harmony.

'It comes as a shock that the Boches should think of observing Christmas Eve, doesn't it?' murmured the officer. 'It's difficult to think of them as Christians from our point of view.'

Smith said nothing.

'You may let this patrol stand in place of any duty you may have to do to-morrow,' said the officer when they had walked back to the firing-line.

'I was thinking of spending to-morrow in the old willow, sir,' Smith replied.

'Were you? All right. But look after yourself,' remarked the officer, tumbling over the parapet.

He knew Smith and his vagaries too well to express any surprise at his wishing to do such a thing on a day purposely made easy for the snipers, nor did he attempt to interfere with the man's intention. That was Jackson's way of running the section. He gave individuality the fullest scope, with the result that his men had the best returns of the division.

IV.

Left alone, Smith walked back into No Man's Land. He bore to the left of the course of the recent patrol, where the hostile lines bent away from each other round the edges of a broad belt of marsh-land. There were pools that glittered blackly in the light of occasional star-shells, and bog-holes brimming with green-covered slime, where strange, living things stirred in affright at his passage, and other pitfalls that a day passer-by could scarce have avoided. But Smith pressed forward, safely and without hesitation. It was his favourite sniping-ground, and no creature of the wild knew the marsh better.

The willow-tree where he meant to hide during the coming day was in the centre of the marsh, the giant of a battered clump which the shells had never succeeded in wholly destroying. Before reaching it he paused on a shoulder of dry ground, and lay down with his face towards the German lines.

Smith often rested on that shoulder. From it he could look a long way over both German and British positions, and watch all the night display of star-shells and gun-flashes. The night-murmur of the trenches, mingling with all the rustlings and stirrings of the marsh, was a chorus which never lost its charm for him. He always came there when most restless, to listen to the wild lullaby, and to let the moist earth drain away the bitterness troubling his soul.

Once a German had come there also. Smith had pictured in him a fellow-sufferer, and allowed him to remain unmolested. For many nights the two had lain there in silence only a few feet apart. In any case, they could not have shot at each other, for the flash of a rifle from No Man's Land would have attracted the fire of every machine-gun in the sector.

Then one night the German had pounced on

Smith and tried to strangle him. Smith strangled the German, and tossed his body contemptuously into the marsh. It angered him to think that a fellow human being should spoil the peace of his sanctuary, when the very marsh creatures were wont to come there and rest with him.

The incident came back to his mind as he lay on the shoulder, and also the memory of the rage that had filled him. He wondered at himself for feeling so angry. After all, what was there in his experience that could lead him to expect anything else from a German? He ought to have strangled the fellow on the night of his first appearance.

The sound of stringed music came faintly from the distant support-line. He peered intently in the direction of the playing, trying to discover some sign which would tell where the players were hiding.

If he could only have been sure of their position, he would have hastened with the news to the artillery, forgoing his sniping of the morrow for the pleasure of imagining the shells rushing down and bursting amidst the orchestra. But not a sign did the darkness give him. He rose and made his way towards the willows.

The clump was surrounded by water, but, with the aid of projecting roots and fallen trunks, he reached the centre tree dry-shod. Feeling for the familiar hand-grips, he quickly pulled himself up into his usual hiding-place in the broad pollarded bole.

The lopped branches were thick and massive where they left the trunk and had sprouted again at the pollarding, so that within this natural screen was room and shelter for many snipers. A heavy festoonery of ivy made the cover still more effective. Smith settled down in his wonted corner and coolly went to sleep.

V.

The dawn was in the sky when he awoke. The light was filtering dimly through the ivy-tendrils. Almost as soon as he was conscious of the daylight he knew that he was not alone.

At first he thought an animal was in the tree. Then something moved on the far side, and he saw the familiar field-gray uniform of a sleeping German soldier. Impulsively he leaped forward to grapple with the intruder. His rifle, dislodged by his hasty movement, slithered from its perch in the branches, and dropped with a splash into the marsh water.

The German woke at the sound. He grabbed hastily at his rifle. In his fright he jerked the weapon out of the tree, and it fell into the water as Smith's rifle had done.

Smith had a bayonet. The German had none. The Boche turned white as he saw the steel at his throat. 'I surrender,' he said, in good English; and his hands went up so quickly that he almost overbalanced and toppled from the branch on which he was sitting.

Smith nearly killed him as he struggled to regain his position. Quite apart from the fact of his being a German, he hated the man for his intrusion, and for spoiling his own work of the dawning day.

But as he crouched there hesitating, waiting for the German to recover, it came to him that he could not kill the fellow. The German's voice told him that he had mixed in England with people of Smith's own class. Besides, to kill him in the tree meant filthying his own resting-place; and Smith detested filth. He felt the German all over in search of hidden weapons, and having satisfied himself that his prisoner was unarmed, he lowered the bayonet, and sank back moodily in his corner.

The German crawled into the centre of the tree, and sat down opposite his captor. Several times he tried to begin a conversation. Smith took no notice of him. He was listening to the sounds in the German positions, and staring straight past his prisoner along the No Man's Land, striving not to look in the direction of the enemy's lines, lest his chagrin at not being able to take advantage of the targets which (he knew) were presenting themselves might make him lose his control, and cause him to murder this German.

Hours went by without his altering his position. Noon came. The German produced some food, and began eating it hungrily. Snow had started to fall, and he was pinched with cold. Smith also suddenly felt hungry. He pulled out of his pocket some bully-beef and biscuits, and munched them slowly.

The motion of eating seemed to make the German feel the cold more keenly. He glanced questioningly at Smith's water-bottle. 'You have not a spot of something stronger than water there, have you?' he ventured.

The bottle was nearly full of raw rum, the accumulated soldier's rations of the past two months. Smith handed it over to the German. The man drew out the stopper with eager fingers, and drank off a great gulp of the spirit.

'Thank you,' he said, coughing a little as the rum bit his throat. 'Heavens! what a place to spend Christmas Day in!' he added when he recovered himself. 'For the past four years each Christmas has been worse than its predecessor.'

'You have come down in the world, then,' said Smith quietly.

It struck him as curious that a German with such a command of the English language, a man, moreover, obviously of some breeding, should be only a private.

'Yes,' said the German shortly. 'My country does not readily forgive her failures.'

VI.

Smith looked at the man more interestedly. Failures and outcasts appealed to him. That was

why he spared the rats and other wild creatures when they rested near him.

'Five years ago to-day I was in England,' the German continued. 'Rich, an honoured member of society—don't you call it?—with one of the prettiest bits of business that I ever attempted for my country almost completed. And I failed, just when I thought success was assured. That was the beginning of my misfortunes. I have failed several times since, and now my country has no better use for my services than as you see me. You also have come down in the world, my friend?'

'I was in prison five years ago to-day,' Smith said evenly.

'Were you, by Jove? I only just escaped an English prison.'

'You were spying, then.'

Smith spoke the words sharply. The German was in the act of drinking more rum, but he stopped in surprise at Smith's tone.

'Why, of course! Like nearly every other German in your country. Like nearly every Englishman in ours,' he said.

'You had better tell me no more,' said Smith meaningly.

The German finished his drink before replying. The effect of the first dose of spirit was already beginning to show itself. He was growing more and more confidential.

'Come, come!' he said with a laugh; 'we two are men of the world, and men of the world do not cut each other's throats in a lonely corner because of their ideas of patriotism.'

He settled himself down more comfortably, his hand still resting fondly on the rum-bottle.

'I had been ordered to get the secret of a new manufacturing process in the Midlands. Damn that twig!' he broke off, reaching up and tearing away a willow-offshoot that was irritating the back of his head.

Smith had begun to warn him again against saying anything further; but he stopped suddenly, and let the German continue.

'I came on the scene as a wealthy manufacturer interested in the same process,' said the man. 'But I had to marry the old fellow's daughter before I came anywhere near getting what I wanted. Quite a business, too, I assure you.'

He smirked evilly at some memory, and made to raise the rum to his lips again.

'And you failed?' questioned Smith.

'Yes. It was damned unfortunate. I had already married a wife, and my worthy second father-in-law found it out just a little too early for my convenience. You do not like what I am saying, eh?' asked the German, as he noticed Smith's hand playing nervously with the bayonet-handle.

'I am enjoying the story. Please go on,' Smith assured him.

'Ah! you are a true man of the world.'

The German raised the bottle to his lips, and chuckled as he drank, so that the liquid spilled grossly from his mouth, and dripped down on his tunic. An expression of what might have been disgust showed for an instant on Smith's features.

'Go on,' he said evenly. 'It is dull for only one of us to laugh.'

'Pardon me; but it really was most amusing,' chuckled the German. 'A business of many complications, a cautious old father-in-law, a wooing, another suitor for the lady's hand—"Lucy's young man," as her father spoke of him when first I entered their circle.'

'And you got rid of this Lucy's young man?'

'Yes, poor fellow! He went to prison for forging father-in-law's signature,' said the German mockingly.

He turned to reach for the rum-bottle, but some subtle instinct made him pause to look at his captor.

'Put away that bayonet, man!' he exclaimed, suddenly sobered.

The point of the weapon was within a foot of him. Smith had risen from his seat, crouching like an animal about to pounce, a frightful expression of hatred and triumph in his eyes.

Into the German's face sprang a look of terror, distorting his features horribly. He turned a pasty white. His head shot forward on his shoulders as though to get a better view of his captor.

'Where have I seen you before?' he whispered hoarsely.

Then, as he read his own answer in the face of the man before him, his lips jerked apart in the beginning of a scream. But the first rising note was cut off sharp, and lost its power in a weak throaty gurgle, as with a quick jab forward 'Lucy's young man' drove the bayonet home in the neck of the man who had wronged him.

THE RENEWAL OF ANTARCTIC EXPLORATION.

By R. C. Mossman, F.R.S.E.

THE culmination of the modern Antarctic campaign in the attainment of the South Pole, in the third serious attempt to reach it, has from a popular standpoint accomplished all that there is to be done in this inhospitable Southern continent. When, however, the actual state of our knowledge of Antarctica is impartially considered, it is evident that the most extensive field for geographical exploration, in both its scientific and commercial aspects, lies in the frozen regions of the South.

It may be asked what has been already ac-

complished in this direction, and in reply the geographer would summarise the results somewhat as follows. A narrow wedge, with a base of about four hundred miles, resting on the Great Ice Barrier discovered by Sir James Clark Ross in 1841, has been driven for seven hundred and twenty miles into the Terra Australis Incognita, as far as the Pole itself. This has been done by the combined efforts of Scott, Shackleton, and Amundsen. The high ice-covered plateau of Victoria Land has been penetrated several times in a westerly direction for a considerable distance beyond the immediate mountains, and on one of these sledge journeys the south magnetic pole was located. Coastal patches of insignificant extent, as compared with the great unknown within the Antarctic Circle, have been surveyed by British, Australian, French, and Swedish explorers. Other recent expeditions have done valuable and extensive scientific work in the exploration of Antarctic seas, as distinguished from Antarctic lands, bringing back information of unique interest dealing with the physics of the ocean—its tides, currents, temperature, and density—as well as numerous examples of its abundant fauna, not only from the surface, but from depths exceeding two miles, where the waters are still rich in life. New stretches of coast have also been located on some of these expeditions, the most important being the discovery in Weddell Sea—a prolongation of the South Atlantic—of Coats Land by Dr Bruce in 1904, and its extension southward to within seven hundred miles of the Pole by Filchner and Shackleton.

In all, these explorers have added some four hundred miles to the known coast-line of Antarctica as laid down by the investigators of the Victorian era. Other discoveries of less extent have been made in widely separated regions, but the outline of the South Polar Continent is still unknown throughout two-thirds of its circumference. It is, therefore, no surprise that, with the coming of peace and the return of the world to pre-war interests, Britain, which has ever been in the van of Polar research, should again turn her eyes to those regions which she has so earnestly striven to investigate in the past.

The new British Imperial Antarctic Expedition at present being organised by Mr J. L. Cope, F.R.G.S., who was surgeon and naturalist on Sir Ernest Shackleton's recent expedition, has among its aims and objects the survey of the uncharted coast-line of Antarctica, the location of mineral and other deposits of economic value known to exist in Victoria Land, and the detailed examination of the physical conditions of air and ocean, with all the improved scientific apparatus that has been provided by recent research. The location of areas frequented by whales, with a view to the establishment of whaling-centres similar to that which has been so successfully developed around South Georgia, also forms a part of the programme. From a small beginning in 1905 the South Georgia whaling industry has grown to very large proportions, so that now no fewer than twenty-one companies are operating in the region known as the Dependencies of the Falkland Islands. The value of the whale-oil, the bone, and the guano now exceeds two million pounds sterling annually, and dividends of 100 per cent. have been paid. It is not too much to say that the annual production of over half-a-million barrels of oil from this area was of the utmost value to the Allies in the manufacture of the munitions of war which, in the end, led to such an overwhelming superiority over the enemy. This very profitable industry, which accounts for more than half the world's output of whale-oil, owes its inception to an Antarctic explorer, Captain Carl Larsen; while the establishment of whaling-stations in the far South was rendered possible, in the first instance, by the scientific survey of Graham Land and Weddell Sea by the various expeditions which explored the regions south and east of Cape Horn between the years 1898 and 1909. It is highly probable that similar whaling-centres will be formed in Ross Sea and other far Southern waters, but before commercial enterprise can begin, the areas where whales abound must be located, and suitable harbours discovered. When this has been done, an important industry can be quickly built up, with every prospect of a rich return.

With these varied problems in front of him, Mr Cope proposes to leave England in the summer of next year for New Zealand, in the *Terra Nova*, a ship that has already figured conspicuously in the annals of South Polar exploration. After a geological survey of Macquarie Island has been made, the vessel will proceed through the storm-swept waters of the great Southern Ocean to Scott Island, situated on the Antarctic Circle, where a party will be left in charge of a meteorological and wireless station. The journey southward will be resumed through polar pack-ice to New Harbour, situated among the foothills of Victoria Land facing Ross Island, where Scott and Shackleton had their winter quarters. At New Harbour, from which in clear weather a fine view can be obtained of the volcanic cones of Mounts Erebus and Terror vomiting forth flame and lava from an elevation of twelve thousand feet, the main base of the expedition will be established, and a large hut erected to accommodate twenty-two men for five years. Special attention will here be devoted to the study of magnetism and meteorology, particularly the conditions of the upper air, so that information may be gained that will materially facilitate the aeroplane reconnaissances contemplated. Sledge-parties will further explore the western mountains with a view to ascertaining the position and the extent of the

mineral and other deposits of economic value already known to exist in Victoria Land.

After coal, stores, and scientific instruments have been landed, the ship will proceed across M'Murdo Sound to Cape Crozier, at the western end of the Great Ross Barrier, close to the eastern foot of Mount Terror, where two small huts, provisions, and equipment will be disembarked. One of these huts will shelter a party to study the habits of the Emperor Penguin, and to investigate the Antarctic winter at this point, a research initiated by the late Dr Wilson of Scott's expeditions, but never completed. A sledge-party, led by Mr Cope, and carrying a hut in sections, will set out from this spot over the Barrier surface, travelling as far south as possible, and when some one hundred and fifty miles from the sea will go into winter quarters, in order to investigate throughout the long Antarctic night the physical conditions of what is believed to be the southern pole of cold. That all low-temperature records will be broken at this desolate spot, situated in the midst of a veritable Sahara of ice, there can be little doubt. Amundsen at Framheim, on the coastal fringe of the Barrier three hundred and fifty miles to the east of Cape Crozier, experienced an average temperature throughout the year corresponding to forty-three degrees below freezing-point, with an extreme reading as low as seventy-four degrees below zero, or one hundred and six degrees of frost. It is, therefore, not difficult to imagine the extraordinarily low temperature that will prevail so much nearer the Pole, under true continental surroundings. Some compensation will doubtless be afforded by the circumstance that the periods of greatest cold will be associated with a complete absence of wind and snow.

When the Cape Crozier and Barrier parties have been landed, the *Terra Nova* will return to Wellington, and there load with coal and provisions for a four years' commission. In the following summer the vessel will return to New Harbour, having previously picked up the Cape Crozier and Barrier parties, who will have completed their investigations. About December 1921 the vessel will leave on her great voyage of circumnavigation. Aided by all the experience, the improvements, and the appliances for investigation which the modern Antarctic campaign has suggested, this voyage will nevertheless prove a formidable undertaking, making great and well-nigh continuous demands on the vigilance and the activity of the ship's personnel in their combat with the forces of Nature. It is expected that the delimitation of the coast-line of Antarctica from east to west will extend over three, possibly four, seasons. An element of luck regarding the ice conditions will determine the duration, especially the date at which the vessel will be able to break out of her winter quarters. The navigable period in high Southern latitudes is all too short, even under the most favourable circumstances, and it is quite conceivable that two seasons may have to be passed at the one spot, as happened to the *Discovery* on Captain Scott's pioneer expedition.

The first winter, it is expected, will be spent at, or near, Cape Ann, Enderby Land, due south of Madagascar, and in the latitude of the Antarctic Circle. This land was discovered by that stout-hearted navigator, Captain Biscoe, on 1st March 1831, and has never been seen since. The region is described as mountainous, but Biscoe brought back few details, as in a sailing-ship amidst constant gales and snowstorms he was unable to make a close examination owing to compact field ice and a chain of icebergs. After the *Terra Nova* gets free from her icy prison, sometime in the summer of 1921–22, the cruise through the Biscoe Sea will be resumed, aided by the prevailing easterly winds, and an effort made to keep in touch with the coast between Enderby Land and Coats Land, which will be specially examined. At the end of the navigable season winter quarters will be sought in Graham Land, due south of Cape Horn, where a supply of coal will be awaiting the expedition. In the succeeding summer of 1922–23 every effort will be made to complete the survey of the remaining portion of the Antarctic coast-line between Charcot Land and Edward Land. This great blank space south of latitude seventy degrees south is as little known to-day as in the time of Captain Cook. Finally, about February 1923 or 1924, the expedition will again reach New Harbour, and thence, after picking up the men on Scott Island, return to civilisation.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXXII.

'I MAKE no bargain,' were the words carried down-wind. They were clear and resolute, and the doctor made no reply beyond a shrug of his shoulders.

The two men moved off again, their backs now turned to us, and although the going must have been difficult, they were rapidly widening the distance between them and our party. Soon the receding figures disappeared in a dip, to emerge climbing a scree leading to the abrupt cliffs which crown the Ladder. The name—The Goats' Ladder—somewhat exaggerates the cliff's character, for, although its ascent in some parts means the tackling of almost sheer rock-face, it is not really dangerous to a climber with nerve and knowledge of the place.

At the head of the scree they halted. Guidotti pointed to the top of the Ladder, and 'The Searcher' went first, swinging himself easily up the dark escalade, followed more slowly by the other man. 'The Searcher' climbed quickly, and reached the parapet when the other was little more than half-way. Through the glass I saw him gain the crest, after which he lay down and craned over the edge. Something in his attitude as he crouched, watching the climber coming up foot by foot, riveted my eyes on him. Now he was kneeling, and his hands were busy.

Tony had risen to his feet, and was spying intently. Suddenly he clutched my arm. 'My God! Look!' came from him, and as he spoke a great fragment of rock toppled over. The climber gave one swift glance aloft, and threw up an arm. In the twinkling of an eye the murderous thing crashed down. I heard the dull impact, and the next instant Guidotti was swept like a fly from the cliff's face. No cry reached us. He fell headlong sixty feet before he struck the granite, where he rolled down until a ledge stopped him. There he lay twitching, face upwards, an arm and a leg sprawling over the edge.

'*Criosda leinn!* Murder! Plain murder!' gasped Malcolm.

'Shall we rush him, Tony?' I asked, sick with horror.

'Steady; he is going to save us trouble. He is coming down. If he moves an arm when I challenge him—shoot!'

As Tony spoke the murderer began to descend the Ladder rapidly, and reached the ledge where the other man lay. Having carefully scanned the corrie, he bent over his enemy for a long minute. Then he lifted him—It—and moved with his burden out of our sight behind the giant boulders. An interminable five minutes passed before 'The Searcher' reappeared, and began to lower himself straight down the bottom rungs of the Goats' Ladder. Soon he would be on level ground, and, if he came straight ahead—in our hands. Down he clambered, and began to pick his way among the granite. The distance between us lessened until I could see the whites of his eyes. We crouched lower, well out of sight. I could hear his footsteps on the stones not fifty yards away.

Up sprang Tony with revolver levelled.

'*Good*-morning, Dr Hall,' he called; 'or is it Mr "M'Nair"?'

I own that the villain showed consummate nerve. He stopped dead. Not a word came from him, but although his face was livid, there was calculation, and not defeat, in his eye. For a tense moment or two he stood perfectly still. Then he threw up his head, cleared his throat as if to speak, and coolly put his hands in his pockets.

'Hands up!' shouted Tony in a blaze of suspicion and anger, suddenly pulling me down beside him—not a second too soon, for a revolver cracked, and a bullet hit the ledge behind us with a wicked *phutt*.

'Ah! I thought so!' said Tony. 'He fired from his pocket. I shouldn't have given him a second's law.'

Now 'The Searcher' had wheeled, and was running at top speed on the level ground towards The Knuckle.

'Bolted!' said Tony. 'But he won't go very far.'

We fired simultaneously, but he had a forty yards' start, and was doubling and twisting among the boulders. Although he flung up an arm, neither of us had stopped him.

'Come on!' said Tony, now round the boulder and in the open. 'We'll head him for The Knuckle. Duncan and Finlay and Macbain are up there.'

The fugitive glanced behind, and, ignorant of the hidden sentries over the ridge, believed that to gain The Knuckle would be the safest plan. Once among its boulders, he could pick us off if we tried to rush him. This must have been his scheme, for he made a tremendous spurt and increased his advantage. The pace was gruelling, a fierce onslaught on the lungs up that steep and stony slope, but guilty terror and a vision of the rope gave him the speed and the resource of a hunted animal. He climbed from one stone to another, looking round at us as he dived in and out of his cover, all the time making his way up with astonishing swiftness.

'In here,' said Tony, slipping behind a rock. 'We'll get back our wind. There's no hurry, for we have all the earths stopped.'

Peering round the corner of our screen, I saw the fugitive throw himself face downward on the ground, and lie watching us from behind a stone. In quick succession we fired again, not so much in the hope of hitting him as to drive him up the ridge and warn our men of his and our whereabouts. A minute or two passed, hunters and hunted motionless, watching, when the silence was broken by a shout behind us. It was from Matheson, coming towards us at the double. 'The Searcher' heard the shout, and spurted up the slope. We waved to Matheson to come on, and the chase began again, on our part at an easy trot, for our quarry was making straight to within range of Duncan and Finlay, who were lying hidden on the farther slope of the ridge.

In his bid for liberty, intent on making speed up the rough ascent, 'The Searcher' did not see the waiting danger. There was a deep cleft, a vertical joint in the granite, running to a V-shaped end on the hunted man's left. The cleft dropped to the dry bed of a stream, and on its crest, bare of stones, the ridge's spine arched and fell a few yards to a crevasse—the crossing of which meant a ten-foot leap, easy enough on the flat, but with a difficult 'take off' for a winded man. 'The Searcher,' after a swift glance behind at us, realised that to break to the left where the

crevasse narrowed would lose time, and perhaps bring him within our range. For a second or two he hesitated, and then ran back a few yards to gather himself for the jump. In the instant, as he rose, one arm in the air, a rifle-shot rang out. While one might have counted ten we waited, but the flying figure did not reappear. Then came a long, despairing cry, cut off with a dreadful abruptness. Keene-Leslie and I looked at each other, listening, the same mute question in our eyes. The silence was death-like.

Duncan and Finlay had rounded the point of the cleft, and were now hurrying down towards us, their faces white as paper.

'He is doon there,' said Duncan, pointing to the cleft. 'I fired low, and missed. The bullet went atween his legs. He made the loup, but he fell short, and clutched a rock at the top. He should easily ha' been able to pull himsel' up, but I think ye had hit him, for he hung on by only one hand. I ran doon, and was aboot thirty yards from him. Then he gave yon cry, and let go. . . . *Trocair o Dhia!*'

(*Continued on page 533.*)

ROUND ABOUT THE MOON.

OUR satellite has drawn an abnormal amount of public attention of late years, thanks to air-raids and the part it plays in long-distance flying. But at no time was the moon without her students, some (not counting the astrologers) of a very queer kind.

Juliet may justly be pardoned for bidding Romeo 'swear not by the Moon, the inconstant Moon,' as no proper witness to a lover's vow. A girl of her age and period, over head and ears in love, is not supposed to be scrupulously accurate in astronomical detail. Otherwise Juliet might have remembered that the Sun himself is not more constant to his appointed course than is the Moon to the times and the sequence of her phases. Were she less absolutely punctual, she would be unable to hide from mortal sight the deepest and darkest of her mysteries. Were it not for the invariable law that her revolution on her own axis exactly coincides in time with her revolution round the earth, we should, from time to time, see that face of hers which no human eye has ever yet beheld or, it can safely be predicted, ever will behold.

There is always fascination about an insoluble mystery. And so it comes to pass that the 'turned-away face of the Moon' has been recognised as *the* spot in our planetary system where wonder may wander at will, unrestrained by telescope or camera. Here is the storehouse of all lost things, of all lost opportunities, lost pins, lost labours, lost causes, unfulfilled hopes, unanswered prayers; here are the quarries whence we build our castles in the air; here the limbo of infants, the menagerie of chimeras, the library of unwritten books, the dust-heap of philosophies, the fountain of fancies, the laboratory of dreams.

But the visible face has bred its fancies too. Everybody knows by sight the Man in the Moon, and some profess to see his dog besides, though the latter's existence is disputed. In controversy, moreover, is the said Man's identity. According to some authorities he is no less a personage than Cain, thus pilloried for punishment; according to others, an unnamed labourer, condemned to the Moon for the sin of Sabbath-breaking by gathering sticks on Sunday—as evidenced by the faggot that weighs his weary shoulders down. Science has preferred to find in the same dark portions of the lunar disc volcanic mountains of prodigious height and steepness, with their craters and intervening gorges, and has mapped them out and given them names. Fiction has taken geographical and anthropological possession through the enterprise of Cyrano de Bergerac, Baron Munchausen, Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, and others; while soaring above more or less poetic fact and more or less scientific fiction is the mystic majesty of the Moon-goddess herself—Phœbe, Cynthia, Diana, under whatever name by mortals known. For essentially feminine she is, as all the world has always agreed (it is only German muddle-headedness that gives masculine gender to the Moon, feminine to the Sun). Are not mystery and femininity notoriously synonymous? And though the lunar phases are actually so regular and calculable that they can be reproduced by clockwork, they undoubtedly seem very mysterious to inaccurate observers.

But the Moon's observers are certainly not, as a rule, entitled to plead Juliet's excuse for lack of accuracy. Artists, of all men, ought to be careful observers of Nature; yet far too often do we find them, especially among book-illustrators, depicting an evening scene with a new Moon turning her horns the wrong way; while how many persons, not artists, can say off-hand which is the right one? Fiction, no doubt, has a quasi-poetic license. A grand lunar impossibility is achieved in the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner,' where the Wedding Guest hears how—

> The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
> At one stride comes the dark;
> . . . . .
> *Till clomb above the eastern bar*
> *The horned Moon, with one bright star*
> *Within the nether tip.*

It is true that the 'Rime' may be regarded as in the nature of a dream. But even dreams—or at any rate literary imitations of them—have their

limitations. Certain of the *Arabian Nights*, for example, are the *ne plus ultra* of dream literature. But not even Sindbad ever reported an impossibility so absolute as the rising of a 'hornèd' Moon at sunset—that is, for the full or a gibbous phase. And not only so, but with a star between the horns! 'Surely, Mr Coleridge,' Dr Johnson is made to exclaim in the *New Lucian*, 'you must have forgotten that, though the illuminated segment of the moon may be shaped like a crescent, the moon itself throughout all its phases remains a disc; and its darkened portion, therefore, must necessarily interrupt our view of any star—unless, indeed, it were one nearer to the earth than our satellite, and none such exists.'

On luck (as on lovers and lunatics) the Moon, of course, has a potent influence. Unhappy the wight who gets a first glimpse of the new Moon through glass! Any one so impolite as to point to Her Highness (two hundred and thirty-nine thousand miles of highness, to wit) has only himself or herself to blame for the ill-luck that penalises so gross a breach of celestial etiquette. On the other hand, to salute the new Moon when first seen (not through glass) with a ninefold bow or curtsy is to secure a clear run of good fortune, and increase of cash therewith if what coins are in the pocket be turned the while.

If, or how far, the Moon affects the weather as well as the tides must be left in controversy for probably many a generation to come. Meanwhile it may be safely settled that such popular science as,

> Friday's Moon—
> Come when it will, it comes too soon,

or,

> Saturday's new, and Sunday's full,
> Was never fine, and never wull,

can scarcely be based on any sound process of induction. And, on the whole, it would seem that Shelley's

> Orbèd maiden with white fire laden,
> Whom mortals call the Moon,

has been rather a 'maker of poets,' as Keats has it, than an inspirer of common-sense. But then, a considerable number of persons, of whom not a few are poets themselves, hold (or appear to hold) that poetry and common-sense are incompatible terms.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XXIII.—WE DISCUSS THE SCHOOL.

'WELL, boys, in another week we shall have one pip on our sleeves, and be wearing Sam Brownes. Heigho, my lads, for a jolly time! No more guards, no more fatigues, no more school,' said Beefy one night.

'Beefy!' shouted Ginger.

'What?'

'You're a silly ass. The commission, a bottle of "fizz," and a chorus-girl form your entire outlook. Haven't you learnt anything here?'

'Oh yes, a little. I'm quite grateful, and I'll do my best. I'm not a marvellous fellow with my headpiece—and know it—but I'll try to do my job. You're a wet blanket, Ginger. Because a fellow laughs and fools about, you think he hasn't got guts. Have sense, you silly old book-guzzler.'

'You'll make a good bombing-officer, Beefy. A strong arm and a soft head are all you require for the Suicide Club,' remarked Nobby.

'And you'll be in the A.S.C., bringing up the bully-beef. A soft job for a Radical. I know your crowd. You curse the public schools, but you push us into the infantry. Nobby, you are a ruddy fraud.'

'Let's sum up the school, boys,' I said.

'Right. Lead off,' commanded Ginger.

'It isn't really a bad show. The first time I saw it, it looked a penitentiary; and when I spotted all you toughs dropping in, it promised to be a Hades. But it's panned out fairly well. There's a great lack of intellectual meat—a few of the instructors ought to go back to school—but still, we're cleaner, we're smarter, we know a few things, and we'll make at least half-decent subs. And I think we ought to be very thankful, considering that the fellows who received commissions at the beginning of the war got no training at all, but had to go straight to the trenches and find things out. And we have been lucky to have such a good old sport for a "com.," as well as that priceless chap, Cheerall. He's the backbone of the school. There has also been a moral improvement. Ginger has had a wash, Beefy doesn't go out after cooks, Nobby has ceased to pray for Asquith, and Tosher has suddenly become respectable. I think we ought to leave with no grouse, and it's up to us to give thanks to the commandant and his staff. They've treated us well, and done their best.'

'I second the motion,' said Nobby. 'The school is a useful institution, and on the whole has done good work. They have certainly paid attention to our bodies. We are all healthier, heavier, hardier, and therefore more fit for our job. The great defect is, as John Brown says, a lack of brain-power. But there is this idea in the military system: "A man of action cannot be an intellectual." And all these old fellows argue, "If they want us to be butchers, they cannot expect us to be professors." To me this is simply an excuse for mental sloth, and adherence to pre-war pleasure-loving ways

War is a science and a conflict of ideas. The army which is most scientific and has the greatest number of ideas is bound to win. This country of ours is packed with ideas; but we are so conservative, so cursed with classical ways, that it is a crime for a hustler to start pushing his ideas to the front. We're tied up to seniority, "form," and rotten old traditions, which simply choke good fellows off. Reverses have improved us, and disasters have helped things on. But why wait for disaster? Why not let every mother's son contribute some ideas to the war-machine, and so help to end the war?

'The soul is certainly sound, as Captain Cheerall says; but what's the good of a soul if you haven't got push and go? Certainly, we have improved since 1914, and we are going to win this war all right. Still, I am not so sure that youth is having its chance. There are too many old fellows knocking about. What I want to see is all those young G.S.O.'s getting the jobs, and then we'll have a good time. Look at Cheerall! He's an absolute treat! There are hundreds of men like him in the Old Army and the New Army. We fellows, who are new to the business, don't give a tinker's damn whether an instructor or a staff-officer is a Cecil or a Henderson. We want the goods. We're willing to learn. We'd pawn our boots to go and hear men like Maude, Allenby, Robertson, and Wilson; but we've got a contempt for all those old blighters who sneer at us, who think we're not gentlemen, and regard us simply as cannon-fodder. The army isn't democratic enough. It's a close preserve, and we Liberals are going to shake it up. All the same, I don't dislike this school. As John says, the commandant is a dear old father and a gentleman. If it weren't for men like him, we'd all get fed up. As for the sergeant-major, he's a terror; but he *does* know his job, and he has taught us a lot. These men are all right. It's the system that's all wrong. Yet I'm sorry to go, for I have had a good time with you fellows here. One thing the army does teach, and that is friendship. I wouldn't have been out of this job for a fortune, and when we part I'll be a sorry man.'

'Hear, hear!' roared Beefy.

'Gentlemen,' said Ginger, rising, 'you've just heard my honourable friend, the member for the Manchester School, heave things off his chest. Having done so, he's perfectly happy, for the great secret of keeping such a person in order is to let him talk—talk hard and talk long. He's a most terrible Radical, and should he be the Secretary for War in the next Government, it will be necessary for me to remove him with a BOMB.'

'Keep to the point,' said Nobby.

'Very well, the point is the school. Much of what Nobby has said is true. Now and again we've been terribly bored with the "padding" some of these fellows stuff into their lectures. The majority are afraid to be original. Still, on reflection, I think it fair to say that many never expected they would have to be schoolmasters. Again, nearly all of them were brought up under the old system, when thinking was very bad form. Nevertheless, they have worked hard. They have treated us well. The defects which exist are due to the system, and not to the men. Unfortunately a few imagine we are Tommies who have never been to school. They import into their lectures a lot of stuff which is pure bluff and part nonsense. We have seen the defects of the General Staff, and we are prepared to realise all their difficulties, as well as to note their triumphs. But it is sheer nonsense to paint them as supermen. That is a good enough stunt when talking to a platoon who cannot reason things out, and who, if told of little things, would expand them into big things and commence to grouse. But if we are going to be officers, then we want to know all the wrinkles. As Cheerall insists, study *where* we failed, *why* we failed, and *how* we might have avoided failure. It's no good cloaking things. We were at Loos. We were at Cambrai. But it is frequently forgotten that we can see things, for many of us are educated. We're not here for fun; we're here for business.

'What is always forgotten by military mandarins is that the nation is in arms. Again we are fighting for our very lives. But I *don't* think we can apply Nobby's sweeping reforms in the middle of a war. Remember Russia! There they abolished the salute. What happened? The army became a mob, and Russia was sold to Germany. The defection of Russia is the condemnation of Democracy—at least, of Lenin's Democracy. And I, for one, am up against all Bolsheviks. Nobby, of course, doesn't mean all this. Still, it takes an Oxford man to balance his impetuous moods and keep the ship right.'

'Don't swing the lead, Ginger,' cried Nobby.

'I am not swinging it, old chap. Your political strategy is one-sided, and sometimes lacks vision. Frequently you throw out constructive ideas, but you want to achieve them by destructive methods. You can't do that, or at least, if you do, there will be chaos. You keep shouting for Democracy, but you've had it for three hundred years. You really want the moon. I'm with you, heart and soul, when you talk about brains, but I'm up against your method of reform. Go slow, old man. Work your reforms one by one, without creating panic and disorder. There are tremendous forces at work to-day. Unreason and anarchy are rampant. Give the mob its head and this old Empire will tumble like a pack of cards. You condemn Oxford, you curse the classics, you tilt at the historical and true political instinct, and you fail to note that the

old system made us what we are—the greatest Empire, the greatest people, one of the most democratic on the earth.'

'Question,' said Tosher.

'It *is* a question,' retorted Ginger, turning to his interrupter, 'but it's a question concerning your educational defects. You are not taught these things in Canadian schools. It's not your fault; it's your Government's. But there's no excuse for Nobby. He accepts the whole "Democratic" scheme with all its blunders. You can carry out his ideas in a parish council, but you can't do it with an army. And while I have endorsed a good deal of his plea for intellect, I am not blind to what we have accomplished. He's a lawyer, but he's not judicial, for he has not given the other side of the case. We started with an army of one hundred and seventy thousand strong. We now have an army of five million. We have increased the corps of officers from ten thousand to one hundred thousand. When we started at Mons we had only shrapnel, and that was short. Now we have the finest Ministry of Munitions in the world. We have shipped an army of millions over the seas, and lost only two thousand men by drowning. Thanks to the navy, of course. There were no such schools of instruction in 1914; now there are hundreds. It's all very wonderful. It has been done slowly, quietly, effectively. True, there have been horrible blunders, and we have had reverses. So has the enemy. But in all manœuvre battles we have beaten the Germans.'

'Hear, hear, Ginger!' some of us shouted.

'Now you see where Nobby is wrong. He concentrates on the failures and forgets the triumphs. And that is the greatest defect of his Radical friends. For all that, I'm not going to say we're perfect—no army is perfect; but I do say we, as a nation, have done our best. Certainly, there are much-needed reforms. I'm with Nobby on the subject of brains, but I'm not going to back up his horrible methods of smashing down to build up. You can't do that in war-time! Graft the new on to the old, *and we'll win.*

'As for the school, it has been a priceless boon for fellowship. I've really learnt to love old Nobby, and tried to understand him. And Tosher, the man-eating, constitution-smashing Canadian—well, we've just taken him into our arms! Like all Colonials, he's a good fellow. Then there's Beefy—dear old Beefy!—the king of the ballet, the god of the bar, yet the toughest devil who ever came out of Cambridge. He's real good! John Brown, of course, is a dreamer. He revels in romance, girls, and philosophy. You'll find him in a barrage writing to Adela and moralising about the smell. Finally, there's dear old Pieface, the best fellow who ever wore a holy collar.

'Now, to be serious, boys. I like the school; but I like you more. We've learnt a lot about war; but we've learnt more about each other. We may not live; but if we do, then "The Dauntless Six" will meet at Ciro's, fill a bumper, and drink long and deep to the happiest school-days of our lives.'

'Hear, hear, Ginger!' we shouted as he sat down.

'I guess I've got to get into this business with my feet,' said Tosher.

'Try your head,' mumbled Ginger.

'It's right there, old child, every time,' answered Tosher, touching his forehead. 'We ain't no one-eyed chicks from Alabama; we get our wisdom-teeth in a hard country, where the snow buries you for six months, and the sun bakes you in the summer. Why, it just makes me sad to see the Balliol joint pumping out, "Go slow," "Steady up," and calling old Nobby a Bolshevik. Nobby is the only spring chicken in the crowd—but you don't understand him. He wants to sweep up all your old institooshuns, and give you all a real good time.'

'Keep to the point, Buffalo Bill,' said Beefy.

'I'm sitting on it, and it's real hard. Now I'm going to skin your eyes. I likes this institooshun. It's durned slow, and there ain't enough ginger in the Old Man. Yet I reckon I've got wise here. They've knocked all the Tommy's grouse out of me, and given me hope of a better land—a commission, a servant, and a waiter to bring me cocktails and fat havanas. They've shown me how to eat an omelet, and warned me off drinking out of a finger-bowl; taught me how to sign myself "Your obedient servant" when I don't feel like it; and to say "sir" to all the chicks that'll want a job from me after the war. They took me in, a tow-headed gum-chewer, and they reckon they're turning me out real prime, first-class, lead-'em-to-hell stuff. As one of those old professors said, "He was a Canadian when he came; now he's a gentleman."

'Well, boys, I'm real grateful for it all, though I haven't much time for etiquette, and ain't no use at the "How d'ye do?" business. Out West we introduce with revolvers, and get our photo taken when there's a hundred dollars on our head.

'We ain't here for amusement; we're here to fight. You can't do that with kid gloves. It's red fighting that will kill the Hun—not talking. And as Nobby says, we need more brains. That's a plain proposition, and I'm his man. However, we haven't been skinned in this saloon bar. The Old Man is a white man. He has been real good to me and you. Our time's been a happy time. I've learned to love the Old Country. We Canadians may be tough, we may even seem white-fanged gunmen, but I tell you, we're in with you to the end.

'God help the Huns when I go back!'

'Hear, hear, old Tosher! You're the goods,' shouted Billy, rising to wind up our informal discussion.

'And now, boys, a last word. Tosher has shown you the real soul of Canada, the spirit which brings the Canadians over, and in which they die. To us all it is a great revelation. He has been a good pal, just as you all have been, and our time here has been one of joy. Never mind this eternal discussion about brains. Leave that to the powers that be. Look at ourselves. Are we better men? Are we better soldiers? Are we really fit to lead our own clean boys? That to me is the real issue. Somehow, I think we'll do fairly well. We are all agreed about fighting the German. We are determined to do so. In this school they have improved us, and made us more fit for the task. We have had a dear old gentleman for a father; our instructors have all been kind; every one of the staff has done his duty. It is up to us to show our appreciation, and when we leave here, to serve our God, to honour the King, and die, if need be, like true British soldiers.'

We got up silently, and went to bed.

The thought of parting had gripped the soul!

(*Continued on page 557.*)

ASHANTI IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

By David Boyle.

IT is now nineteen years since the siege of Coomassie Fort. In 1900 the Ashantis, bereft four years earlier of their king, Prempeh, and angered beyond measure at an unfortunately-timed request for the unpaid indemnity of 1874, turned on Sir Frederick Hodgson (Governor of the Gold Coast) and his party, and broke into open revolt. It would be difficult for any one revisiting Coomassie to-day to recognise the savage capital of last century, hemmed in as it then was by the great Ashanti forest with its steamy silence, undrained, and uncivilised except in the immediate neighbourhood of the fort. A succession of wise rulers, after the suppression of the revolt, beginning with the late Sir Donald Stewart, has had a sure result in social, commercial, and political progress, and there can be few parts of the Empire that have been more quickly and more completely remodelled.

Ashanti occupies a remarkably advantageous position with regard to the West African coast, for while, thanks to the railway, she can keep in touch with the ocean trade that every year is becoming a larger asset to the Gold Coast, she also taps the interior roads that lead down from the French Niger country through our Northern Territories. There is a marked difference between the close-forested area of the south and west, and the semi-open or orchard country of the north. Cocoa, cocoa, and yet again cocoa, spells the secret of the extraordinary prosperity of Ashanti to-day—a prosperity interfered with, indeed, by the war, but only temporarily. Mineral development is, of course, also to the fore, principally at the great Ashanti gold-mines at Obuasi. Ground-nuts, shea-butter, rubber, kola-nuts, all contribute their quota to the general increase of commerce; while the cattle trade with the north and the south, for which Ashanti occupies a half-way house of exchange and broking, is responsible for no small turnover in money. But cocoa, first, second, and always, is the handle of the country's wealth.

German enterprise had not extended far into Ashanti before the fateful summer of 1914. It was chiefly confined to the politico-religious activities of the Basel Mission, a German Swiss society whose stores almost invariably followed the pastor's moving tabernacle within a few months. But the Hun benefited not a little by Ashanti's progress, a large proportion of the exports being sold to Hamburg and shipped direct. Truth to tell, the German steamships of the Woermann line were well patronised by our officials and others in those days, for they offered many little comforts and courtesies that our own Elder Dempster did not think it worth while to give one. 'The devil shows himself in many guises,' and doubtless it was all part of a plan, as the venerable German missionary declared when, with a perfectly unruffled exterior, he awaited at Coomassie station the arrival of 'Wife, one, as per invoice,' sent out to him from the Fatherland as a reward and a helpmeet for his labours. (This is a fact. I remember the mild excitement caused by the arrival of the lady, a tall, fair, good-looking German girl of about twenty-three.)

The chief need of Ashanti after the 1900 'show' was, of course, a railway. At that time one had to land at Cape Coast, march many a weary mile through the Coast scrub and the Ashanti forest, ford innumerable streams, and spend several sleepless, mosquito-haunted nights before emerging on the clearing that contains Coomassie. So a railway was made—by the mile, it is said. This would seem to be true, to judge by the curves that in places almost enable a person in the last coach to shake hands with the engine-driver. But a railway there is, and you may now leave Sekondi, the Gold Coast port, at 7 A.M., with reasonable prospect of completing by 6 P.M. the one hundred and sixty-nine miles that lie between you and Coomassie. There are no night trains, and no refreshment-cars on the day trains, but everybody is accus-

tomed to inconveniencies in West Africa, so the time passes fairly well. About midday, or soon after, the train crosses the Offin River, which separates the colony from Ashanti, and plunges into the thick forests of southern Ashanti. Great tall cotton-trees stand sentinel on each side, while countless other trees of from eighty to one hundred and twenty feet in height present the appearance of an impenetrable green barrier. Here and there a small hill is seen; and at last, between a number of hills denuded of all trees for firewood and a few mounds of old workings, the train pulls into Obuasi. This busy mining-centre is the chief town of the southern province of Ashanti, and is about three and a half hours' run from the capital. It is the usual tin-roofed, bustling mining-village, with the endless clatter of machinery, blasts of whistles, and ceaseless toil characteristic of such places.

The European bungalows are perched on little hills, as there is hardly any flat at all except the railway valley. They have a lonely, unsociable look, each on its own little pinnacle, and even electric light (connected up with the mines plant) hardly makes up for the difficulties of intercommunication. This may sound feeble; but go and live in a dampish, hot, depressing country like West Africa, get through your day's work till tea-time, and then, feeling really ready for a rest, or a tonic in the shape of new ideas, see if you are prepared to walk down your hill, along three or four hundred yards of old railway line, and up another hill steeper than your own, to see a man who knows all your stories as well as you know his, who has no interests in common with you, and who perhaps has an absolutely maddening habit of whistling 'Tipperary' in silent intervals! You won't be so keen on leaving your own little hill-top then.

From Obuasi north the cocoa industry is much in evidence; even from the train one can at intervals catch sight of the golden pods hanging in the dark shadows of the long-leaved trees, and at every station bags, barrels, and baskets of the fermented bean assail the eye and the nose —it is rather a sickly smell, never forgotten. Probably a merchant down from Coomassie for the day will join the train at Akrokerri or Bekwai—to name but two of the intermediate stations—and will at once find a friend in the carriage to whom to talk on crops, prices, markets, &c. Perhaps, if you are in luck, the Chief Commissioner or some other political officer will invade the train with orderlies, officious servants, Union-Jacks, baths, chop-boxes, and all the paraphernalia of camping. Examine well, if you get the chance, for this is how our small colonies are governed, and that hot-looking man in khaki shirt and shorts is perhaps building more than he knows. Soon after half-past five the line starts climbing a slight incline, and on the left passes an attractive botanical garden, in which sheds and bungalows and neat beds of various fruits and vegetables are visible through the straight lines of planted Para rubber-trees that here border the line. Then, on the right, a long, low series of tin-roofed barracks, where the Mendi transport-carriers are lodged, a glimpse of red and white houses, stone buildings, a spire, and a shout from the daily assemblage of natives who seem to live for this one moment of meeting the train. 'Coomassie! Coomassie!' cries a black porter, and you jump out to collect your kit.

Unless one has friends here, or introductions sent on beforehand, one will probably have to resort to the rest-house that is near the station; but when one has one's own boys and cooking materials, there is little discomfort in that. It will be too late to see much of the town that evening, and after the journey, eleven hours' hot continuous jolting in a gritty atmosphere, one will be, if not too headachy, quite ready for bed. Next day it will be advisable to rise as early as possible, and see as much of the town as can be managed before 10.30, for the sun seems to centre on Coomassie in the middle of the day, and the glare is almost unbearable. A short walk up the little rise in front of the rest-house brings one to the corner of King's Way by the post-office; there you may look across the green cricket-ground to the fort, the fort of 1900, now modernised as a residence for the Chief Commissioner, or down the red laterite road, with its gorgeous border of flamboyant trees, to the mess and lines of the Gold Coast Regiment, W.A.F.F. On each side of the road are bungalows in gardens screened by mangoes and other trees, and a small open space of grass-land leads up to the white walls of the prison. Turning your back on that side for the moment, you may look down King's Way, with its fine European stores, to the factories and the yards where the cocoa is sorted and packed, and, while you look, perhaps a dozen little motor-lorries will fly past from the great north road with their freight of the ubiquitous bean. Down the hill from the post-office you can quickly reach the native town, with wide ordered markets, including a fine meat-market but lately completed. Up the hill again on the other side, beyond the Ashanti town, you may arrive at the Zongo or Mohammedan quarter, where the Hausa traders of the north are housed, with the large cattle-kraal under their management lying to the side of it.

Retracing your steps past the rest-house to the other side of the valley, across the railway, you ascend another small ridge, formerly merely a polo and parade ground, but now—thanks to a brilliantly ambitious programme of five years ago—laid out as a European segregation area with solid stone houses, all standing in their own little gardens, and completely isolated (except, of course, for their servants) from the native population. By this means it is hoped

to improve the health of our men at outposts such as this, and by sanitation and better housing, if not entirely to defeat the West African climate, at any rate to counteract it. From this ridge one can get a fine bird's-eye view of Coomassie, as it is now, with its red-roofed fort and bungalows, its business centre to the right, and the smoke and the indescribable hum of voices ever rising from the native town in the middle distance. A bugle calls, and away in the distance too we hear a band playing. Nearer by the Union-Jack flies modestly at the fort entrance—no longer the emblem of an alien conqueror, but a common rallying-point of absolute loyalty and devotion to the Empire. Not a bad record that for a race which is among the most war-like in Africa, and among whom, until quite recently, human sacrifice was a common practice. By money and gifts in kind, the chiefs and the people of Ashanti have vied with each other to help in the war. They have even recruited some of their own men for service over-sea. Who of those that headed the 'Relief' in 1900 would have dared prophesy such a thing?

THE RATS OF ST L——.

By W. Coats-Bush.

I.

IT was in August 1920 that I again visited the village of St L——. My first visit had been during the Great War when my battalion was quartered there, and it was there that I had met Yvonne, now my wife. It was one of those lucky places which, though perched on the very edge of war, had by some miracle escaped with slight damage.

My father-in-law's farm lay some little distance from the village, and, with the exception of two small cottages, his was the nearest house to the enclosure of St L——, or, as it was more popularly called, 'No Man's Road.' Immediately after peace was signed the French Government had taken the strip of land (in places forty miles wide) stretching from the coast of Flanders to the Swiss frontier, over which the tides of trench warfare had ebbed and flowed till the very ground was rotten with the horrors of war, and had securely wired it off, except in certain places where roads and railways had been cut through it, linking up the civilisation on each side. Thus it was divided up into huge enclosures. No Man's Road indeed! A grim, noisome land, rank with weeds and horrors, shunned by man, bird, and beast—except the rats. Rats in thousands—millions. And such rats! Terrible, fierce creatures, which it was said no dog would face; in fact, none of the dogs that lived round the enclosures would venture into them even in daylight. It was whispered that strangers who had incautiously wandered into these enclosures at night had never been seen again.

The St L—— enclosure had been fairly free from these pests, but as the enclosures above and below were cleared by the Government reclaiming-gangs the numbers increased at an alarming rate. Owing to shortage of food, the rats became very daring, and every now and again raided one or other of the small farms, and cleaned up every living thing that came in their way. In fact, so many complaints had been made to the Government by the peasants that the enclosure had been specially wired, in such a way as to pen in securely its terrible inhabitants.

The gang of professional rat-killers had arrived at the village, and were preparing to start work on the morrow. I had strolled down to the *estaminet* to smoke a pipe and listen to the tales these men told. They all agreed that the St L—— enclosure was the worst they had so far encountered.

'It's absolutely alive with them,' a big, burly man said. 'And, *mon Dieu*, so fierce—the fierceness of hunger! Look at my coat,' he added. This coat, a stout leather garment, was scratched and bitten all over. 'I just looked into what had been a dug-out, and flashing my lamp round, I saw a hundred pin-points of light—rats' eyes. As I turned to climb out again I fell, and out went my lamp. In a second they were at me, squealing, biting, scratching like furies. Luckily my mates heard my shout, a dozen lamps lit up the hole, and I was pulled out.'

'Ay! they can't stand fire or light,' said a small, dark man in the corner. 'The good God help any man who falls among them in the dark! You remember Henri Despois?'

A murmur of assent ran round the group. I scented a story, and ordered more wine.

'It happened at the —— enclosure,' he went on. 'Henri was my mate, a braggart, but no coward, and fond of his bottle. Some one heard him boasting of what he had done one evening, and bet him a hundred francs he wouldn't walk across the enclosure alone and without a light that night. Henri took him. I did my best to stop him, but the wine was in, and when he was like that the Blessed Virgin couldn't have turned him. The enclosure was only three miles across at this particular spot. We all saw him off, and proceeded to walk round the end, so as to meet him on the other side. When we arrived, there was no sign of Henri. We gave him another half-hour, and as he did not come, we got lamps, entered the enclosure, and started

to walk across to look for him.' The speaker paused to light a fresh cigarette.

'You found him,' I ventured.

'What was left of him,' he answered grimly. 'Just a still warm skeleton, picked as clean as a whistle—with a broken leg. He had fallen and broken his leg, and the rats had got him. He died fighting, as a score or more rats lay round him.'

I shuddered at the picture this conjured up, and rising, bade them good-night. My way lay parallel with the enclosure, and I confess I cast more than one apprehensive glance at the dreary waste, now rapidly darkening as the summer evening deepened into night. The day had been hot and oppressive, and the sky had an angry, threatening look; while even now a flash of lightning heralded the approaching storm. A curious restlessness seemed to take possession of me. I felt a peculiar creeping sensation of the skin, and the hair on my head seemed alive and moving.

'Damn!' I thought; 'the rats have got on my nerves.' I quickened my steps, and soon reached my father-in-law's.

II.

I must have been in bed about three hours when I suddenly woke with a start, every sense on the alert, and a feeling that something was about to happen—a feeling I had proved to be a sure guide during my days in the trenches. My fellow-officers had dubbed me the 'Boche barometer,' for if ever the Boche was up to any devilment I was sure to get that queer, alert, waiting feeling. The lightning was now very vivid, and was accompanied by a curious sound, like the crackling of thousands of small pieces of glass.

I slipped out of bed without disturbing my wife, and looked out of the window. My eyes instinctively sought the enclosure, and as a flash illumined it I saw the wire and its supports sway as if in a strong wind—yet there was not a breath of air. I rubbed my eyes and looked again. The next flash showed me the wire clearly. It was alive with rats, jumping, clinging, tearing, hanging on to it with teeth and claws—a solid wall of writhing vermin, driven by some unaccountable impulse to break through the fence that held them prisoners. I had barely time to take all this in when, with a crash, the posts gave way and the wire was down. With a rush the rats swept over it in seeming millions. Up to this moment they had not uttered a sound, but now they sent up a squeal of fiendish triumph—a sound so horrible, it froze the blood.

A man from a cottage opposite, in his night attire, opened the door and stepped into the road. In a moment the rats were on him and he was fighting for his life. I saw him go down, under a seething mass of rats, then stagger up—rats hanging all over him—and attempt to reach and close the cottage door. But the rats forestalled him, and hundreds poured into the cottage, from which a woman's scream issued a moment later.

The noise now became a pandemonium. Above the squeals of the rats came the cries of bird, beast, and man attacked by them. A horse came thundering down the road, mad with terror, rats hanging on it and leaping up at it as it passed. In front of my window it slipped and fell. Instantly it became a heaving, struggling mass of bodies.

I stood spell-bound with horror, when my wife's voice from the bed brought me back to our own peril. I slammed the window to, only just in time, as a large gray rat which had climbed up the ivy leapt on to the window-sill.

In a few hasty words I explained to my wife what had happened, and persuaded her to remain in bed and bury her head under the clothes. We were safe enough for the moment, as the room had no chimney, and with the door and the window shut the rats could not enter. I could hear them pattering on the roof and running along the landing outside. I could even smell their fetid breath and the stench of their filthy bodies.

I banged on the wall and shouted to my father-in-law what had happened, telling him to stay where he was.

Suddenly a new sound struck my ear above the din, a steady drumming. Rain! In another second it broke over us—but such rain! The heavens seemed to open and vomit water. Hour after hour it continued till morning broke, and with it the horrors of the night passed away. The rats had either been drowned or swept away in the flood. The few that had managed to find refuge in house and barn were easily despatched.

The French Government kept the affair out of the papers, but a semi-official report admitted the death of two men, two women, and three children, besides many domestic animals.

THE VOYAGE.

At night I take a little ship
That's moored beside a shadow quay;
No sails I rig, no oars I dip—
I navigate a magic sea.

I drift across the Drowsy Straits—
To windward lie the docks of Day;
Beyond Cape Nod's dim headland waits
The sheltered cove of Sleepy Bay.

Across its placid depths I steer
A craft that knows nor sail nor oar,
In happy languor drawing near
The fertile stretch of Slumber Shore

Its harbourage I gain at last—
Before me lies a silver strand;
In Port of Dreams I anchor fast,
And wander into Fairyland.

LILIAN HOLMES.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

THE capital of an empire was never so unhappily masked, never made such puny representation of its own value, as when in due course the first season of summer rest and recreation came round after the interruptions, the privations, the detachments of horrid war. From armistice to peace there prevailed disorder and grossness, the hottest pressure of a life that on its surface appeared all of materialism, utterly lacking in sympathy with high ideals. There was a vulgar living for the day, and contempt for all thereafter. The farther hopes were seemingly abandoned; faiths of old were as nonsense, were forgotten, neglected. Even city and commercial grades of honesty were displaced by new schemes of greed, selfishness, and spoliation which Government connived at, and, indeed, in some measure adopted. Men of conscience complained that in high places ideals were no more preached or practised, and that it was lack of idealism and simple sincerity in Government that was pushing the people into moral chasms from which they would not easily emerge. However it might be, the scene appeared vulgar, pantingly hot, and morally depressing to such as reflected on sacrifices made by sons of Britain. Despite material gains of sorts, it seemed that the Conference in Paris was a pretty failure. The idea had reacted upon the people, and an undercurrent of feeling was now running strongly that war was indissolubly of the world, the flesh, and life, as they are known; that another great conflagration was in the making; that the Conference might, indeed, unwittingly be speeding the onset of the next clash of arms, the horrors of which were not to be imagined. People seemed to be asking who believed in life. Yet leaders were trying to whip up political faith in themselves again, and still, while screwing more and more from the life and the resources of the people, prattled of the future, though now (for reasons) they spoke little of patriotism. London in the high summer of Peace Year was conspicuous for crowds, controls, and cant. What was once a city of grand inspiration, which lifted men's thoughts and spurred on to good achievement, was now poor for the spirits of those who dwelt therein. Those who loved it most were pleased to deliver it to others for the celebrations that were proclaimed by order. Afterwards it will perhaps right itself again, and, with thinning crowds and cooling brains, return to its good normal. The months of armistice, and the doubtful achievements of Governments in that period, have surely, it is said, spoiled the prospect of peace celebrations. The borough councillors of Lambeth the other day objected to the report and recommendation of their Peace Celebration Committee, who advised the imposition of a halfpenny rate to pay for certain forms of celebration, the children to have buns and tea; and, rejecting it, asked the committee to think again. In truth, there are few who feel that the idea of such celebrations is worth a halfpenny of the money of any one. So much for the peace for which there was such hungry yearning for more than four years, the peace which has been so much botched and bungled by politicians! A friend, in sarcasm, sends a note from Paris with information that the present measure of popular esteem for, and faith in, political leaders is suggested by the circumstance that in the people's quarters there are roundabouts of hobby-horses, and these wooden animals (variously spotted and bearing upon their backs youthful Armand and little Jeanne, happy Jacques and dainty Claire, making their circuits to the Yankee tune of 'Over there!') have painted upon their necks — which but yesterday bore the titles of equine heroes of the race-course — the names of the leaders of the Peace Conference. 'Orlando' and 'Clemenceau,' 'Wilson' and 'Lloyd George,' thus gallop around, whipped by gamins.

* * *

Is it not the case that in London and other cities there has been for long past an oppressive sense of a loss of faith in leaders of humanity? While some in deep seriousness have doubled sharply back on their own spiritual resources, knowing that they have too much trusted, and that for their good *morale* they must raise up a standard of conduct within themselves for themselves, others have appeared to be given to a wild abandonment in manners and conduct, laughing it forth that nothing matters—scarcely anything can matter. Some of these libertines, if they could be brought to reason, would say that leaders to whom they had looked for good example had neither ideals nor sincerity. They would say

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that by the leaders was the example of foolish and shocking waste most conspicuously set; they would ask what was rightly to be demanded of a people to whom the first public appeal in a matter of pressing national importance was made on the day of some of the worst revelations of scandalous waste in high places, of Ministers practising the utmost extravagances in the use of the most luxurious motor-cars for trivial purposes at the people's expense, when the people themselves, for public economy's sake, were not permitted to use any motor-cars at all; and, again, they would murmur of aeroplanes in large numbers being made at factories after the declaration of armistice in order to give employment to persons whose task was ended, and of the self-same aircraft being conveyed thence to other workshops, and there destroyed for the purpose of giving employment to other such persons—these not being tales of fiction, but official statements contained in official reports and duly published. And beneath it all was heard continuously the slow rumbling of discontent and great political desire among vast masses of the people, the proletariat—a foolish proletariat, it may be, but one that had been provoked, they would say. Everywhere, then, the spirit of unrest was abroad; confidence was shattered. Not for long had mammon seemed so little righteous. So it appeared a good thing in summer to go away and seek balm by the sea, upon the slopes of hills, in the bosom of the country. Not for health and refreshment only, but for the realisation of utter truths, the adjustment of senses, and the regulation of ideals and conduct is the green bath of Nature the most certain and delightful corrective. Never was the country in its purity sweeter to townsfolk, ridden with impurity, than when the season of rest and change began this year. Change? In five summers what a change! People left the cities five years ago with the assurance to themselves that in a month or so they would be most happy to return. Now. . . .

* * *

The point seems to be appreciated that of all the special periods that people have known in their lives, this now is the best for the recasting of old holiday schemes and systems, the inspection of habits and conventions followed hitherto without thought or consideration. Two essentials only were demanded by the bulk of the British holiday-making public, the joyous and not generally overworn masses; the one was change of scene, and the other was fresh air. A section of these masses demanded also some light and artificial entertainment, preferably in the form of popular music discharged by bands on or off the constructions known as piers. The essentials—with the supplementary desideratum, of course—were met by a visit to the seaside. Truly, it is an admirable form of holiday, most excellent in its health-giving properties, and it is appropriate that a nation of seafarers, of island dwellers, should for once or twice in the full season seek their shores and gather delight from a simple vision of the blue main upon which such glory has been earned and whence such riches have been gathered. These visitations should not, and never will, cease. You will find that the dwellers in central Europe, the middle states of America, and other places that are far from the coast possess no instinctive desire to visit it, to look upon the sea, most rare and wonderful sight as to them it might be. The love of the sea is seemingly a special instinct; it belongs only to the seafarers, so is strong in the Briton and the Scandinavian, as centuries back it was in the ocean adventurers who set forth from the ports of Spain. Never were the coasts so thick with British humanity as this year; never before have our people proved their instinctive attachment to the briny so thoroughly as in this summer following a winter in which the sea yielded them the most dazzling, the most amazing, triumph in all naval history—a spectacle of such a kind as man with his enlarged views of possibilities still believes to be impossible of recurrence. Yet for all the good instinct, there is something crude, often much that is very vulgar, about the general scheme and system of these seaside sojourns. Above all in this and other modes of holiday it is realised now that our people have been too conventional, too little thoughtful and ingenious, and have been unfortunate accordingly. They have too often forgotten the country lanes, ignored the mountain paths, been heedless of the plashing murmur of summer streams. Tawdry convention has misled them. But these are days of convention collapsing; there have been four seasons of makeshift holidays, a break away from the old customs; and now there is a recasting of such schemes, the quest of new pleasances for summer and autumn days, introspection to determine the true nature of personal needs and desires, with a close investigation of the extent to which these are satisfied by such procedure as was adopted up to the beginning of the disrupting war. The report that people ultimately make to themselves upon these matters is one that is conducive to change, and concludes with a strong recommendation to a more intimate association with Nature, insisting that it shall be conducted with sincerity, and shall be in no wise affected or artificial.

* * *

The new ideas being at work, the intelligent holiday-maker who realised upon the signing of the Armistice that his next summer's vacation would open up a new era for him, and, in wise and thoughtful anticipation, established an information bureau in his mind accordingly, naturally filed among the most important documents for future reference a schedule—he would mark it A—which was provided by the

Minister of Education on the first day of the present year. Mr Fisher is a man of ideas, of perspicuity, conscience, and sincerity, and he has nothing to say upon the advancement of life, upon human equipment, and the good exercise of effort that is not deserving of the best attention. On this occasion he was addressing a conference of educational associations, and, following many wise words upon the maintenance of efficiency and the business of keeping alive in education, he came to this question of holidays, and became bold upon it, even to the degree of dogma. It was a delightful study; a delicate imagination that had shunned convention always played upon it. Even though in the chilliness of January it were scheduled and marked A in every individual bureau, it is yet the most interesting and valuable contribution to constructive philosophy on holidays, so that in simple duty it must be publicly produced when the sunshine of August glistens on our land and calls the people from their labour to their vacation. Teachers of all degrees often appear to some as a class rather distant from the rest, folks of an odd groove with peculiar ways, not dreamers like artists and clerics, and yet not, as it has seemed, concerned with the stern everyday affairs of life, of business, living rather in a world of Peter Pans who do not mature, where the youthful view, the youthful way, and the youthful sense abound always. But that is a good atmosphere in which to live. If it sometimes breeds monotony, it is yet an atmosphere of freshness, of innocence, of sincerity, truth, and hope, and one would say of the teacher that he could hardly be a good and honest teacher and yet a bad man or woman. Odd as these folk may be, they need their holidays as much as any, and their plans and intentions concerning them are generally better than those of the conventions, contempt of which is provoked by thought and study. What is good for these, then, is good—perhaps better—for us. The Minister of Education puts it to us all, through them, that the right use of a holiday is one of the sovereign secrets in the practice of the noble art of keeping alive. He propounds to us the advantageous thought that leisure is only valuable if it improves the quality of work. A holiday is not an end in itself, but a means to a general improvement of the working life; and the test of whether a holiday has or has not been well used is the supplement of zest and vigour which it has contributed to our proper labours. Every holiday should bring with it a real development of experience. And then, upon the excellent plan devised by Mr Wilson for the determination, collocation, and compression of concrete points, the statesman puts forward fourteen of them, truisms, perhaps, as he himself has called them, and yet neglected and little thought upon, sparkling in seeming novelty, interest, and happy incitement now. In such a matter we should not paraphrase, and so we present the exact words of the points. The first is: 'Plan your holiday carefully, but be ready to abandon your plan on the slightest provocation.' Herein we see the wise recommendation towards freedom from restraint, from obedience to task, from that discipline to routine which cramps our lives. For all of us, no less than for the instructors, the time-table is the blight of refreshment for the soul. It is of the essence of convention, of formality; it forbids the exploration of new delight. Yet it is the fault of many to harness themselves closely in their times of vacation to harsh and cramped time-tables, upon which honest indulgence should set a ban for the havoc they create. In these time-tables are often massed ponderous packs of neglected duties; reading that has been too much overlooked is fitted tightly in them, and often constitutes an uneasy reproach through languorous days. The second point of the fourteen that the Minister consecrates to our holiday welfare is this: 'Never go North when you can go South.' In this he may be challenged; and, anyhow, for metropolitans at present it is not an easy thing to move any distance south, to cross the Channel, when timid Governments, having urged people to fight for freedom, conceive that there are fearful risks in permitting them to leave their own for foreign lands, and ordain that for permission to do so they shall be subject to grave inquisitions and much contemptuous treatment by the underlings of passport offices. If we cannot move by southward ways, then to the north we go, and happily with delightful prospect. 'A change of work is itself a holiday,' Mr Fisher's third point, is more readily endorsed in dreary January than in sportive August. The fourth point is: 'Never drive when you can walk, and never walk when you can ride.' It is Fisherian philosophy of much merit, but not, perhaps, incontrovertible. Then, the fifth point: 'In a cross-country walk there is seldom time for short cuts;' a true maxim this. 'A good holiday is like eternity; there is no reckoning of time,' is the sixth of the points. The seventh—'One of the best fruits of a holiday is a new friendship'—calls up a gallery of grand memories. There are delights and regrets among them. Some of the human figures in the gallery have been in their way large or small as lasting influences; others might have been but for that after-neglect which is common with such August-fashioned friendships. Mostly they are ephemeral things; these people have flickered in our lives like the fancies of a dream and have gone for ever, each to the comedy and the tragedy of his own existence. The long history of these summer associations often makes a doubtful contemplation, and there is a moral to it sometimes, that in this business we must be cautious and it were better to be sincere. We are midway through the points,

and the second half of them is perhaps better than the first.

* * *

The Minister of Education says for his eighth point: 'Stay where you are happy.' In this there is gentle counsel towards placidity, a contention against that fevered restlessness which is of the age, and there is an argument against the time-table also. 'Soak yourself in the atmosphere of a new place before you study the details,' he enjoins us (ninth), and in this perhaps there is some oblique warning against the vulgar habit of investigating the local sights, the often meretricious relics, the overpraised scenes and the doubtful marks of history that are attended by visiting people as a duty to conscience or custom, found mostly to be irksome, and discharged with eyes that do not see and minds that do not comprehend, but with lips that marvel automatically and in sad insincerity exaggerate in after-narratives. These local sights are commonly the most pernicious things, and they are worse for evil when attached to time-tables. Is it not better to soak longer and longer in the atmosphere? Would not the wayfarer who knows not the characters of columns nor what constitutes the Gothic style be doing better for his soul by asking questions of a milkmaid than by peering with his guide-book into the corners of the village church? The tenth point is made of the plain maxim: 'The best holiday is that which contains the largest amount of new experience.' In this we are thrown back upon that old and consoling idea that holidays end, but recollections endure and ripen until there is no further compensating service for them to do. The good holiday begins its happiest work only upon its termination; the memories of sunlit streams, of rocky coasts, of the ineffable music of summer breezes playing through the leaves of trees, and adventures among them all, serve for the gladdening of many days and nights in after-times, and at each remembrance life should seem a little fuller and better worth the living. It is not twenty or fifty or a hundred pounds spent upon a month, but so much devoted to the enrichment of all succeeding life. To how many of us does not the memory seem richer, more romantic, than the experience? We view ourselves objectively in those distant places, wonder at the dispositions, the caprices, the motives of our former and now much-changed selves; we smile, and pass on to another novel formation in this strange kaleidoscope of our lives. (Suggestion: A diary in brief—and better of thoughts than of facts?) Mr Fisher for his eleventh point says that 'holidays come up for judgment before the next term's work,' and we may let that pass, and, again, the twelfth—'In the choice of holiday books, act on the principle that one of the main uses of leisure is to feed the imagination'—for no better reason than that for even the moderate treatment of such a text we should need a thousand times the number of words that serve for its bare enunciation. Point thirteen will touch some of us to the quick: 'The principal experts in the art of taking holidays are painters, naturalists, travellers, and historians; the worst person to consult is a golfer.' And it has been computed that there are nearly a million golfers in these isles, and they are notorious for their enthusiasm, and envied for it! They will say that never since Adam laboured first in Eden and took a holiday, perhaps, have holidays been better spent than on the links. But there are two classes of golfers, the thoughtful and the thoughtless, and with increasing years the former realise better and better for themselves the inner truth and meaning of what the Education Minister says. The eleventh hole at St Andrews is a wondrous thing, upon whose small and aggravating proportions there have been many controversies, but are they right who think it better worth their speculation than the records of a dead civilisation at Pompeii or the awesome mysteries that arise in the mind of a man of imagination and sensibility when he treads alone among the mountains and sees the setting of the sun amid such changing and extensive colour as mocks an artist? The painters and the naturalists have it, the satisfaction of the spirit, and in these times more than any, for the grandeur and the supremacy of Nature, her omnipotence, were never so manifest as when mankind in thin endeavour seems for a season to have failed so sadly. As his fourteenth point, Mr Fisher adds lightly and pleasantly that 'on occasions a very good holiday can be taken at home if you change the hour of breakfast;' and with that he leaves us.

* * *

We are older than we were when the war began; we are more than five years older. A chasm lies between us and the often careless people who went upon their merry-making in the summer days of 1914. Those who will may have their jazz bands, may seek the strange pleasures of new inventions, the 'improvements' on the old. But the better part of our victorious islanders turn back for solace in anxious times upon simpler and more heart-refreshing ways. Many will find a strange delight in visiting the haunts of earliest youth, pacing slowly now and in deep reflection those paths upon which lads' feet tripped so gaily in the long ago, and which perhaps have not, through an odd neglect, been visited since. This instinct towards the renewal of such old and good acquaintance with the magic places where we played when life and hope were young somehow seems stronger in the days of upheaval and so much doubt than ever before. By the same process, or one allied to it, the minds of harassed men may now strangely revert to some simple diversions that have been abandoned since school-time. They begin anew by this reversion,

and begin well, leaving the conventions to which they became attached as they grew up. A box of paints! There is no better thing in the world for a man to possess and use on holiday than a box of water-colour paints, such as he has not possessed, in most cases, since childhood—never thought of, indeed. But now he cannot paint, he says; he never learned; he knows not the simplest rules. But he can try, and in the trying what a fascination, what delight! You will discover that there is nothing like it. It is provocative of great and continuous endeavour. It is for ourselves, and comparative failure does not matter. Besides, there is improvement continuously, and increasing joy. To play with colours is a most pleasant thing, for the love of them is a human instinct. See the passion of Nature for her colours, and her unerring blend of them! Often she seems uncertain of her lines, but never in her tints, her harmonies and contrasts. So he who would take up again a box of paints (or tubes and some sable brushes costing the pound that aforetime was not forthcoming) should practise upon Nature. He will do right in that, and will not be presumptuous or offend. Ignoring the artist standards, giving no thought to Turner, painting in sincerity and to please himself, he will gather a splendid joy. It is not only that he will play with colour—in a thoughtful and novel way for him; he will see the colours and the world as never before. Nature will have a new meaning for him, the evening skies their first real enchantment as he may set himself to match them in his water-tints on paper—the happiest form of practice. So by appreciation he may become a finer being. It is an atavism in our individual minds that can hardly fail of good. You take up a hedge flower or a garden bloom and seek to copy it, and wonder awakens thus. And he who fully comprehends a daffodil may have much pity for the politicians.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXXII.—*continued.*

WE tore down the slope and made our way into the cleft. Fifty yards from its entrance we came on him, dragging his broken body towards us. I was within a few yards of him before he looked up. Not a word did he say, but when his eyes met mine there was in them what I never wish to see again.

'Are you hurt?' I asked, bending over him.

'Not enough, worse luck!' he answered. 'A pity you did not finish me. My leg is smashed, and you winged me in this arm.'

I gave him some brandy, and propped him against a boulder. For a long time he said nothing, shadows creeping round his mouth; but his eyes, curiously alive in their mask of dead white, narrowed to steel points, were watching Keene-Leslie.

'It was you,' he said dully, almost as if speaking to himself; 'it was you who ran me down, Keene-Leslie. . . . I wonder how you did it.' . . . He looked from Tony to me, and getting no reply, added, 'Not that it matters now!' His free hand made a groping movement towards the lapels of his coat, but Tony swiftly caught his wrist. 'The Searcher' looked at him with a faint smile on his white face. Then he said in a startlingly clear and composed voice, 'Ah! I see what you mean. The revolver! You'll find it in my hip-pocket. Your precautions are, I admit, justified, but I was about to present Forbes and you with a far more interesting souvenir. I know when I'm beaten. The game is up. This is the end of the paper-chase!'

Tony took the revolver from his pocket and unloaded it.

'And now'—'The Searcher' turned his head to me—'you want the paper, Forbes. I wish I had never seen it. Put your hand into this pocket and you will find something. You are welcome.'

I did as he asked, and pulled out an old pocket-book. I recognised it at once.

'Yes,' he said, watching my face; 'the same pocket-book! Rip up the lining. I was "M'Nair" on the night of the fog in Edinburgh. I came back next morning to Jura Street, and recovered my property. That was the night when Guidotti—you'll find him up there in the rocks—knifed Salvi in Durham Place, and nearly got me at the same time.'

'And I met you in the Caledonian Hotel next day?'

He nodded.

'I am tired. . . . Take me away from these accursed stones. I am in no great pain, and . . . I'm not going to cheat the gallows . . . just yet. Like King Charles, I apologise for death's delay. It's none of my seeking, God knows!'

Leaving the others to look after him for a moment or two, I turned to Tony and opened the pocket-book. There was nothing in the pockets; but I ripped up the lining, and soon found the little paper. A glance at it—the serrated edge and '*ossahumiliata* †' at the foot—told me that here at last was what we sought, the few words over which the centuries had woven their web of intrigue and crime. Keene-Leslie and I withdrew round a bend in the cleft, where I took out the copy of our half, and held the two together. They fitted like the parts of

a puzzle. Before us was the key to Father Hamilton's grave!

Here is the complete document:

Anno Redemptoris I^mD.LXIII. |
Y^e month Aprile. . . . From Gleann Cluin His house | IV
Houres to Y^e Learg Ghruamach Itts North Jawes & in other | IV
Houres from Itts Jawes to Y^e Saddle and High^st P^t |
of Y^e Pass. . . . Now First thrue | Y^e Jawes & up Y^e Drove
track till yow do come neare | Y^e Saddle & High^st P^t Itt
lyeth among Greate Monta | ines & Rockes Past Belief
a Toyle to enconter | . . . there leave Y^e drove track
Strike to Y^e Heart | of Y^e Wilde Turn on youre right
Sron na Lairg | Itts Shoulder heeing on youre Left
ontill yow do come | to Y^e Rise & spring of one narrowe stream
Itt runeth but no | distance then doth itt joyne
one neybour Wa | ter. . . . Now do yow there discretlie
Salute oure Three trustie friends | who awaite oure comin
Anent these I did fullie in | structe yow in one seperat Wryting
from Y^e tall | est do yow stepp her own high^th &
no more | faire & strait W. Go no furth^r Here is bless^d ground
† Exultabunt Domino | ossahumiliata †

The instructions in it were clear. We had to leave the drove track (or, rather, the line where the old drove track had once been) near the top of the Larig, and then 'Strike to the heart of the wild.' Keeping Sron na Leirg on our left, we should find the source of a short mountain stream, which we were to follow until it joined another—'ane neybour Water.' There the 'Three trustie friends' were waiting for us. The word 'tail' in the third last line of our half of the paper puzzled us for a little, but from the neighbouring half it was plain that we had misread the indistinct writing. The letters were 'tall,' not 'tail,' and the whole word was 'tallest.' The last direction enjoined us to step straight west, the same distance as the height of the tallest of the 'Three trustie friends.' Our exultation can be imagined. The grave—if it existed—could not be far away.

By this time all our men had joined us, and a suggestion by Duncan that the two stalkers should carry 'The Searcher' down the Pass to the shelter-hut below Cairn Toul was adopted. A stretcher was improvised from a plaid and a couple of rifles, he was lifted into it, and the party went down the slope.

The rest of us turned to the Ladder, where the dead Guidotti, his last hazard played and lost, lay among the boulders. It was easy to find his body, for the track from the ledge to the spot where his enemy had hidden it was crimson. It lay behind a boulder, and one glance at the gruesome wound on the temple told us that he must have gone to his black account in the twinkling of an eye. We took turns in carrying the corpse down the Pass, and soon it was laid outside the hut into which the stalkers a short time before had borne 'The Searcher.'

Inside the hut a couch had been made from the plaid and heather. 'The Searcher' was lying on it. He had not spoken a word beyond 'Thank you,' but he never closed an eye, and lay watching us, his face peaked.

'You have something to tell us, I think,' I said.

He pondered a little.

'A confession? Well, perhaps, on the whole, it is due to you. You have won the paper-chase, and no doubt you are anxious to test the truth of the instructions in the accursed paper,' he said slowly, with great composure. 'I think that they are genuine. . . . I wish I could go with you. . . . As for my story'—he hesitated, and then went on deliberately—'if you give me pencil and paper, I can write down anything I have got to say in your absence. It will help to pass the time.'

Keene-Leslie tore out part of his pocket-book, and handed it to 'The Searcher' with a pencil. Old Angus was left in charge, and the rest of us stepped out of the hut into the bright sunlight. I was last, and at the door I turned. 'The Searcher' lifted his head and looked at me. His eye and voice were steady. 'Good luck—and good-bye,' he said.

(*Continued on page 553.*)

THE SHALE-OIL INDUSTRY.

I.

A STRANGER passing through any of the districts where the Scottish shale-oil industry is carried on may be painfully surprised at the sight of those blots on the landscape, the 'bings' or miniature hills of spent shale, cast up from the retorts after yielding their quota of oil, sulphate of ammonia, and other by-products. The works we allude to are situated in one shalefield in West and Mid Lothian. Its centre is about twelve miles west of Edinburgh; and it stretches from the Firth of Forth at Hopetoun southwards for sixteen miles, with a width varying from three to eight miles. Four refining companies—Young's, Oakbank, Pumpherston, and Broxburn—with a capital of some three millions sterling, employ about ten thousand men, including miners, for the shale is mined like coal. The marketable commodities produced include shale-spirit, lamp-oils, internal-combustion-engine oils, fuel-oils for the navy, oils for gas-making and gas-enriching, lubricating-oils, solid paraffin, still-coke, and sulphate of ammonia. The shale-measures are situated in the calciferous sandstone series, and lie under the Carboniferous Limestone and above the Old Red Sandstone.

A Munitions Committee reported favourably on further boring for oil in Great Britain, and a fuller development of the Scottish shale-oil industry. A Petroleum Bill was introduced in Parliament in order to protect the oil-pools of the country from indiscriminate and wasteful

boring, and prohibit boring and searching for petroleum without a license. The firm of Messrs Pearson, of which Lord Cowdray is the head, placed its geological and oil expert staff gratuitously at the disposal of the Government. Drilling operations were undertaken in Midlothian, in north Staffordshire, and in Derbyshire, where oil was discovered in May near Chesterfield.

A valuable communication was made to the Society of Chemical Industry on the 'Shale-Oil Industry' by Mr D. R. Steuart of Broxburn, and reprinted from their *Journal* of July 31, 1916. To this among other sources we are indebted, as well as to some manuscript notes from Mr Steuart supplementing the authoritative article by Mr W. Love on 'Paraffin' in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*. Mr Thomas Wilson, of the firm of Messrs Thomas Wilson, Son, and Company, mineral prospectors, Edinburgh, has also placed a paper at our service, giving the experience of a lifetime in boring for shale.

There is warning as well as encouragement in what Mr Steuart tells us regarding the incidence of thin seams of shale found all over the coalfields of Britain. These were retorted in the early bright days of the oil industry. There was considerable manufacture in Wales for some years. But foreign competition put an end to all working many years ago, except in the case of seams situated in the calciferous sandstone. A hundred small works were thus killed off in Scotland (many on the shalefields, some on the coal-measures), representing a loss of some millions of pounds. 'The larger works,' says Mr Steuart, 'were increased so as to be worked more economically, and have continued to exist, sometimes paying dividends, and sometimes not. The through-put of shale has always kept increasing, and in 1915 was three million tons. New fields may still be found in Britain. Oil-shale has been discovered in the western islands in Raasay and Skye; there is an outcrop (not worth working) on the Northumberland coast; and we have always the Kimmeridge Clay, stretching across England from Dorset to Lincoln and Norfolk, with its thin seams of oil-shale yielding a very sulphury crude oil.'

Within and around the areas desolated by the shale-works and their sordid surroundings still survive regions of great natural beauty and romantic associations. That poet, professor, and principal of St Andrews University, John Campbell Shairp, was born at Houston House, Uphall, right in the heart of what is now an industrial area. The clever and learned, but eccentric, eleventh Earl of Buchan, and his two famous brothers, Harry Erskine, Lord Advocate, and Thomas, Baron Erskine, Lord Chancellor of England, have associations with this region. The Almond, beside which Harry Erskine built Amondell as a home for his later years, is no longer a pellucid stream. The Earl of Buchan, who had his early training under a tutor at what is now Uphall Manse, was buried in Dryburgh Abbey, which he purchased in 1786, as he told George III., from the wreck of the family fortunes. His brothers rest in the chancel of Uphall church, near the vault of the Shairps. A gaunt, tall house, called Kirkhill, near Broxburn, has associations also with the eleventh Earl of Buchan. It is now occupied as a farm. Vain and eccentric, the earl does not figure very favourably in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, but Archibald Constable and others credited him with many sterling qualities, both mental and moral. He was a chief founder of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries, and was indefatigable in his admiration of celebrated men. In a bundle of over sixteen hundred letters which he left, fifty-four were from royalties, eighty-seven from his brother, Lord Erskine, one hundred and six from famous Americans, including Washington and Benjamin Franklin. When the earl expressed surprise at his brother's choosing a site for Amondell in the vale of Almond where there was no view, Harry retorted, 'You forget, my dear David, that I have always the prospect of your estate.' Here many guests of taste and culture were received. No one, young or old, could ever tire in the society of Harry Erskine, who radiated happiness, and who, after a brilliant career, enjoyed what he called 'otium cum diggin-a-tate' at Amondell. Houston House is a queer, picturesque relic of a past age, and figures in J. C. Shairp's *Kilmahoe* as—

An old white lofty-gabled Lowland home;
Up to the sunshine, and the breezes all,
For ages o'er the ancestral trees have clomb
Its stalwart chimneys tall.

Far seen, wide gazing, the old mansion gray,
Adown the long lime avenue, from its doors,
Looks here to rich, tilled lands, yonder away
To meditative moors.

The outlook has greatly changed since the days when Sir John Shairp, advocate to Mary Queen of Scots, came into possession, and left as relics a cabinet and gloves which had belonged to the queen.

II.

The shale-oil industry, now a characteristic of this region, began in quite a small way in the middle of last century, under the patent of James Young of Kelly, who produced paraffin and paraffin-oil from coal. He was the first to obtain solid paraffin on a large scale, and to make it industrially profitable. Experience with a Derbyshire oil-spring prepared him for dealing with the rich Torbanehill mineral in works erected near Bathgate, and for distilling at a low heat an analogous oil from the coal. The yield was from ninety to one hundred and twenty gallons per ton of shale. Success led to imitation and competition, and much litigation, before his patent expired. The story of the industry is one of continued expansion,

helped by the improved retorts of Henderson, W. Young, Beilby, and others, and after 1864 the greater attention paid to by-products such as sulphate of ammonia. But for the ammonia industry, the manufacture might have ceased long ago. Mr Steuart considers the home-made sulphate of ammonia a better and safer manure than the foreign nitrate of soda, if applied at the right time, and if the soil be kept neutral with small doses of lime. The nitrate tends to kill off the beneficent microbes in the soil that produce plant food; the ammonia encourages their increase.

It is to be regretted that no biography has been written of James Young of Kelly (1811–83), pioneer in this great industry, although he finds a place in the *Gallery of Western Worthies* by J. S. Jeans. Trained as a working joiner under his father, he studied at the Glasgow Andersonian Institution, and became chemistry assistant under Dr Thomas Graham. He taught David Livingstone, the future missionary-explorer, when a student here, the use of tools and lathe, and they struck up a lifelong friendship. Young thought Livingstone the best man he ever knew; and the great traveller named an African river after his friend, who 'had shed a pure white light in many lowly cottages and in some rich palaces. I, too, have shed light of another kind.' Livingstone was proud of Young's achievements, playfully addressed him as 'Sir Paraffin,' and once expressed a wish, if he died at home, to be laid beside him.

The war, which increased the price of products, also increased their cost of production. The soda is now causticised by the firms themselves, and two of the companies make their own oil of vitriol. Mr Steuart further informs us that in paraffin-oil from shale, besides liquid paraffins and the olefine series, there is also a proportion of the hydrocarbon series called naphthenes. Russian petroleum is largely naphthenes. The loss in process has been reduced from 30 per cent. to 25 per cent. There has been at the same time a reduction in the quantity of chemicals used—sulphuric acid and soda. The shales now worked are poorer than those mined in the past. The best came first to hand. The shales now yield from eighteen to twenty-five gallons of crude oil per ton; of ammonium sulphate forty to sixty pounds per ton of shale.

In the distillation of the crude oil there is a series of boiler-stills working continuously, with residue stills receiving the heaviest portion, and, distilled to dryness, giving a large yield of still-coke. In coking, great quantities of the very richest gas are evolved, and this formerly passed into the air and was lost, besides causing some nuisance from the hydrogen sulphide in it. This gas is now caught, motor-spirit is got from it, and the refined gas is used for lighting and heating. It may be mentioned that Broxburn and Uphall are lighted from the Broxburn Oil-Works.

The ammonia is distilled from the ammoniacal liquor much as before; but now the sulphate, instead of being put into bins to drain out all the solution retained mechanically, is put rapidly through a centrifugal machine, and the salt dried at once. Draining in the bins, the salt solidified into a lump difficult to break up. It also solidified in the bags. The centrifuged salt is a dry powder, which, bagged at once, *remains* a loose powder.

The works, after using the sulphuric acid twice over in the extraction of oil, recover the acid, and use it for sulphate of ammonia making. Now, however, the solution of ammonium sulphate so got is evaporated in vacuum-pans.

The paper by Mr Thomas Wilson, already referred to, gives the experience of a long lifetime in boring for oil-shales. His examples are culled from a wider field than West and Mid Lothian. He has become so familiar with the sections that he has only to look at the outcrop of a shale to discover by its appearance, and that of the surrounding strata, its kind and relative value. He takes a section of two thousand five hundred feet and shows how the shales are distributed, and considers it true of these, as of mankind, that they can be known by the company they keep. The knowledge of the strata was not gained by one continuous bore, but by many made at different times and places. An inferior coal-shale is of sedimentary origin, and was washed down in the form of fine silt from the land, to be accumulated in lakes and quiet areas of the sea-bottom. It is the bituminous shales, or those rich in carbon and hydrogen, that are the chief sources of illuminating oils. The shale-beds always lie in a certain series from above to below. What is the principal shale in one locality may be useless in another. There is greater regularity in point of distance between different seams of coal than in the case of shale-measures. The first shale found in the section of two thousand five hundred feet is Raeburn's, from the name of the proprietor on whose ground it was first found, in the neighbourhood of Mid-Calder. It yields about forty gallons of crude oil per ton, and the seam is about two and a half feet in thickness. About one hundred and eighty feet lower in the section another shale is reached called Mungle, from Mr Mungle of West Calder, who first worked it in that neighbourhood. It has not been popular for use, but sometimes acts like a finger-post or guide to something better. Blaes is the prevailing character of the shale in this section. Between Mungle shale and Steuart's coal there is a distance of one hundred and eighty feet. This coal, named from Mr Steuart of Westwood, West Calder, has a varied and many-sided character. In some cases it is an ordinary soft house coal, in others a mixture of coal and blaes, or partly household and partly gas coal, as found at Drumcross, near Bathgate. Elsewhere it may prove to be shale of a very superior

quality and partly coarse, black-band ironstone, as at Fivestanks, near Uphall. At Loanhead, Midlothian, it is called paper shale, and is rich in oil. After the next one hundred and eighty feet there comes Houston marl (from Houston estate, Uphall), blue, brown, or of a reddish colour, an outstanding landmark in the geological world, there being nothing else quite like it in the shale-measures. Immediately below the marl there is the gray shale, about one foot nine inches in thickness, which has not been extensively worked, but is believed to be rich in paraffin-scale. Because of its thinness it might not pay working expenses. Some thirty-six feet below the gray shale lies the Houston coal, its usual thickness being about four and a half feet; but it is unreliable. Like the prophet's figs, when good it is very good, and when bad, very bad. At Houston, near Uphall, it is seen in its best condition. Another one hundred and eighty feet below this coal is Fell's shale, two and a half feet to three and a half feet in thickness. This was the shale that Young's company worked largely in the Addiewell district. It stands higher in yield for burning-oil than most of the shales, but much lower in other and more valuable products, such as sulphate of ammonia and paraffin-scale.

About two hundred and forty feet farther we come to the Broxburn shales, the intervening strata being composed mostly of marl for two hundred and thirty feet, much harder than the marl that overlies the Houston coal. Some of it is almost solid limestone. Although there are three, or sometimes four, seams, the lower or main seam, about five feet in thickness, has, as a rule, alone been worked. There is a thin seam of shale, sometimes only eight or ten inches thick, that lies, roughly, one hundred and ten feet below the Broxburn main seam, called the Lower Gray shale, found just on the top of the famous Binny sandstone. Three hundred and forty feet below the Lower Gray shale are found Dunnet, Straiton, or Burntisland shales. Sandstone and flakes bulk very largely in this part of the section, and some of the sandstones are exceedingly hard, especially the Burntisland. There are occasionally three shales in this group, but it is the lowest one that is generally worked. There is sometimes a distance of seventy feet between the upper and the lower, while the under seam may assume large proportions. In one place it was fifteen feet thick, in others from four to six feet. This shale is rich in paraffin-scale. About one hundred and twenty feet farther is got the Barracks' shale, but it has not been much worked. It lies a few feet above the Burdiehouse or Camps limestone. Then follows a distance of eight hundred feet between the limestone and Pumpherston shales, three in number, some about ten feet thick. The yield of oil from these is very low, perhaps not more than from fifteen to eighteen gallons per ton. However, they are rich in products, yielding some 15 per cent. of paraffin-scale and between fifty and sixty pounds of sulphate of ammonia per ton. At one time it was considered there were no shales below the Burdiehouse limestone, but Mr Wilson is strongly of opinion that there may be another series below the Pumpherston variety. There *are* lower shales than the Pumpherston series, Mr Steuart points out in this connection. One is found at Dalmahoy, and others occur at Wardie and Granton—twelve-gallon shales at the outcrop, with a possibility of twenty gallons farther in.

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER XXIV.—THE COMMANDANT'S FAREWELL.

THERE was no mock hilarity on the final morning. We had too much to do. Kits had to be packed, books returned, the hut scrubbed out, and everything left shining and in order, for the pride of an army is 'handing over' in a spotless condition. That is always a good test of a well-trained and disciplined unit. Hitherto we had not been bothered about falderals; we were learning and swotting, and the commandant had little use for eyewash. But this day we knew he expected to see tables—nay, floors—off which a king might eat his food. The 'Old Man' was not disappointed, for we all desired to leave the school with his fatherly benediction.

The boys were a bit sad. Tosher, Beefy, Nobby, Ginger, Billy, and myself—thanks to the good offices of Captain Cheerall—were to be gazetted to the same battalion. This was a piece of luck. But there were other good friends who were being scattered to the four ends of the earth. Many were bound to be killed; others we might never come across again. They were our brothers-in-arms, and we loved them as only men can love. The war and the army had opened our hearts. We men of all classes, all professions, have been linked into a loving community, which only death can sever.

'Stand to your beds!' roared the sergeant-major. We sprang to attention, and the colonel entered. His keen eye saw everything spotless and shining. He smiled and muttered, 'Splendid, men!—splendid!' and went off round the other huts. When this was over we were marched to the lecture-room to hear the 'com.'s' farewell.

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'this will be a happy day for you. You are going forward. The King's commission will shortly be yours. You

will join battalions already famous. The good name of those regiments and the honour of our country will then be in your keeping. We have done our best for you, and I feel you will not let this school down. We have had our hard times, our sad times, also our jolly times, together. No doubt you were often bored, and did your share of grousing. That is only human. If you cannot see a marked improvement in yourselves, I can see it in you. You were more or less rebellious when you arrived. You all had different ideas of discipline, training, tradition, and *esprit de corps*. Many of these ideas were sound; others were not at all practical. But by steady grinding, patient teaching, and persistent application, my staff have created at least a seedbed in good soil, and it is for you to develop the fruits of our instruction. We have not aimed at making you generals. Our job was to make you subalterns. There are other schools to teach you the arts of the higher command. Perhaps this elementary curriculum was too slow for the more brilliant, but these bright ornaments must remember that in a school like this we have to adapt our arrangements to the intellect of the majority, and not of the minority. The brainy minority can take care of themselves. It is for us to help the less fortunate, and give them confidence and the hall-mark of efficiency. I have a reason for making this remark, for I know we have intellectuals here, and I should regret if they left the school feeling we have not given them enough.

'You must also remember that your training has been crammed into four months instead of three years, which we used to put in at Sandhurst. We are at war, and we cannot go into the bowels of everything. Still, considering all our disabilities, such as the absence of many brilliant men at the front, I do feel we have reason to think that, on the whole, the course has been successful.'

'Hear, hear, sir!' we shouted.

'I said at the beginning you will no doubt feel glad at going forward. I also am glad; but I am sorry too. This has been the most interesting of all my "courses," and there are faces I shall miss, even that of my good Canadian friend, who, I understand, rejoices in the remarkable sobriquet of "Tosher."' (Loud laughter.) 'I can assure you, gentlemen, I have learnt a lot from you. Here we have a pleasant mixing of the classes and the masses; likewise a sprinkling of splendid fellows from overseas. This confirms my view that ours is a Democratic army, also an Imperial army. I rejoice! This is a splendid signpost to the future. When the job is done, we shall settle down in more friendly fashion, without the class distinctions and the horrible class war that were the curse of this country prior to 1914. You will also be interested to hear that, if you men are going forward, I too am about to receive promotion. I am taking unto myself a charming lady'——

We cheered tremendously. (By the way, the lady in question was none other than my aunt Jane.)

'Yes; and next week I leave the school and the army—for ever. I am old now. My day is done. I came back again only to help the Old Land in its hour of pain and woe. Yet I think I have the wisdom of my race. This is a young man's war. It is not for me to keep youth and vigour back; to stand a bulwark against progress, and put back the clock, so that I, a soldier of the past, may continue to enjoy the fruits of command. No! That is folly! We must win this war. Age cannot do it! It is beyond us! To youth we must hand the sword and the laurels! And yet, when I take off my Sam Browne belt and shove on my tweeds, I shall feel like a captain without a ship, like a man without a cause. However, there's my lady. She will help me through!'

'Hear, hear, sir!'

'Another intimation. My successor is Captain Cheerall. This officer is of the Old Army, yet of the New. To me he has been a loyal colleague, a zealous friend, and an invaluable assistant. He is an extraordinary compound of intellect and emotion. Every time he talks to me, I feel I must clap him on the back. The school is, therefore, in good hands. When I have gone, perhaps the intellectuals will not feel so bored.'

'You never bore us, sir,' shouted Ginger, and all of us gave a cheer.

'Thank you, gentlemen. Your kindness will lighten my coming darkness. But it's of you I must speak. Do not think me a great Christian, for I am not. But this war, somehow or other, has brought me face to face with the fact: IT IS A HOLY WAR. We are not out for LOOT. We are out for PRINCIPLES. It is our testing-time. GOD and THE BRUTE are struggling for mastery. The religion, the morality, the safety of nations, mothers, and babes are in your keeping. Should we lose, the Cross will lose. I do beseech you to think it out, to lead clean lives, to go forward with the heart and the aim of crusaders. It is not a burden! It is a privilege! There is no question of false glory. It is DUTY! And DUTY is the hall-mark of honour. Would to God that I were as young as you, so that I might fight the good fight and lead you on! Again, you have all got mothers, sisters, sweethearts; some of you have wives, perhaps bonny little babes. It is for you to guard them. The dripping sword must not be seen by their eyes, nor their blood stain your hearths. Think of Belgium! Think of Serbia! Think of Rumania!

'Do not waste your time hating! Your work is KILLING. War is Germany's religion! Brutality is her philosophy! Domination is ever her aim and vaunted creed!

'*You must destroy the loathsome gods of the Huns.*

'Well, gentlemen, I think that is all. I shall watch your careers. I shall keep your records in my study. Each great deed will be noted in my little book. The higher you go the more I shall be pleased. And never think of me as your commandant. Think of me as your friend, as a father—for to me you're boys, just dear boys, and I love you because you are going forth to help this dear Old Land.

'Good-bye,' he said with emotion, and turned away.

Tosher Johnson led a terrific cheer, and cried, 'Let's carry the "Old Man" round.' We rushed him, lifted him high on our shoulders, and carried him across to the officers' mess, singing:

'For he's a jolly good fellow,
For he's a jolly good fellow,
For he's a jolly good fellow,
Which no cadet denies.

'Hip — hip — hooray! Hip — hip — hooray! Hip—hip—hooray!'

Thus the New Army parted from the Old.

THE END.

ACOUSTIC ECHOES OF THE GREAT WAR.

MANY interesting incidents bearing on the science of acoustics were reported from time to time during the war by observers of phenomena of sound in connection with gun-fire. It was frequently noticed that inside a dug-out the din of a distant bombardment could be distinctly heard, while to those standing in the open it was inaudible. The Vicar of Rusthall related in a letter to the press how his sexton told him that, when he was digging a deep grave one day in August 1917, the noise of the guns was tremendous compared with what it was above-ground; and about the same time an army chaplain wrote from Chatham that near the house of a friend of his living at Cobham an excavation had been made, in which no sound was discernible until a layer of chalk was reached, when an extraordinarily loud noise was heard. Hence we may deduce that the clamour of the guns was conveyed by the earth, and either that calcareous matter is a better conductor than other accretions, or that this particular bed was a continuation of the one on which the cannons were standing on the other side of the Channel. There may, however, be another explanation. Several years ago, when at Eshowe, Zululand, from which the sea is distant but a few miles, I used to notice that so long as I remained *en plein air* no sound of waves ever reached me, but that on my entering my tent the small partially enclosed volume of air readily took up the vibrations from the earth, and the moaning was unmistakable.

By applying one's ear to the ground the guns in France could often be distinctly heard in this country when the sound was not conveyed by the air. 'On the afternoon of Sunday, 24th June 1917,' wrote one observer, 'at the time of a heavy bombardment in France, I was lying full length, with my head on the ground, at the top of Blackdown Hill, in Sussex, when I very distinctly heard or felt the reverberation of the guns. I drew the attention of my companion to the fact, but she protested that she heard nothing, until I made her also lie down on the ground, whereupon she too distinctly heard the sound. On resuming the sitting position, we again heard nothing. We repeated this again and again, with the same result each time.'

There is still doubt as to what causes these earth-pulsations, termed by scientists 'elastic waves somewhat analogous to sound-waves.' The concussion of the ground owing to the fall of a heavy shell is, no doubt, considerable, but hardly enough to set up a wave of sufficient strength and magnitude to reach these shores, since the main force of the explosion escapes upwards and in all directions into the air. The recoil from the charge in a heavy piece fired at a high angle, coupled with the resistance thereto, imparts a far heavier blow to the ground; so that what we hear is more probably caused by the thud of the gun than by the fall and bursting of its missile.

That the earth, like water, is a better conductor of sound than the air is well established. It was often remarked by occupants of a subterranean shelter that the fall of a shell in its vicinity produced a twofold effect upon the ear—one, through the medium of the earth, of a subtle hardness, shortly followed, through the agency of the air, by the other, the dull resonant thud of the projectile on the ground. The difference in the two sounds is due to another ratified truism, that sound transmitted through a solid or a liquid undergoes a marked alteration in character. In the winter of 1875 I was driving on a very still evening along the Mall in Peshawar, northern India, when, for no apparent reason, my horse suddenly took fright, and behaved in an extraordinary manner. The cause soon became evident when, a few seconds later, I heard the ominous rumbling that heralds an earthquake. Judging from the aimless way they tumbled about, the birds had received a synchronal warning, though their antics may have been due to the change in atmospheric pressure which precedes a severe tremor, as this one proved to be. The horse was affected by the

earth's groanings before any aerial disturbance had occurred.

Another thing often remarked upon was that heavy firing could not be heard in this or that locality, but that on one's retiring some distance it could. This was, no doubt, due to layers of air of different temperature, and therefore of varying density, and to wind blowing more strongly at a height than near the surface of the ground, where its velocity would be retarded by friction, the waves of sound being distorted, moving upwards and then down again, missing the interlying region. Of course, it may be argued that these so-called *zones of silence* are nothing new. We learnt at school that if two people were separated by a wall, the one standing at some distance from it on his side, the other close against it, communication between them was impossible; and I have been told by one who saw it that a lighted candle placed on the top and on the windward side of the Menai tubular bridge when a strong wind was blowing burnt perfectly steadily, the air, impinging on the side of the tube, being deflected upwards, and then flowing downwards, like water over a dam, leaving a space of absolute calm where the light was placed.

There is another very rational explanation of this absence of sound. The Somme district is called by its inhabitants 'The Silent Land' from the fact that noises within ordinary earshot are there frequently quite inaudible. This is ascribed to the configuration of the landscape, a series of parallel ridges, the consequent disturbance in the strata interrupting the carrying of sound. On this head a non-commissioned officer wrote: 'I was standing one night on the ridge west of, and above, Beaumont Hamel, watching the most intense of bombardments from Thiepval, only a mile or so away, round Combles, to Péronne, and yet I was unable to hear a sound. I remember the scene perfectly, as for once I understood the "glamour and beauty of war." There was a twenty-mile curve of star-shells, red and green flashes from the guns, and the destructive scarlet-lit smoke from the bursting of the gigantic high-explosive shells. Yet, as I said, although the firing (an attack was about to start) began practically at my feet, a whisper could be heard. I was told afterwards that at Amiens and Doullens the noise was appalling.' This experience was fully borne out by another writer ten days later.

On the firing of a high-velocity gun, in which the initial velocity of the projectile exceeds that of sound, two separate and distinct noises were clearly distinguishable within a zone bounded by lines emanating from the muzzle, and forming an angle of about fifty-five degrees on either side —namely, a sharp crack caused by the flight of the shell, very distressing to the ear, succeeded in a very few seconds by a dull boom, the true sound of the firing of the piece, which shook buildings and shattered windows, but did not affect the auditory nerve. This double sound was not perceptible when the initial velocity of the missile was low, as when fired from a howitzer, nor to one outside the limits of the afore-mentioned zone; and it was also found that the higher the initial velocity, the longer the interval between the two reports.

On those parts of the front where the contour was rugged or the country well wooded or abounding in houses, the discharge of a high-velocity gun was followed by a majestic echoing *roll*, which has been compared to 'a mixture of thunder and the music of a mighty bass orchestra.' Mistaken by many for the actual noise of the travelling shell, this roll proved to be the effect of a series of echoes from the numerous obstacles in the path of the sound-waves, which so magnified the din as on several occasions to exaggerate the number of hostile guns, as was proved on one's approaching the firing-line.

Among additions to our vocabulary contributed by the war is the compound word 'drum-fire' (*trommelfeuer*), which was invented by the Germans to describe the impression produced by our massed artillery. To those behind the guns it was nothing but a dull, continuous roar; but to those in front of them, each individual shot stood out distinct, the whole concert resembling the beating of many drums.

The French scientific paper *L'Astronomie* reported the appearance of visible sound-waves that could be seen without the aid of apparatus when violent cannonading was in progress. These were described as parallel arcs of light and shade rapidly moving over the sky. In one case the bands were seen on a cloud by all the members of a battery, who noticed that they moved with the speed of sound-waves, that their appearance coincided with the successive discharge of particular mortars, and that the space between the bands was greater for those of large than for those of small calibre. Their visibility, which lasted for about ten minutes, depended apparently upon the relative positions of the observer, the cloud, the weapon, and the sun. This calls to mind a letter I received from my son in the Royal Artillery during the siege of Kimberley, in the South African War, telling how, by searchlight signals flashed on to the clouds, communication was established between that town and the relieving force under Lord Methuen when it was held up on the Modder River.

With the copy of a letter written from a farm 'somewhere in France,' narrating a curiosity in natural history, this epitome may be brought to an end: 'We often hear the sound of a shell coming, and yet there is no burst, and we always say, "Hallo! there's a dud." But the other day I was sitting in the yard in the sun, when I heard a shell coming, as I thought,

close by. As it appeared to be just about to burst, it suddenly stopped. Two minutes later the performance was repeated, and I saw that the noise was being made by a hen! Whereupon a cock made a similar noise, and it was the exact imitation of a falling shell. I often heard the birds making the same noise, and called the attention of the others to it, and they verified my statements. I then questioned the old Frenchman about it, and he says that the birds have learnt to make the noise since the war commenced, and keep it up sometimes for a long time.' A commentator on this remarked that it would be a valuable addition to the instances of domestic instinct referred to in *The Origin of Species* if the imitation of a falling shell (not an egg-shell!) could be shown to be transmitted as a fixed habit in the hen's progeny. The continuance of this imitative habit would be a strange memorial of the Great War.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A CHEAP PARAFFIN NIGHT-LIGHT.

WHAT may be called the night-light type of paraffin-lamp has now become common, largely owing to the economies forced upon us by the war. Lamps of this kind are freely used in places where only a dim light is required, even by householders who employ gas or electric lamps for ordinary lighting. A very simple and cheap lamp of this type, known as the 'Tweenie,' has recently made its advent. It consists of a tin saucer, provided with a handle, upon which is mounted a hollow cone of tin filled with cotton-wick. The apex of the cone is cut off down to a point that leaves an aperture large enough for the wick, which is adjusted by means of a pin through a small hole in the side. At the bottom, the cone is cut away slightly at each side. This lamp is not filled in the ordinary way; in fact, there is no filling-hole, but paraffin is poured into the saucer, and runs into the cone until the wick is saturated, when the lamp can be lit, and will burn for about twelve hours. The 'Tweenie' lamp is painted in various colours, and, being so simple, it can be sold at a very low price.

ELIMINATING FATIGUE IN THE FACTORY.

Factory management has been scientifically studied during the war with a view to obtaining the highest efficiency from the workers, and much attention has been given to the elimination of every avoidable source of fatigue. In some industries periodical rests have been found actually to increase the output. The old-time manager would have been horrified at the present-day practice of providing chairs for employees to sit upon whilst carrying out operations which have hitherto always been done in a standing posture. An interesting article appeared recently in *Engineering and Industrial Management*, in which Mr James F. Butterworth gives descriptions and illustrations of factory chairs devised by Major Frank B. Gilbreth for minimising fatigue. These include, for a worker at a vice-bench, a chair of such a height that the operator can either sit or stand at his work, and always be at the same distance above it. It is fitted with wide foot-rests, which enable him to work with a file with greater ease, speed, and efficiency when sitting than when standing. Another example given consists of a chair fitted with spring feet and felt-lined foot-rests to deaden heavy vibration from high-speed sewing-machines. Workers provided with these chairs are able to do more work with less fatigue than under ordinary conditions. Perhaps the most interesting device described is the 'Marshall' chair, consisting of a seat mounted on ball-bearing wheels which run on a track, so that the worker can change his position along a bench with a minimum of effort. The track is supported on two posts, and swivels outwards or inwards on one of them, thus giving a wide range of position. An adjustable foot-rest is also provided. A chair for typists gives the same position for the hands relatively to the keyboard whether the operator sits or stands. He or she, therefore, can stand when tired of sitting, and *vice versâ*.

THE LARGEST AEROPLANE IN THE WORLD.

What is believed to have been the largest aeroplane yet built—the 'Tarrant'—the attempted initial flight of which resulted so disastrously, possessed some very interesting features. This machine was a triplane, and had an extreme span across the middle wings, which were the widest, of one hundred and thirty-one feet; while it had a length of just over seventy-three feet from nose to tail. When the aeroplane was standing on the ground, the top of the uppermost wing reached to a height of more than thirty-seven feet. Even the tail was gigantic, being in the form of a biplane thirty feet in width, with the planes ten feet apart. The fuselage or body was no less than eleven feet in diameter, and it had a framework built up of wood lattice rings and longitudinals. These were constructed on a special system, devised by Mr W. G. Tarrant for aeroplane spars, which is claimed to give both great strength and lightness, and to lend itself to rapid production. Unlike that of most other aeroplanes, the fuselage was open from end to end, and was said to be capable of accommodating one hundred persons. It was covered

with a skin consisting of two layers of thin wood, in strips one and a half inches wide, which were glued together with the grain of one set crossing that of the other at right angles. On the outside of the wood skin was a layer of fabric, which was well varnished, and then enamelled. The machine was driven by six Napier 'Lion' engines, each of which was capable of developing over five hundred horse-power, and these were expected to give the aeroplane a speed of one hundred and ten miles an hour when it was fully loaded. Even with two engines disabled, the speed, according to the estimates formed, would have been ninety miles an hour. Four of the engines were located between the middle and bottom wings, two on each side, about sixteen feet out from the fuselage. The two engines were in tandem, the forward one driving a tractor, and the rear engine a pusher propeller. Directly above each pair of engines, and between the middle and uppermost wings, was a single engine, fitted with a tractor screw. The tractor screws were twelve feet in diameter, and the pushers slightly smaller. All the engines could be started and controlled from the cockpit at the forward end of the fuselage. The machine itself, with the engines and accessories, weighed just over eleven tons; while the tanks, when filled with sixteen hundred gallons of petrol and ninety-two gallons of lubricating-oil, weighed about six tons. The normal weight when the aeroplane was loaded being calculated at twenty tons, a lifting capacity of about three tons would thus be left for the crew of five, their guns and bombs, and other necessaries. Loaded in this way, the Tarrant triplane was estimated to be capable of covering nine hundred miles at the maximum speed; while by running only four engines, and with these throttled down, journeys of twelve hundred miles could have been undertaken. Two of these machines were ordered by the Air Board with the special object of carrying bombs, and it is believed that they would easily have been able to fly to Berlin, drop their load of five-hundredweight bombs, and return home again. Naturally so heavy a machine required enormous landing-gear, and the two front-wheels, which were of the triple type, measured nearly ten feet in diameter. These, of course, would take the main shock of landing; but a huge tail skid was also provided. At the time of writing the second aeroplane is not completed, and no doubt modifications will be introduced to eliminate any risk of an accident similar to that which occurred with the first.

DRIED MEAT.

Of late years much attention has been given to the drying of vegetables in such a way that they will retain all their essential salts, keep for long periods with their cellular structure unimpaired, and assume their original freshness when soaked in water. Hitherto heated air has been exclusively used for this purpose; but recently, under the direction of Professor Ralph H. M'Kee, a new drying process has been investigated at Columbia University, which promises to be as effective for meats and fish as for vegetables. The drying is done in a vacuum by the application of heat, which is so regulated that the albumens are not coagulated and the fats are not fried out. In other words, the dried meat is still *raw* meat, and retains its original composition except for the absence of water. Moreover, this method of preservation does not involve the destruction of the vitamines, which form such an important feature in all fresh foods, and which are mostly destroyed by other methods of preserving meat and fish. At present further details of the vacuum process are withheld, but according to the *Scientific American* it has proved highly successful in the experimental stage, and can be applied even to such juicy vegetables as tomatoes, which would take a very long time to dry by the air process. The advantages claimed for the new method include the elimination of any possible risk of contamination from germs in the air, and the drying of the food in one chamber instead of passing it through several. In the experimental apparatus used at the university the vacuum is produced by an electric motor, but pumps worked by steam-power will probably be employed for carrying on the process commercially, in which case the exhaust steam can be utilised as the source of heat.

THE WORLD'S LONGEST WARSHIPS.

Many new vessels were added to the British Navy during the war of which no particulars were allowed to be published; in fact, some of the larger craft were referred to with bated breath as 'hush ships.' Among these not the least remarkable were the two colossal battle-cruisers, the *Repulse* and the *Renown*, the dimensions of which have recently been given in the technical journals. Measuring close on eight hundred feet in length, these vessels have a breadth of ninety feet, and require twenty-five and a half feet of water to float them. They are the longest and most powerful warships in the world, and although their displacement (twenty-six thousand five hundred tons) is less than that of the last battle-cruiser completed before the war, this is owing to their fine lines, which allow two knots more speed to be achieved. The propelling machinery consists of geared steam-turbines capable of developing no less than one hundred and twenty thousand horse-power, which is applied to the turning of four propellers on four shafts. Officially the speed of these vessels is given at thirty-two knots, or about thirty-six miles an hour; but when pursuing German ships in the North Sea the *Repulse* is said to have done thirty-five knots, or about forty miles an hour. Forty-two

huge boilers are provided in each vessel to raise the enormous quantities of steam required for the turbines, but no coal is burned in the furnaces, the necessary heat being obtained entirely from liquid fuel, jets of which are blown into the furnaces by compressed air. Besides other well-known advantages, such as clean stokeholds, fewer stokers, and no coal-trimmers, the employment of oil instead of coal allows of fuel being taken on board from a 'tanker' at sea with comparative ease, while in port the 'bunkers' can be much more quickly filled with oil than with coal. This feature proved to be an immense advantage during the war, and contributed greatly to the mobility of the British Fleet. Like other modern warships, the *Repulse* and the *Renown* are divided up into large numbers of watertight compartments by bulkheads. These are carried up well above the water-line, and in order to pass from one to another it is necessary to come up and go down again by means of lifts. The main armament of each vessel consists of six fifteen-inch guns, each capable of hurling a shell weighing almost two thousand pounds a distance of nearly twenty miles at intervals of forty seconds. Seventeen four-inch guns, with two three-inch anti-aircraft guns, constitute the secondary armament, while two torpedo-tubes are installed. A belt of six-inch armour passes nearly round each ship, and the big gun turrets are protected by armour-plates eleven inches thick. Immunity from the evil effects of torpedoes and mines is sought by the provision of a swelling, commonly called a 'bulge' or a 'blister,' below the water-line on each side. Should a vessel unfortunately come in contact with either mine or torpedo, the destructive power of the resulting explosion would be largely dissipated in the 'blister,' and the real hull of the vessel would remain practically uninjured. According to Mr Hector C. Bywater, who contributed a description of these interesting vessels to a recent issue of *The Navy*, the conning-tower in each is a 'pear-shaped, two-storied erection,' having the lower part protected by ten-inch armour, and the upper storey by six-inch armour. Huge as are the battle-cruisers which form the subject of this note, their dimensions are exceeded by those of the *Hood*, which is due for completion in the autumn of this year.

FLYING 'STUNTS' ON THE GROUND.

Before the budding airman is allowed to fly he is put through a course of training on the ground, with a view to minimising the risk of accidents in the air. In some schools this course now includes the practice of 'stunts' in a machine known as an 'orientator,' in which the conditions closely resemble those met with when actually flying. The 'orientator' designed by Mr William G. Ruggles of New York consists of a series of rings mounted on gimbals, and turned by electric motors which are under the control of the pupil, who is strapped into a dummy fuselage gimballed to the innermost ring. The outer ring is gimballed to both the ceiling and the floor, a motor at the ceiling gimbal imparting the necessary turning motion. Inside this outer ring is another ring mounted on horizontal gimbals, one of which is turned by a motor. Finally, at right angles to these gimbals are others which support the fuselage, which is also rotated by electricity. All the motors are controlled by the usual joystick and rudder controls, and the pupil can put himself through every conceivable combination of motions, including such as closely approximate to the spinning nose-dive, the falling leaf, looping the loop, and other well-known 'stunts.'

WATER-PIPES THAT DO NOT FREEZE.

Among the many matters in connection with the housing question which have been brought to the attention of architects by housewives is the demand for 'water-pipes that do not freeze.' Such a demand appears at first sight extravagant, but in reality it is far from being so. It is apparently not known in Britain that this problem was solved long ago in America and Canada, and in a very simple, ingenious, and inexpensive way. In British houses, as most householders know, the water-supply is turned on or off in each individual house by means of a stop-cock which is invariably placed outside the house. In the case of American and Canadian houses, the place of this stop-cock is taken by an extremely simple and ingenious device known as a 'stop and waste' cock, which is always placed inside the house in a very accessible position. Without entering here into technical details, we need only say that this 'stop and waste' cock is of such construction that whenever it is turned off, all water-pipes in the house leading from the main are automatically and immediately drained, and are thus prevented from freezing. When the 'stop and waste' cock is turned on, it admits a full supply of water to the house, precisely like the British stop-cock. It is absolutely 'foolproof,' and is just as simple in operation as any common tap. While the 'stop and waste' cock is always buried, so that it cannot freeze, it has a long handle firmly attached to it, which projects upwards through the floor, and by means of which it is turned on or off. It is usually placed in the kitchen close to the sink, experience having shown that to be the most generally suitable position. Obviously, water-pipes in a house are most likely to freeze at night; consequently, in severe weather, the householder turns the cock off before going to bed, in absolute certainty that no frozen water-pipes will await him in the morning when he turns the cock on again. Why British architects have not, long ere this,

insisted upon the adoption of this simple and inexpensive device, in addition to the outside stop-cock, is a mystery. As matters stand at present, it is compulsory in Britain that there should be an outside stop-cock. This is usually placed in the pavement in the street, and a key, which can never be found in an emergency, is required to turn it on or off. Hence, if a pipe bursts, hardly one householder in a hundred knows where or how to turn the water off; the great majority are compelled to stand helplessly by and witness the devastation caused by the flood of water until a plumber arrives. With the provision of an inside stop-cock, all danger of this would be obviated.

A NEW APPLIANCE FOR SCRAPING WATER-PIPES.

The interior of the iron pipes used for the conveyance of a supply of water gradually becomes coated with a layer of iron oxide, which, in the course of time, materially reduces the carrying capacity of the pipes. To remedy this, Mr Thomas Davis, one of the outdoor superintendents on the city staff of the Glasgow Corporation Water-Works, has devised an appliance to which he has given the name of the Helix Pipe-Scraper. The apparatus consists of a spiral steel band which forms the scraper, a light set of rifling-rods with screwed joints, a crab winch, and a steel-wire rope. With these appliances it is claimed that the water-pipes can be efficiently cleaned by the ordinary pipe-laying staff employed by the local authority, no skilled mechanics or other experts being required. The work is done, we are informed, without any abrasion of the interior surface of the pipes, and without damage to the brass ferrules occurring at the points where leaden communication-pipes branch off. To carry out the operations, openings must be made in the pipes at intervals of about one hundred yards, but if these openings are carefully cut, collars are the only new material needed for rejoining the pipes. The saving to be effected by scraping pipes instead of scrapping them is so obvious that the invention seems to merit the attention of all local water authorities.

THE FAMOUS MOUNT MORGAN MINE.

Situated in Queensland, under the Tropic of Capricorn, at an elevation of eight hundred feet above sea-level, is what was for a long time one of the most remarkable gold-mines of the world, though its palmy days as a gold-producing proposition are probably now over. To reach it the traveller must go to Rockhampton, either by steamer or by rail. By aeroplane the distance thence would be about ten miles, but the journey by rail is twenty-four miles, and occupies a little over an hour. After running twenty miles the railway proceeds into what looks like the dead end of a mountain gorge, five hundred feet above sea-level. Here the train is met by a small, 'dumpy' rack-engine. This is the beginning of Queensland's only rack railway. In fifteen minutes the rack-engine hauls the whole train a mile farther to the top of the range, a climb of three hundred and seventy-five feet. The works are now in full view, as also is the town of Mount Morgan, which nestles down below and climbs up and round the sides of the neighbouring slopes. Nominally the mine was discovered by the Morgan brothers, but really by an old prospector who was friendly with the Morgans, and showed them some specimens of a reddish peacock-coloured ore, which the Morgans had assayed at Sydney. The result of the assay was a tremendous surprise, in that the gold contents were fabulous. This was in 1882, and the secret was closely guarded until the Morgans secured the ground. From 1883 on the mine has been worked continuously, first by the Morgans—who sold out for what was then considered a large sum—and afterwards by the present company. From 1886 to quite a recent date the present holders produced 4,578,362 ounces of gold, valued at £18,637,867, and 86,678 tons of copper, valued at £6,054,975. Prior to that £242,248 worth of gold had been taken out of the mine by the original holders, thus making in all a total of nearly £25,000,000 as the earnings of the mine. The very valuable gold-deposits were found near the top of the mountain. There apparently at one period had been a bubbling volcanic spring, the froth from which settled down into the peacock ore, forming the crust of the mountain after the volcanic energy had left.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE GIFT.

LIFE cannot give to either of us two,
In all the days yet ours on this dear earth,
A nobler gift, a boon of greater worth,
Than that it gave when first we blindly drew
Together, out of all the world, and knew
Unmeasur'd joy, true solace, and clean mirth;
And taking this, rejoic'd in love's glad birth:
You have my all, and I have all of you.

Thus, in my dreams, I dare to claim you wife
And dearest comrade still, when open wide
The seas uncharted of another life;
When we, once more together, meet the tide
That bears us far beyond these lands of strife,
No matter whither: we are side by side.

A. T. CORKE.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE AIRY PRINCE.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles; Mr Craighouse of New York, Satirist;* &c.

PART I.

I.

ON a hillock that overlooked a mill-stream in Picardy, a girl of sixteen was lying, face downwards, reading a book. The noise of the water tumbling over the chute was a song to which her ears had grown accustomed, but more than once she looked up as the October wind rose and fell in a chromatic whine. A dark, thickening cloud crept sullenly towards the earth, throwing its shadow on her book.

She gazed up at it and sighed.

A black cat, his green eyes glowing suspiciously in the fading light, stalked from the mill-house and furtively watched a wanton leaf that was flirting hilariously with the autumn breeze, until, still coquetting, it was caught by the stream and carried to destruction.

The cat's teeth showed for a moment in a sinister grin. Cautiously measuring each step, he climbed to the top of the hillock, crouched suspiciously as a blade of grass moved in the wind, then scampered boldly up to the girl, and settled ostentatiously upon the open pages of the book for a siesta.

'*Tiens!*' The girl started, laughingly caught the offender by the ear, and pulled him to one side. 'Louis, you have very bad manners,' she said, speaking in French. 'You come so, without asking permission, and you go to sleep on *The Fairy Prince*. Wake up, Louis! To you I am speaking.'

The cat opened his eyes, bent them on her with a reproving look, and slowly closed them once more.

'Louis! Wake up—listen! I will read to you *The Fairy Prince*, and if you go to sleep I 'll have you gr-r-r-r-ound into black flour. See there now!'

Louis scratched his ear with a hind paw, rubbed his nose with a fore one, sneezed, opened his eyes to their widest, and generally indicated that he was thoroughly awake—in fact, was not likely ever to sleep again in this world. His little mistress gathered her shawl more tightly about her shoulders, and, crossing one foot over the other, shifted her position to secure the acme of comfort.

'Now then, my friend, attention! This is all about a little girl—like me, Louis; only, she was pretty. Tell me, Louis, am I pretty, eh? Stop yawning when I ask you a question. You sleep almost all day and all night; and when you do wake up—you yawn. Pouf! Such laziness! So—this is the story. This little girl, she lived like me in a house away, ever so far away, from everything, and she was very unhappy. You understand, Louis, she was *so* lonesome. And every night she would cry herself to sleep—as I do sometimes, because—because—— Wake up, you wicked cat!'

The feline culprit stretched his paws and sat up rigidly, like a slumbering worshipper in church who has been detected in the act, but tries to indicate that he has merely been lost in contemplation of the preacher's theme. The girl frowned at Louis, and, laughing gaily, rubbed her cheek against his head.

Her laugh had hardly ended when, as her ear caught the note of melancholy in the wind, she looked up, and her face, which had hovered a moment before between a frown and a smile, was shadowed by a musing expression that left her eyes dreamy and her lips drooping in the slightest and most sensitive of curves. Her dark hair, rippling into curls, fell back from a forehead whose fullness and whiteness added to the spiritual innocence of her countenance. Without being faultless, her face had an elusive mobility of expression that altered with each mood as swiftly as the surface of a pool lying exposed to the caprices of an April morning.

'Is it not a pretty story, Louis?' Of a sudden the filmy dreaminess of her eyes had lifted, and their dark-brown depths sparkled with life. 'I am so glad that at the convent they made me learn to read. But it is dreadfully difficult, my friend—there are such big words, you see. Well, Louis, this little girl went one day for a walk to the top of a hill—but you shall hear exactly how it is.'

She carefully found the place in the book, and, with a finger following each line in case she should miss any of it, proceeded to read in that ecstatic and unreal style of voice common

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to young people when uttering other thoughts than their own.

'" . . . . Reaching the top of the hill, the most beautiful little girl in the world, whose eyes were brighter than stars, and whose lips were redder than the heart of a rose" (like me, Louis—yes?), "sat down on a fallen tree, and started to sing a song which she had learned from a solitary shepherd near her home."—It does not say, Louis, but I think, perhaps, the music goes like this:

"Maman, dites moi ce qu'on sent quand on aime.
Est-ce plaisir, est-ce tourment?
Je suis tout le jour dans une peine extrême,
Et la nuit, je ne sais comment.
Si quelqu'un près . . . ."

'"And just then she saw a handsome cavalier approaching on foot." (Is it not exciting, Louis?) "He was tall and young, and was the bravest soldier in all France. He was so brave and handsome that every one called him 'The Fairy Prince.'"—Listen, Louis, to the wind!'

The lowering clouds threw black shadows over the fields; the hurrying water of the mill-stream turned the colour of ink as it made, shudderingly, for the fall of the chute. Through the ominous rise and fall of the October wind came the sound of an aeroplane in the clouds, to be lost a moment later in a boisterous rush of wind that swept the girl's tresses.

'Come, Louis, under my shawl—so! It is cold, is it not? As soon as we finish this part of the story, we shall go in by the stove and work until bed-time; then . . . Do you ever dream, Louis?'

The black cat opened one green eye and closed it with the solemnity of an all-understanding wink.

'I often dream, my cat'—again the wistfulness lingered about her face—'and always it is of the world that is past the village. . . . Is it that I must stay here, and never, never see that world but when I dream? *Voyons*—what has all this to do with the Fairy Prince? I continue, Louis: "As soon as the handsome cavalier saw the loveliest little girl in all the country, he came towards her. . . ."'

The droning sound grew louder. She looked up and watched the dark billows of clouds hovering over the fields, when, suddenly, through the heavy, underhanging mist, an aeroplane appeared, descended swiftly towards the earth, straightened out its course, and soared into the clouds again.

She could hear the whirring of the machine as it circled round and round, like an angry hornet outside its nest that has been entered by an invader. The sound of the engine grew increasingly loud; again the mists parted as foam from the prow of a ship, and again the aeroplane swooped towards the earth. She could almost make out the features of the helmeted occupant, when, with a deafening roar, the machine checked its downward flight, and rose once more until the clouds took it to their bosom and hid it from sight.

'Louis!' Her voice shook. 'I am frightened. Louis, we will go in and pray to the Virgin, you and I. It may be an *Allemand*, and, so 'tis said, they eat little girls—and black cats too.'

The whir-r of the engines grew angry with intensity, then fainter as the machine rose to a greater height. Suddenly the droning ceased. The tumbling waters of the chute seemed insistently loud, as though jealous of the brawling monster that had dared to challenge its incessant song. The girl had just stooped to resume her book, when, above the whining breeze, there was a sound like that of a saw-mill she had once heard in Étrun—but it came from the air—far over by the village road.

With a catch of her breath, she saw the aeroplane pierce the mists once more, and realised that it was pointing towards her as it descended. Rising to her feet, she pressed her hand against her mouth to keep from screaming, while ominously, noiselessly (but for an occasional hum such as wires give on a frosty night), the giant bird sped lower and nearer.

'Louis!' she cried. 'Louis!'

Weak with terror, she grasped for the cat, to find that that ungallant protector had bolted ingloriously to the mill-house. Unable to move, she watched the monster as it touched the earth, bounded lightly, felt the ground a second time, and staggered unevenly over a rise in the ground. There was a final Wagnerian crescendo of the engines, and the aeroplane stopped, motionless, less than fifty yards from her.

The aviator climbed from the pilot's seat and looked about with a puzzled air. He was dressed in a leather coat which reached to the top of his riding-boots, and his head was encased in a leather helmet. Raising his goggles, he looked toward the mill-house, and, for the first time, caught sight of the girl.

For a moment he hesitated, then made towards her, taking an extraordinary length of pace for one of his medium build, and raising his knees, as a bather will do when wading through surf. He paused, irresolute, about five yards from her, saluted, unbuckled a strap, and removed his helmet with a carelessness that left his generous supply of light-brown hair standing straight up like the quills of a porcupine. His face was rather long, and, except for his eyes, which twinkled humorously, bore a look of exaggerated solemnity. Constant exposure to the sun had tanned his face a vigorous brown, but his moustache and eyebrows, which were of a size, appeared to have completely faded, and stood out, glow-worm-like, against the background of tan.

For a full minute they gazed at each other, the girl with parted lips and heightened colour,

the new-comer's gravity slowly giving way to the good-humoured persistence of his light-blue eyes, until, with a smile, he ran his fingers through his rumpled hair.

'Phew!' he said.

With something between a sob and an exclamation of delight, she clapped her hands together twice. '*Ciel!*' she cried; 'but I am so happy!'

The mill-stream had ceased to shudder, and had resumed its song. . . . With an air of furtive preoccupation, Louis emerged from concealment and proceeded towards them after the manner of an unpopular Mexican President walking down the main street of an unfriendly city. . . . The darkening shadows blended with the early approach of night. . . . And her heart was beating wildly, joyously.

Adventure had come to the lonely mill-house in Picardy—and, after all, one is not always sixteen.

II.

'Will you please tell me where I am?' The young man spoke in French with ease, but with more than a trace of an English accent.

'This is my uncle's mill.'

'Of course. And that road?'

'But the village road, monsieur — what else?'

'And, Mademoiselle Elusive, what village may it be?'

''Tis where the church is, monsieur; and every Sunday I go there to mass.'

The pilot produced a pipe, and, extracting a pouch, proceeded to fill it with tobacco.

'I am lost,' he said complacently. 'My compass was shot away, and the clouds are hanging too low for me to follow any landmarks.'

He looked about at the steadily thickening twilight. 'How far is it to the village?' he asked.

'Five kilometres—and a little better.'

'The devil!' He made a screen from the wind with the flap of his coat, and lighting his pipe, puffed it with evident satisfaction. 'I shall have to leave the old "bus" here. As a matter of fact, she's so nearly "napoo" that I rather expected to come riding home on one plane, like the old woman with the broom. But, mademoiselle'——

'Monsieur?'

'I am very tired and distinctly hungry, and I know of a mill-house with a cosy fire in the kitchen, where a pretty little fairy that'——

'There is no fairy—only Louis.'

'And who the deuce may he be?'

'The cat—*le voici!*'

He surveyed the feline with an air of tolerant gravity. 'Do you think Louis may object if I remain for supper?'

'Ah—but no!' She laughed gaily; then a look of doubt changed the expression of her features in a moment. 'But my uncle—he never has any one in the house. For many years I have lived alone with him. Only when the curé comes, perhaps once a month, does any one visit the mill. My uncle is very surly, a perfect bear, and often he gets drunk as well.'

The young man raised his absurdly light eyebrows. 'A pleasant relative, mademoiselle. And, pray, what is his grievance against his fellow-men?'

'I know not, monsieur. All week he works alone, except when he takes the flour to sell, but on Sundays he always goes to church and leads the chanting. He was taught Latin by his father, who was a grave-digger in Paris and learned it from the tombstones. So on Sundays my uncle, from his seat in the chancel, performs the chants in such a terrible voice that almost always some children scream with terror, and once Madame la Comtesse fainted.'

The aviator relit his pipe, which had gone out, but did not remove his eyes from hers.

'Once,' went on the girl, plucking a blade of grass and making a knot with it about her finger, 'two villagers, Simon Barit and Armand Cartier, were requested by the curé, who is very small and weak, to tell my uncle to sing no more. Ah monsieur, it was terrible!'

'Yes?'

'My uncle he is a very strong man; he threw Simon Barit into the stream, and the other he chased almost to the village.'

'And so, like the mill-stream, he goes on for ever?'

'Ah yes, monsieur, like the war—for ever. Listen!'

A great voice, sonorous as that of the fabled giant calling for his evening meal of an Englishman, rent the air. The October wind seemed to quiver to its lowest note, and the water racing over the chute was quieter than it had been for hours.

'I must go, monsieur. It is his supper he wants.'

'And may I not come too?'

'Ah—but no! I am frightened.'

'Of me?'

She raised her wide brown eyes to his, and her eyelashes, which so jealously guarded those guileless depths, parted grudgingly, revealing to him their full beauty. . . . Another roar shattered the air, and she laid her hand upon his wrist. 'You must not come,' she said earnestly. 'He would throw you into the stream.'

His melancholy face gave way to a boyish grin. 'If he did, mademoiselle, my ghost would haunt him for ever. All night it would sing outside his window—and, in truth, my singing is no less terrible than his.'

There was another roar, followed by a

reference to the untimely decease of ten thousand devils.

Without a word, she reached for her book, and, throwing her shawl over her left shoulder, hurried away. The aviator watched her girlish figure with its unconscious grace; then, turning about, he strolled to the machine, and, sitting on the side of the fuselage, surveyed its bullet-punctured carcass.

'Five kilometres and a little better,' he soliloquised in English, 'and a doubtful prospect of a meal. . . . Contrast that with what the gods offer here—a cosy fire, coffee, eggs and chips, I warrant, and the daintiest of little maids—to say nothing of a musical uncle with an amiable propensity for throwing visitors into the stream. By Jove! it is chilly. . . . Over in dear old England they'll be roasting nuts and telling ghost-stories to-night.'

The fast-thickening shadows deepened into the blackness of an October night; the wind grew quieter, but there was a bite in the air that made him draw his fur collar about his ears.

'What excellent French the little lady uses!' he went on. 'I wonder who her parents were, and why the deuce she has to live with this ogre. And what eyes! Enough to make one invent new songs of Araby just to see them sparkle and soften. . . . One moment sad, another tender — and always lovely. Steady, the Air Force—you're becoming sentimental.'

He looked at the battered machine and shook his head; a solitary raindrop lit on his face and slid down its surface like a tear.

A belated gust of wind smote his face and left it moist. He rose in a determined manner and adjusted his helmet.

'*Adieu*, my Camel!' He took a last survey of the machine. 'The kitchen is calling to my appetite; a storm is brewing in the heavens; a pair of dark eyes are urging all the romance within me; so—mill-stream or no mill-stream—*mon oncle*, I come.'

He squared his shoulders, and, with the rather absurd long stride and the odd raising of the knee, made for the cottage door, from underneath which a faint glow of light was timidly emerging.

III.

In response to his knock there was a roar from within, and the door opened enough to show the young lady in the doorway.

'Good-evening,' he said gravely. 'I saw the light in here, and decided to accept its kindly invitation.'

She glanced over her shoulder; but the airman, gently putting her to one side, entered and looked serenely about the room, which appeared to be kitchen, dining-room, and parlour in one. Beside the stove he noticed the stooped figure of a man, whose huge black beard straggled over a suit of overalls that had once been dark blue, but had become a dirty white from constant association with flour.

'Good-evening, monsieur.' The airman handed his helmet to the girl, and proceeded to unbutton his coat.

The miller's blotched eyes rose sulkily to the visitor's face. 'What do you want here?' His voice was nasal and slovenly, and there was a hoarse growl in the words, as though his throat was parched and rusted.

'I am doing myself the honour of taking supper with you, monsieur.' The airman's face was full of melancholy dignity as he divested himself of his coat.

The miller's mouth opened, and a rasping, deep snarl resonated disagreeably. 'There is the village, five kilometres that way.'

'Ah—but that is five kilometres too far.'

'You cannot stay here'—the miller's voice rose angrily; 'there is but food for two.'

The Englishman tapped his pipe against his heel, and blew through it to ensure its being empty. 'Then, monsieur,' he said, 'you must go hungry.'

The Frenchman rose to his feet and brandished both arms above his head. 'Go!' he bellowed, and swore an oath that comprised a reference to the sacred name of one dog and the sudden demise of the afore-mentioned ten thousand devils who, it appeared, rested heavily on his conscience.

'Mademoiselle' — the young man turned politely to the girl—'I apologise for this gentleman. Shall I throw him into the stream, or would a cleansing spoil his particular style of mottled beauty?'

The miller became eloquent. His language was threatening, blasphemous, and deafening. His whole ungainly body vibrated with a fury which, at certain moments, grew to such a pitch that he would raise his chin upwards until all that could be seen was a forest of beard, the while he emitted an unearthly roar that could have been clearly heard on the village road. The girl, who had been making preparations for supper, glanced timidly at him, but continued her work. The cat, slumbering by the stove, opened his eyes dreamily, as if some sweet strain had come to his ears, then settled to slumber once more.

And the whole room resounded and quivered to the hurricane of sound.

With an air of complete imperturbability, the intruding guest slowly backed towards the table, and became engrossed in the task of refilling his pipe, though beneath the glow-worm eyebrows his eyes (which were very clear and blue, as if his excursions into the last free element of nature had blown all the dust and grime away) held the orator in a steady look.

'Fill your pipe?' he said cryptically, choosing

a moment when his host was filling up with a breath that promised to burst his ribs.

The response was startling.

Exhausting the air from his lungs with the noise of steam escaping from an overcharged boiler, the miller rushed blindly forward, crouching so low that his beard against his discoloured clothes suggested an ugly bush against a background of slushy snow.

With the precision of a Guardsman forming fours, the airman took one pace to the rear with his left foot, and one to the right with his right foot. This manœuvre, successfully completed, placed the table between himself and his assailant, and, tilting it dexterously, he swiftly thrust that article of furniture forward, where it came into violent contact with the irate miller's knees and shins. With an indescribable howl the worthy man fell back in a paroxysm of agony, grasping his knees with both hands, and rocking to and fro like a demented dervish.

The airman bowed gravely to the girl. 'I learned that,' he said, 'from a gentleman by name Charlie Chaplin. If you can oblige me with a custard-pie, I shall hurl it at your uncle, and thus complete the Chaplinesque method of discounting violence.'

The young woman's brows puckered. The spectacle of her uncle's discomfiture had not disturbed her so much as this new kind of a person who could bow so courteously, whose eyes twinkled humorously, and whose words were full of gravity on the subject of custard-pies. She came of a race that co-ordinated gestures and the play of features with speech; but this stranger of the air—*Sapristi!*

The moaning of the uncle grew less, and his figure stopped its rocking; but his red, blotchy eyes looked furtively at the young man, biding their owner's time for a renewal of hostilities.

With an air of deep dejection the airman gazed at the unlovely spectacle, then, very slowly, unfastened his holster and drew a revolver.

'Monsieur,' he said, 'I offer peace. The alternative is—that I fill you full of holes—which would interfere with your singing. I intend to have supper here, because I saw hens outside. If they have given no eggs, we shall eat the hens themselves as a punishment. We are allies, you and I; let us be friends as well. Monsieur'—he struck a Napoleonic attitude—'*Vive l'Entente!*'

The swarthy face of the miller, who had retained his posture on the floor throughout, wrinkled hideously into a grin, which developed into a roaring laugh that set a solitary vase jingling.

With a doubtful air of appreciation, the airman surveyed him, his head inclining dubiously to one side. 'Come, monsieur,' he said, after the miller's unpleasant mirth had subsided, 'you sit there—at the far end of the table; mademoiselle—when you have given us the supper-things—here; and I, at this end. Just to show how completely I trust you, my host, I will keep my revolver beside my plate; and should it be necessary for me to blow your brains out during the meal, it will be with the very keenest regret that I lose a friend for whom I have acquired such an instantaneous and profound affection.'

Thus the young lady with the guileless eyes, the youth who had descended from the clouds, and the stentorian miller with the painful knees sat down together for their evening repast.

And the mill-stream, chuckling as it sportively tumbled over the chute, made a pleasant serenade.

(*Continued on page 572.*)

'THE BALANCE OF NATURE' AND THE NEW ENTOMOLOGY.

By C. A. EALAND, M.A., Author of *Insects and Man, Insect Enemies, &c.*

I.

WE are all too prone to consider the birds and the beasts, the fishes and the insects, which abound in this world of ours as a mere heterogeneous collection of living organisms, without relationship or interdependence. As a fact, the activities of all living things are closely allied; one group of organisms cannot increase inordinately without another group being adversely affected. In short, nature is always in a state of equipoise. Cruel she may appear at times, but her very cruelty is a necessity if the wheels of the world are to run smoothly.

Darwin, with that rare intuition which more than anything else won him fame, summed up the phrase 'balance of nature' very aptly. He showed how the yield of a clover-crop depended upon cats. From cats to clover seems a far cry to the ordinary man; not so, however, to Darwin. Every one knows, or should know, that clover will not set its seed unless fertilised by bumble-bees. Amongst the enemies of these bees are field-mice, and field-mice, in common with all others of their kind, are eagerly devoured by cats. Professor J. Arthur Thomson carried the story a little further by the naïve remark that the yield of a clover-crop depended upon the number of maiden ladies in the district.

There are many links in nature's chain, and

if any be weak or wanting, something untoward will happen. It is the interdependence of living creatures on one another that maintains the balance of nature. The equilibrium is so nicely adjusted that the upsetting of it is easily accomplished; and man, above all, with his ruthless methods of civilisation, is the main factor in doing so. We may well consider how man has wrought this havoc, together with the efforts he has made, and is making, to undo his work.

The dodo, for some unaccountable reason, is the one extinct creature known to every one. (No doubt Lewis Carroll did much to popularise this extinct pigeon.) Now, the dodo, and its congener the solitaire, once reigned supreme on the islands of Mauritius and Rodriguez respectively. The absence of enemies, combined with a plentiful food-supply, rendered wings useless to these birds, so that in time they lost the power of flight. Then came man, and slaughtered the creatures in his usual inane fashion; furthermore, he introduced his pigs, which found the birds' eggs palatable. Man and his attendant swine upset the balance of nature in a small way, but so surely that the dodo and the solitaire are no more.

The moa, a huge wingless bird, whose home was once in New Zealand, met with a similar fate, passing into oblivion before the Maoris, who in turn have been greatly reduced in numbers by the white man. The great auk, another flightless bird, remains with us in name only; and the albatross, powerful flier though it be, is assuredly going the same way, by reason of its confiding nature during the breeding-season and man's insensate slaughter at that time.

St Helena, so rich in valuable ebony and redwood at the date of its discovery, is now a barren, storm-swept island, and the reason—the Portuguese introduced goats in 1513, and they, browsing, as is their wont, on all manner of vegetation, soon killed off the seedling trees. Primitive methods of forestry did the rest.

Let us bring the narrative a little nearer to our own time. Not so very long ago the common rat of this country was a neat, jet-black creature of engaging habits; but he has been ousted by a later introduction in the shape of the odious brown rat, a beast full of guile and cunning. A similar story applies to the cockroach. Our common cockroach, popularly but wrongly called a black beetle, itself an Asiatic alien, is being slowly but surely forced into obscurity by its more robust, more recently introduced, American relative.

About fifty years ago the balance of nature was rudely disturbed; events of far-reaching import occurred in the animal world. At that time the Phylloxera, a near relative of our green fly, was accidentally introduced into France from America. In twenty years it totally destroyed one-third of the French vineyards, and seriously damaged most of the others. Man restored the equilibrium by introducing resistant stock, curiously enough, from America.

The next false move on man's part was the introduction of rabbits into Australia. It was thought that the rodents would provide good sport. They have provided more sport than their sponsors bargained for. Of natural enemies there were none in the land of their adoption, and the rabbit is proverbially prolific. The game animal rapidly developed into a serious pest, costing the country seven hundred thousand pounds annually.

About the same period witnessed the accidental introduction of the gipsy moth into America, and though the insect has not spread over a very large area, it has increased in numbers so rapidly that the United States Government spend more than a million dollars a year on its control.

The tragic story of the mongoose is another brilliant example of man's efforts to improve on nature. The mongoose is an inveterate enemy of the rat, and rats were becoming a nuisance in the West Indies. Numbers of mongooses were introduced from India, and they certainly exterminated the rats in an incredibly short time. Then, being short of food, they proceeded to exterminate the ground birds, insectivorous birds for the most part, with the result that, though the rat plague was ended, a more disastrous plague of insects ensued, for there were no insect-eating birds to keep them in check.

The Argentine is the home of a war-like little ant, which is rapidly becoming a pest in the warmer parts of the United States. This insect, during the Boer War, contrived to get himself introduced into Madeira. The climate suited him, and he lost no time in establishing himself in the island, and in killing off all the native ants. At the present time the Argentine ant reigns supreme in Madeira. He is a nuisance; but to him belongs the credit of having upset the balance of nature.

One more example from the present time. Comparatively recently a few American gray squirrels were set free both in the Duke of Bedford's park at Woburn and in the Zoological Gardens in London. As the animals grew in numbers, these areas soon became 'centres of dispersal,' those from the Zoological Gardens wandering into Regent's Park, and thence to Hampstead and elsewhere. In a few short years the gray squirrel has spread over the home counties, and gives promise of travelling still farther, unless means are taken to prevent him from doing so. Our native red squirrel, a beautiful little creature, cannot hold his own with his more robust gray cousin—a serious enemy of the farmer, by the way, and looked upon as vermin in America.

Other striking examples of man's handiwork

might be quoted, but sufficient has been said to show that it is dangerous to trifle with nature. The dodo, the solitaire, and the great auk vanished from the earth because their enemies were more powerful than they. The gipsy moth in America, and the rabbit in Australia, prospered because they had no natural enemies in their adopted homes, and they were favoured, too, by climate and a plentiful food-supply.

II.

Every summer we are accustomed to read in our daily newspapers that the balance of nature has been upset. Certainly the information is not given to us quite in that form; it usually relates to a plague of caterpillars in some part of the country. Now it is the antler moth which is responsible for the trouble, now the cabbage white, our only harmful native butterfly. Again, the ermine moth, with its curious, tent-like larvæ shelters, or the lackey moth, whose egg-rings are common on the winter twigs of our fruit-trees, or the vapourer moth, the insect with the bizarre larvæ and the wingless females, may be to blame.

The damage caused by these and other insects has been recounted time and again; the reasons for their appearance in large numbers are less often considered. Usually the weather is presumed to be responsible for these visitations; many natural phenomena are ascribed to the weather, from the souring of milk to the spread of potato disease. Just as certain atmospheric conditions are favourable to the growth of milk-souring bacteria, or the fungi causative of potato disease, so are other weather conditions encouraging to insect life; but weather alone is a minor factor in the problem.

Arguing from the case of the gipsy moth, change of habitat would seem to be favourable to rapid numerical increase. In Europe the moth has never increased so inordinately as in the land of its adoption. The reason for its spread in America is not one of climate, however, but of practical immunity from all natural enemies. A ground beetle kept the gipsy moth in check in the Old World; but, the beetle being unknown in the New World, the moth was there left free to increase its kind unmolested.

This question of parasitic and predatory enemies is at the bottom of the majority of modern insect plagues. When enemies are plentiful, or present in reasonable numbers, the balance of nature is maintained; when they are few, their natural prey increases out of all bounds. Under the stimulus of a liberal food-supply, the parasites increase in numbers enormously; but they can only multiply at the expense of their prey, with the result that the following year sees a number of parasites with little or no food to meet their needs and the needs of their offspring. Then the pendulum swings in the other direction, and the next season is one of many insect hosts and few parasites; there is, in short, a plague of insects.

How does man contribute to these insect visitations? In his wisdom, he has contrived two methods of regulating the natural economy of the world around him—the slaughter of queen-wasps and the inauguration of the sparrow club.

Now, the wasp and the sparrow are not without guile; that must be admitted. The former has a sweet tooth, and takes its toll of the fruit-crop; the latter has been aptly termed the 'avian rat.' This, however, is one side of the question. There are few greater enemies of other insects than wasps; the queen-wasp is prolific, and her numerous progeny are fed, not upon honey, as with the bees, but upon flesh in the shape of insects. Exterminate the wasps in a district, and other insects, more harmful maybe, will fill their places.

The sparrow club is a more serious matter. The bag of the average sparrow club would make any ornithologist weep. Sparrows there may be in plenty; but warblers of all sorts, whitethroats, fly-catchers, tree-creepers, and other purely insectivorous birds swell the total. Anything brown is considered a sparrow by the petty sportsman seeking an excuse for wholesale slaughter. The sparrow club is a sham, and a dangerous sham.

Our knowledge of the feeding habits of birds is lamentably meagre; yet it is a question of the utmost importance, when everything possible should be done to conserve our food-supply. That the birds, in general, are our greatest allies in the fight with insects there can be no denying. In the aggregate, they destroy millions upon millions of injurious insects. A starling has been observed to visit its nest, when feeding its young, no less than three hundred and forty times in seventeen hours; a great tit fed its young more than three hundred and eighty times in the same period. Allowing for a period of twenty days from the time of hatching to the time of the young birds leaving the nest, it is clear that one brood of tits would consume between eight thousand and nine thousand insects. Many nestlings consume their own weight of insect food in twenty-four hours; in fact, it has been computed that a young robin will eat fourteen feet of caterpillar in twelve hours. As the rearing of young by the birds is going on all over the country from March to August, the destruction of insect life must be prodigious; and, for the most part, harmful insects are the more palatable. Even the sparrow feeds its young upon insects. If we destroy the birds we shall assuredly upset the balance of nature. They and parasitic insects are more effectual in the battle with injurious arthropods than any insecticide.

III.

Recognising that insect may be pitted against insect to man's advantage, certain entomologists have made deep and practical study of this newest branch of entomology. We use the word newest, because it is the most recent branch of the science to be taken in hand seriously. Its inception, however, dates back to 1602, when Aldrovandi, an Italian naturalist, discovered some parasitised larvæ of the cabbage white butterfly. Nearly a hundred years elapsed before another Italian, Vallisnieri, elucidated the phenomenon which had puzzled his predecessor. One of the greatest of the early authorities on insect parasitism, Ratzeburg, 'did not believe that insect control could in any way be facilitated by man'—an opinion, by the way, which is shared by many entomologists at the present time.

It is interesting to trace the history of artificial insect control from these early times to the present day, when ladybirds, used to control plant-lice in California, are dealt with by the ton, 'boxed in sixty thousand lots each, in screened cases and in special cold storage, run into a chute and handled like grain.' This stage has been reached in less than twenty-five years. The whole science 'is based on the fact that nature is in a state of equilibrium, that all life, in its native home, is kept in check by other forms of life which prey upon it.'

In an earlier article in this journal the story of the successful introduction of an Australian ladybird into America was told. That ladybird freed the orange and lemon groves of California from the destructive cottony cushion scale, an insect which must not be confounded with the totally distinct woolly aphis. At the present time the beetle is bred in large numbers in Sacramento, and despatched, in quantity, to any part of the state in which an outbreak of the scale insect occurs. The successful introduction of this beetle was not without its concomitant tragedy—a false step, of which the opponents of artificial or man-aided insect control have made much capital. Another American state, hearing of the success of the beetle, and being under the heel of another species of scale insect, applied to the authorities of California for a supply of the ladybirds, and of the cottony cushion scale for their nourishment till they became established. The scheme was well laid, but it went agley; for quite unaccountably the ladybirds died, and the cottony cushion scale, thriving in the orange-groves, became a worse pest than the insect its arch-enemy had been summoned to control.

In the case of moths there is a well-defined seasonal history, which is wanting in the scale insects. On this account they are the more difficult to control by means of artificially introduced parasites. They must be attacked in the egg, larval, pupal, and even adult stages. Acting on this fact, the American entomologists relied on a single enemy to control their scale insect; but they introduced a varied assortment of parasites and predators—no less than thirty-seven species—in their attempt to check the ravages of the gipsy moth. An abundant parasitic fauna preys upon certain insects; other insects, however, may support only a single species of parasite. Only when the host insects are practically identical in life-history and habit does the same species of parasite attack them.

'In a country where the conditions are settled, each species of insect is subjected to a certain fixed average percentage of parasitism, which in the vast majority of instances, and in connection with numerous other controlling agencies, results in the maintenance of a perfect balance. The insect neither increases to such abundance as to be affected by disease or checked from further multiplication through lack of food, nor does it become extinct, but throughout maintains a degree of abundance in relation to other species existing in the same vicinity, which, when averaged for a long series of years, is constant.'

Whatever one's opinions may be concerning the ultimate success of the new entomology, even its bitterest critics—critics who see in this latest phase of the science not a certainty of maintaining the balance of nature, but a grave risk of disturbing the equilibrium—are agreed that it is pregnant with romance. Thereby lies its danger, according to some.

The full story of the artificial control of insects, were it written, would be as absorbing as any work of fiction ever penned. Entomologists have scoured the earth in search of the natural enemies of pests which damaged their crops. They have measured the rate of progress of a predaceous beetle larva over a continuous period of seventy-two hours, and found that it travelled nearly ten thousand feet, at a maximum rate of almost five feet per minute. Such activity gave promise of slaughter in the field. They have fought, at times, a losing contest with hyperparasites, exasperating insects which prey upon the primary parasites, and so nullify their good work. They have even called fungi to their assistance, and by their aid spread disease among insect pests. Time alone will prove whether the new entomology, as yet in its infancy, will maintain or upset the balance of nature.

THE SEARCHERS.

By JOHN FOSTER, Author of *The Bright Eyes of Danger*, &c

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SUNLIGHT now flooded the Pass. In the valley the heat must have been sweltering, for the wind had fallen, and even at that altitude the rocks were warm to the touch. With the men carrying the spades and the picks, we stepped out briskly up the Larig. The air cooled as we mounted to the highest point of the Pass. Keeping the shoulder of Sron-na-Leirg on our left, as the paper enjoined, we struck into the wilds, and soon came upon trickles of water threading the waste. Two of these we followed until their junction (as the paper put it) with 'ane neybour water.' The 'Three trustie friends' was obviously a reference to some outstanding physical feature, but there was nothing of mark in the surroundings—nothing but sour-looking bog-land, with the everlasting granite thrusting its strong shoulder out at intervals.

Back we went for about half-a-mile to the source of a third stream, which we followed for a hundred yards or so, when it led us round a spur into a little defile. Keene-Leslie and I, in front, stopped dead in the same instant. The defile had widened into a cup-shaped hollow, and in the middle of it, straight in front of us and not two hundred yards away, there stood up, in sharp isolation from the débris scattered on the floor of the hollow, three tall, black rock-pillars.

'Look, Neil! What if these are the "Three trustie friends"?' exclaimed Tony.

The rest of the party overtook us, and I turned to Finlay.

'Has this place a name?'

'No, sir,' said he. 'But in the Gaelic they will be calling the big stones there'—pointing to the three singular rocks—"*Na tri bantrichean*," meaning "The Three Widows."'

Tony and I looked at each other.

'Salute our "Three trustie friends,"' I quoted, and, much to the mystification of the men, we doffed our caps.

Here was a discovery! This must be the spot indicated in Father Sempill's paper. We hurried forward, and in a few minutes were at the base of the middle rock. It was the tallest one, but its sisters were only a few feet short of it.

The directions in the paper were clear. From the tallest we were to pace its own height straight west. Duncan Ross, who was exactly six feet in height, was placed near the middle rock, and his shadow was measured. It was eight feet. The shadow thrown by the tallest of the three rocks was fifty-six feet in length. A simple calculation determined the rock's height, forty-two feet, which we measured from its foot due west by the compass. There we found a granite heap about four feet high, near the edge of the burn. It ran seven or eight yards along the top of the bank, and was roughly eight feet broad. The heap did not look very promising, but the instructions in the paper were explicit, and without delay we set to work to clear away the stones. Some of them were no bigger than slates, but others were great lumps which had been embedded for years. An hour's hard work revealed nothing except a bed of rock three feet down, as hard as ferro-concrete. We took turns with the men, sweating hard, but at our rate of progress a long day's work would have made but little impression on the stubborn heap. The great cicatrices on the slope of the hill showed that it was in the direct line of avalanches and landslides. The whole face of the place must have changed with the years, but it was clearly the spot indicated in the paper; and after a spell off, we set doggedly to work again.

An hour or two afterwards Tony and I were on the bank beside the burn, examining the strata of the rocks, debating whether an assault from the side might not give better results. All at once one of the men shouted a warning. We were just in time to get clear, when the stones in the middle of the mound bulged outwards, and a couple of yards of the formation collapsed and crashed down to the mossy ground below. In our apparently futile digging, a stone which had acted as a linch-pin must have been moved, and, the balance thus disturbed, the side of the heap had given way.

This was a piece of great good luck. Its result lessened our labours considerably, for the big stones were now loosened and more easily lifted. An hour's work cleared them out. Below them were a number of flat pieces of granite. Tony was pitching some of the smaller ones into the burn, when he suddenly ceased, and stood staring at something in his hand. It looked like a small discoloured and misshapen melon covered with mould, and I wondered why he wasted time in turning the uninteresting object round and round. Presently he went down the slope and dipped the thing in the burn, after which he scoured it carefully with sand and water, scraping the mould away. It was hollow, and when he held it up, little arcs of water, glittering in the sun, ran out from two holes in it.

'Catch!' called he, tossing it lightly to me.

I caught it, and almost threw it away again as soon as I touched it, a glance at it filling me with a strange mixture of repulsion and elation. It was a human skull.

'*Ossa humiliata!* Father Hamilton's grave!' Tony exclaimed, and pointed to the cavity, where more flat, thin slabs of granite lay in orderly sequence. Very carefully we raised them, and saw, protruding from a shallow layer of earth, the ribs of a skeleton. A few minutes were enough to enable us to uncover what had once been a man—the man who had died centuries ago in the storm in the Larig.

He must have been a small man—'of frail body,' according to Father Sempill—for the femur bone was slight, and the skeleton, without the skull, was scarcely five feet long. It lay at full length, a few wisps of rags clinging to the ribs; the finger-bones of one hand overlapping the other, between them a tarnished crucifix. It was not difficult to visualise the last scene: the dauntless priests, upheld by the simple courage born of faith and duty, watching their comrade dying; the last rites in the blinding storm; the laborious covering of the body with stones to guard against discovery by man or prowling beasts of the mountain; the two survivors staggering on into the blast. 'Here is blessed ground. *Exultabunt Domino Ossa Humiliata.*' The words recurred in their extremest force.

Under our directions the men lifted the skeleton out of the grave and laid it on the ledge. The stones on which it had lain were for the most part inconsiderable in size, but there was one striking exception. At the head of the narrow bed lay a large flat slab, the priest's pillow in his long sleep, and round it some lesser stones, the regularity of their places in the setting of earth suggesting that they had not come there by accident. I bent down and tried to move the slab, but the earth held it firmly. It required a couple of wrenches with the pick to turn it over, but when it came away I felt a sudden throbbing in my temples, for below it, bare of earth, was a flat surface, dark, except for a yellow scratch where the pick had glanced off it.

Tony's voice broke the silence. 'You have come to your own, Neil.'

My pulses quickened as I scraped the earth away from the sides and lifted the thing out. It was an oblong box, black with age; but a closer examination showed that it was made of brass, and on the lid was the Ciuin coat of arms. Any lingering doubt I had vanished.

It was locked, but the old rust-eaten hinges offered little resistance. The lid was easily wrenched open. On the top lay a cylindrical packet, six or eight inches long. I lifted it out, and drew a long breath, for below it was the top of a Latin cross, crusted with jewels. The cross had been snapped in pieces to fit the casket, and was studded with magnificent square emeralds. Underneath was a little silver ship, much tarnished, but of the most delicate workmanship, and bordered with gems, which afterwards proved to be superb black pearls. We found heavy gold candlesticks, a rosary, and another large crucifix, all inlaid with precious stones; two fine ropes of pearls; and the Scottish Lion exquisitely designed in sapphires on a tiny ivory shield. A smaller casket (like the larger one, with the Ciuin coat of arms on its lid) was full of jewels. To be exact, there were fifty-nine, and a glance was enough to show that in them alone there was a fortune.

The casket was now empty, but there still remained unopened the packet that had been uppermost. Its outer covering was of hide or skin of some sort, specially prepared with a waxen substance, which the years had hardened into a scaly integument. A sharp knife cut it open easily, and inside we found an old parchment in excellent preservation. It was a full inventory of the jewels. Enclosed in it was a little object, sealed at both ends, like a large walnut in shape, colour, and size. The seals were carefully broken, when the shell fell apart and disclosed a superb gem.

I held it up to the sun.

'The Leopard's Eye!' cried Tony.

And so it proved to be.

It was the last item—'This and None Other is ye Greate Leppard's Eye'—in the old inventory.

It was almost as large as a pigeon's egg, a magnificent chrysoberyl, the true Oriental Cat's Eye. After its dungeon life for some three hundred and fifty years, at its first startled meeting with the sun, the eye watched us like something alive, shining now with the wide unblinking stare of a beast of the jungle, now with a soft and mellow radiance, but always with a remarkable interplay of colour and sheen in a trichroism spun of delicate straw tints, light hazel, and rich amber, and with the wizard 'line' peculiar to the Oriental Cat's Eye gleaming in mysterious life. This 'line,' formed by minute striations in the gem, was unusually well defined, running vividly from end to end across the middle of the stone, like a restless impatient spirit, as the jewel's different angles leaped to the sun. It was beautiful, but the fancy seized me that it knew of dark secrets, and that at times a shadow touched it, as a baleful memory clouds a lovely face.

I laid the strange, fascinating stone on the ledge along with the glittering contents of the casket, and Tony and I glanced at each other. Heaven knows, we had talked enough about our quest; but now, at the moment of its sudden finish, the restraint which often seizes intimate friends at great moments fell on us. Although I knew that wealth and all it stood for were mine, the knowledge froze the springs of speech. Not a word did we exchange for some minutes, but fingered the treasures one by one, awkwardly, like a couple of children, the men standing, curious-eyed, a little distance away.

(*Continued on page 566.*)

AN ENGLISH GIRL'S ADVENTURES IN TURKESTAN.

II.—SAMARKAND.

By FLORENCE FULLER-NEARY.

I.

THERE are certain cities, giant cities of the East, whose very name is an appeal to the imagination. They were capitals of great empires, centres of power and splendour and luxury. Each has risen, phœnix-like, on the ashes of its predecessor; and the first was Babylon, and the last Samarkand, the city of Tamerlane. Legend hovers over them persistently, and endows them with all that the heart desires. Samarkand is a link, almost the only link, with the great conquerors of the past, for even Baghdad preserves no shadow of the days of the Caliphs.

Like Mecca and Lhassa, Samarkand is a guarded and mysterious place, which, though its name is familiar to all, no one visits. In one of his books, Mr Stephen Graham claims to be the first Englishman to visit Turkestan since Colonel Fred Burnaby. But Colonel Burnaby's famous ride to Khiva did not take him so far to the eastward; and, from the somewhat perfunctory description that he gives, it would seem that Mr Graham's stay in Samarkand was not protracted. It was pleasant to feel, when we left Tashkent for Samarkand, that I was probably the first Englishwoman to enter that famous city. It has always been extremely difficult for a foreign subject to obtain passports to Turkestan; Samarkand itself is by law forbidden ground; and my own papers did not take me beyond Tashkent.

Before its capture by General Kaufmann in 1868 Samarkand was lost to the Western world. In an article in the *Quarterly Review* of 1820, on a history of Asiatic discovery, it is said that since the visit in 1403 by Clavijo, ambassador of Henry III. of Castile, no European had entered Samarkand. Clavijo was entertained by Tamerlane at a banquet, magnificent as the feast of Belshazzar, where the king and his nine wives drank from great cups of gold, set with gems. The Castilian speaks of the glory of the streets and the gardens. The population was at least two hundred thousand, and outside the city itself were mansions and villas, built amid the network of canals that watered the rainless country. 'Of its present state,' says the reviewer, 'we know no more than of the capital of the Grand Lama.'

The city is built on the banks of the Zarafshan, one of the great inland rivers of central Asia, which rises in the Kok-Su mountains, and is eventually lost in the desert sands near Lake Kara-kul. It stands on the edge of a wide plain, at the foot of low hills, behind which rise the jagged summits of mountains. Samarkand is one of those fertile places, set in the midst of the desert, where men have ever congregated, and in Oriental tradition it is one of the four Terrestrial Paradises. In ancient days it was called Maracanda, and was capital of the province of Sogdiana. It was destroyed in 329 B.C. by Alexander the Great, but it was soon rebuilt, and then appears under the name which it has borne ever since. In the tenth century, in the golden age of Arabic culture, it was the royal residence of the Moslem Samanids, and became one of the centres of learning and civilisation. In 1220 it was captured and sacked by Genghis Khan, who deported to China thirty thousand of its skilled craftsmen; but it appears to have saved itself from utter destruction by paying an indemnity of two hundred thousand pieces of gold. Its size in those days may be gauged by the statement in the contemporary histories that the army which it gathered for its defence numbered one hundred and ten thousand men.

But it was under Tamerlane and Ulug-Beg, his grandson, that Samarkand attained the zenith of its fame. The great Tatar emperor took the city in 1369, and at once made it his capital. He swept through the East, burning and destroying, and all the vast wealth of his pillage was brought to this city. There, to the present day, stand the great buildings which he and Ulug-Beg built to embellish their beloved city and to perpetuate the memory of their own greatness. After its capture by the Uzbegs at the beginning of the sixteenth century, it steadily declined; and in the eighteenth century, when it was probably under the Chinese, it was almost deserted. Then it was annexed by the Amir of Bokhara, from whom it was finally wrested in 1873 by the Russians.

II.

We arrived at Samarkand towards evening, when the light was fading, but before the setting of the sun. The city has been spared the desecration of a railway station, and the line passes about a mile from the town. We drove in a rather dilapidated carriage along a straight road, very dusty, which led through fields and orchards and gardens.

The Russians have laid out at Samarkand, as at Tashkent, a European quarter, and here we found a hotel, unpretentious, but clean and comfortable. The head waiter was an Austrian prisoner whose brother was interned somewhere in England. But the European quarter is smaller—much smaller—than at Tashkent, and the city is essentially Oriental. The hotels, offices, and shops, which make up this European settlement, are to the west of the main town, and divided from it by the big citadel, a new building erected in 1882.

We went out early the next morning and explored the maze of winding streets, so narrow that two laden camels could hardly pass. The walls of the flat-roofed houses are square and unbroken, except for occasional window-slits, hardly bigger than archer loopholes in a medieval stronghold. The streets are unpaved and very dusty, and not so clean as those of Tashkent, with its system of canals. However, we soon found our way to the enormous Rigistan Square in the centre of the town. Hundreds of scantily clad natives were sitting on the ground with baskets of bright-coloured fruits—peaches, apples, grapes, figs, and melons—in front of them, and though no one seemed to buy, all the time they were shouting the price and the quality of their wares. Three sides of the square were formed by buildings whose façades were covered with bright mosaics and intricate carvings. They were of all colours, gold, and red, and green, but above all the purest turquoise blue. On the right of the square, from where we entered, was an immense gateway, worked with mosaic. In the middle was a huge pointed arch, bricked in at the back and pierced by a single door leading into a courtyard. On either side of this immense portal is a great carven column towering well above it. The brightness of the mosaics at first hides the signs of age and defacement, but the columns lean slightly, and two great lions wrought in gold-leaf that glare at each other across the arch are disfigured by time and the vicissitudes through which the city has passed since this wonderful building was completed, more than five centuries ago. The buildings around are the three colleges founded by Ulug-Beg, the grandson of Tamerlane, who was to Samarkand what Solomon was to Jerusalem—the art-loving successor of the grim warrior to whom the refinements of peace were impossible. He founded these colleges not only for the training of priests, but as a university where astronomy and mathematics could be studied, and Samarkand again became the centre of Eastern learning. All trace of his observatory has been lost, but these colleges, or *madrasahs*, are now the great Mohammedan seminaries. We procured a Sart guide, who took us through the great archway into a stately courtyard. Here we were allowed to look inside (but not enter) an empty hall where the students are taught in the winter-time.

We spent half-an-hour there, and when we came out into the square the din was greater than before. The natives seemed to arrange themselves in little groups, but so thickly were they clustered, and so animated were their voices and gestures, that it was with the greatest difficulty that we made our way through them. I asked our guide the cause of the commotion, and, to our amazement, he informed us that they were telling each other fairy tales. We re-entered our carriage, taking with us our Sart guide, and drove through the winding streets of native shops until we came right outside the town. Then we stopped at a building like a mosque, called Char-Zind, which stands quite alone on the slope of a bare hill. A number of white-robed Sarts sat on the ground at the foot of a flight of stone steps, under the shadow of a squat tower, carven, and closed in with a domed roof. From the outside it was a long building, or, rather, a succession of connected buildings, with many of these carven towers. I thought at first that we should not be allowed to enter, but our guide said something in his native tongue, and they let us pass. We went up several flights of steps, along a narrow corridor, and came to small landings where on either side was a little cell containing two, sometimes three, tombs. All the walls and ceilings were wrought with the same blue mosaic that had predominated on the walls in the Rigistan Square. This great mausoleum, our guide told us, contained the bodies of the wives and the children of Tamerlane. The building is chipped and battered, the bombardment by General Kaufmann having done more damage than the passage of five centuries. Pigeons make their nests in the burial-places of these princesses and royal children, and ghoulish robbers have broken some of the marble sarcophagi.

At length we came to the entrance of a mosque that stands on the crest of the slope. Here, too, our guide took us, after removing his shoes, and carefully wiping ours with a cloth that he found at the door. This was the only mosque, except that containing the tomb of Tamerlane, that I was ever permitted to enter. Inside, the light was very dim, and at first I could only see that the square walls were bare, and that in the centre of the roof there seemed to be a high dome. There were no lamps burning, and light came only from a few tiny windows. Then, as my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, I could descry on the walls a few strange decorative designs, and Arabic writings which faithful pilgrims had brought from Mecca. In one corner was a pole, covered with pieces of ribbon and embroidery, offerings of the Mohammedan women who come there to pray that Allah will send them a son, and not a daughter. Then I saw in another corner praying figures. So still were they that at first I thought they were carved in stone. Then one of them slowly rose to his feet, and with bowed head walked towards the doorway. It would seem, as one watches Mohammedans at prayer, that for a while their very life departs from them. It is a breathless, unmoving absorption that would be impossible to a European for more than a few seconds. Beneath the grave and gentle immobility of the priests and the devotees there is still the sweeping fanaticism that once carried the arms of the Prophet in triumph over Christian and pagan lands. On our way down

the guide told us to give some silver to the priests for candles. I slipped a little money into the hand of one of the white figures seated at the gateway, and he at once rose and bowed to us with dignified courtesy.

III.

The next day we drove through the noisy bazaars to Gur-Amir, a beautiful college with the mosque that contains the tomb of Tamerlane. After a short stretch of dusty road, we approached a peaceful courtyard planted with tall trees. There was a quietness in this lovely retreat like the calmness in the close of some English cathedral. We had left all the dust and the noise and the bustle far behind, and were now in a place where time and change were not known. It was the very embodiment of Oriental repose, with its atmosphere of wisdom and peace and seclusion. Here, too, were silent priests in white robes, sitting on the ground, lost in prayer and contemplation. However, after a pause, one of them rose and came towards us, and then showed us round the building.

The tomb itself, and the mosque enclosing it, have the grandeur of perfect form and perfect simplicity. It was dim and unlighted, a very high building, rather longer than it is broad, and the flat roof broken by the blackness of a semicircular dome. Right in the middle is the long, narrow tomb, an uncarved block of green marble, the colour of jade. On each side is a similar block, about half the size, marking the resting-place of a favourite wife and daughter. The walls of the mosque are of dark stone, but the first four feet from the floor are paved with the same glistening substance from which the tombs are made. The walls are flat and bare, except for a few weird arabesques of gold and turquoise. At the head and at the foot of the tomb was a tall pole, hanging from the top of which was a kind of crest, like the long tail of an Arab war-horse. Our guide told us that these were not the real tombs, but that the bodies were in a crypt below. He lit a small lamp and opened a trap-door, and we followed him down narrow steps into pitch blackness.

We were in a low chamber of the same length and width as the mosque above. In the centre were exact replicas of the green marble tombs we had already seen. It was a cold and eerie place, and I had followed our guide with sudden fear as the darkness swallowed us up. All at once the sense of our helpless isolation seized me. We were in a place never before seen by Western eyes, and, as at Tashkent, a feeling of unreality came over me, as though the phantom of some land of enchantment had materialised, and I, unwittingly, had wandered into it. We were in the forbidden city of Samarkand, in the secret tomb of Tamerlane the Great. I looked at the white-robed priest, as he stood by the tomb holding the little Eastern lamp above his head. His face was covered by a long beard, but his eyes, sombre and expressionless, seemed hard as the eyes of an Inquisitor. We were in his power, unbelievers and enemies of the Prophet. I wondered what secrets and what strange rites those orbs that regarded us so fixedly had rested upon, and visions of all the mystic horrors of Eastern religions rose vaguely in my mind. All the time I took care to keep between him and the narrow steps that led to the trap-door. He asked us, speaking a quaint dialect of Russian, to place a piece of silver, for candles, at Tamerlane's head and foot, and when I had done this, we moved to the entrance.

We visited other tombs and reliques of the past. There was the audience-hall of Tamerlane, a long building, carved within and without, and surrounded by a colonnade of pointed arches. There is at one end a great slab of green marble, the Kok-tash or stone of justice, on which the throne of Tamerlane was mounted. The audience-hall is on the rising ground west of the city, where the Russians have constructed a citadel. We also saw the blue-domed mosque built over the grave of Bibi Khanum, the most beloved wife of Tamerlane.

Although a great part of Samarkand consists of crowded and narrow streets, there are many fine houses set in the midst of beautiful gardens. The grounds are laid out in formal style, with fruit-trees, and fountains, and gravel paths between beds of red and yellow roses. There are numbers of shaded avenues, and from the distance the city seems almost buried in masses of foliage. Fragments of the old wall may exist, as at Oxford and Chichester, but, as in those towns, it is hidden among houses and gardens that spread out into prosperous suburbs. Also, the population is given as only about one-third that of Tashkent, whereas to me Samarkand seemed quite as large as that town.

There is a calm beauty, worthy of its name and tradition, that cannot fail to make the deepest impression on all who visit Samarkand. It stands, as it did in the days of forgotten empires, a rare jewel, set in a desert land. The river flows past it, feeding now, as in remote ages, the canals that water its fields and gardens and vineyards. It is a city of learning and religion, for the two hundred and forty mosques and the forty-three colleges create the peaceful atmosphere of Samarkand, and the noisy bazaars are only incidental to its life. As at Oxford, there are buildings, unique and beautiful, where for centuries the abstract wisdom of the past has been taught without heed of the changing life beyond its cloisters. The spirit that in England pervades our own centre of scholarship is also found in this ancient city of Asia.

[It should perhaps be explained that in the preparation of the two articles descriptive of her personal adventures, Miss Fuller-Neary has had the assistance of Mr B. T. Barrett.—EDITOR C. J.]

MISS BULLEN'S LACE.

By HEADON HILL.

I.

I AM advised that the door is banged, bolted, and barred against the war story henceforth and for evermore; but as the incident here related is not fiction at all, but sober, solid truth, I venture to write it down, despite the fact that if there had been no war it could never have happened. It is a mere by-product from the great crucible, and as such I offer it, perhaps actuated by an old man's vanity.

When the tocsin sounded in August 1914 I was living in the country, sixty years of age, and engaged in the most peaceful of pursuits. Having been a soldier in my youth, I was annoyed that age and rheumatism rendered me worse than useless as a fighting-man, and for a month I led my small household a pretty dance. Then, suddenly, it was brought to my notice that there was an opening for brains as well as brawn, and that as a proficient in three European languages I possessed the necessary qualifications. Within a fortnight I was spending my days in a Whitehall office, censoring letters.

The work was interesting, and every now and then exciting, when one's suspicions were aroused by some trick of phrasing or penmanship in the correspondence that passed under scrutiny. What vexed me was that I never knew the result of what it pleased me to consider was my acumen. I was not told whether or no my censorial nose had followed a true scent. It would have been so much more satisfying to be assured that the writer or the recipient of the doubtful letter had been shot at dawn in the Tower Ditch.

I had been at it six months when, by an almost incredible coincidence, I was enabled to lay my own hand on the spokes of the wheel for a brief spell.

In the ordinary course I one morning opened a postal packet addressed to a German civilian prisoner in an internment camp. The name on the envelope was, let us say, Herr Fritz Schubert. On extracting the contents I found that they consisted of a letter and the photograph of a good-looking young woman in a low-cut evening dress. After a casual glance at the picture, I laid it aside for the moment and carefully read the letter.

It was a very ordinary communication in English, signed Gertrude Bullen, and dealing with the state of the weather and the health of the writer, both being described in prosaic terms, without a spark of vitality or warmth. It was, I think, the lack of all intimacy or of any compelling interest that caused me at once to read the letter through again. On this second perusal I was struck not so much by what the letter contained as by what it omitted.

In the first place, there was no address; in the second, there was no reference to the enclosure, unless it was hidden in some cryptogram of the wording or concealed on the blank spaces of the paper by the cruder device of 'sympathetic' ink.

We had our own methods for detecting such tricks, and presently I would have them applied, but it remained to subject the photograph, so unsung and unheralded, to a closer scrutiny. I took it up again, and fixing my gaze on the face that stared at me from the cardboard, made an amazing discovery. The features of the pretty lady were perfectly familiar to me. I had seen them, and admired them from a distance, every day for the last two months.

On coming to London I had taken up my abode in a Bloomsbury boarding-house, and the original of the photograph regularly passed the window of the dining-room as the inmates sat at breakfast. I was not alone in my admiration for the aloof beauty of the early wayfarer, my younger fellow-boarders singing her praises in terms which would have been foolish in one of my years and more or less venerable appearance. There was also much speculation as to where the charming young lady hailed from, and what was the goal of her daily pilgrimage.

One of the more adventurous spirits had soon solved both these points. She lived in the same street, and only six doors higher up, in a similar establishment to our own. Discreet inquiries, the nature of which our informant did not particularise, had revealed the fact that her name was Miss Bullen, and that she was employed in a city office as typist.

With the idea of what I meant to do slowly shaping in my mind, I locked the photograph in my desk, and took the letter up to the laboratory, where suspicious letters were submitted to photographic and chemical tests. Two hours later it was returned to me with the report that nothing had been detected in the way of hidden writing. Miss Bullen's dull screed then spent the afternoon in the room of our champion code-decipherer, with the same negative result. It came back to me just before closing-time, with a curt statement on the accompanying slip that the expert had been unable to detect any sign of a code in the words or characters employed by the writer.

I locked the envelope away beside the photograph, and, with the letter in my pocket-book, went home to Bloomsbury.

II.

The amenities of the boarding-house dinner that night seemed more than usually tedious, but the horrid meal ended at last, and, slipping out of the house, I made my way to the rival establishment six doors off.

It was on the very threshold that I encountered what, at the time, I took to be either a happy omen or an amusing coincidence. My ring at the bell was answered by an obviously undesirable alien, a slovenly man-servant, who had probably passed muster as a "Swiss," though his brutal brows and sloping chin simply clamoured for barbed wire. He was of the type common enough in London boarding-houses before the war, appealing to landladies by their indifference to wages.

'Does Miss Gertrude Bullen live here?' I inquired.

The fellow did not reply, but scowled at me ruminatively.

'You heard what I said?' I brought him to book sharply.

'Yais, Miss Bullen, she live here,' he answered.

'I want to see her. Tell her I've picked up something belonging to her.'

He gave me another dour look, but motioned me to enter, and showed me into a sort of anteroom off the hall. The tinkle of a piano upstairs told that the boarders had finished dinner, a fact suggesting that I should not have long to wait. The surmise proved to be wrong. It was nearly a quarter of an hour before Miss Bullen came in rather breathlessly.

'I am sorry to have kept you, but I was playing bridge,' she said. 'I hear that you have found something of mine.'

An undeniably handsome woman, this denizen of the neighbouring boarding-house, and it struck me that she was holding the weapon of personal charm in readiness in case it should be needed. I was conscious that she was regarding me with a friendly gaze which, while it veiled a keen scrutiny, was capable of being converted into a genuine 'glad eye' without much effort. And I had sense enough to recognise that that masked battery of mixed calibres, turned on an elderly gentleman with white moustache and eyebrows, hardly made for sincerity.

'Yes,' I said, fishing out the letter. 'It doesn't seem important, but as I live close by I thought I would bring it round.'

She almost snatched the letter, glanced at it, and broke into a silvery little laugh.

'But I don't understand,' she said. 'My address is not on it. How did you find me?'

'One of my youthful fellow-boarders supplied the deficiency,' I replied with a bow. 'A young lady of your attractions cannot expect to hide her light under a bushel.'

She frowned as she pondered this, and then she asked suddenly where I had found the letter.

'I picked it up in the street,' I lied.

'Just as it is, without an envelope?'

'Just as it is. If there had been an envelope I could have posted it to the address.'

'Of course, you would have done that,' Miss Bullen readily assented, as if paying tribute to my gentlemanly instinct. "Would you mind telling me just where you picked it up? You see, the friend to whom I wrote must have dropped it, and I should like to call him over the coals for his carelessness.'

The fine eyes grew a shade harder as they searched mine.

'I picked it up in Russell Square, just off this street,' I lied again. 'Might I suggest that your friend was on his way to see you when he dropped the letter?'

This was intended for a trap, since I knew that the 'Dear Fred' to whom she had written was interned in a northern county. It was possible, I thought, that she might give herself away by accepting my theory. Nothing of the kind. This was a lady for whom it was vain to set snares of such amateur devising. She waved the suggestion airily away.

'It could not have been that,' she declared. 'My friend has not been in London for a considerable time. To be quite frank,' she added, laughing again, 'he is an unnaturalised German, and is very properly paying the penalty for his oversight by suffering durance vile in Yorkshire. He is quite a harmless creature, and I saw nothing wrong in sending him a line, with my photograph. You didn't see the photograph, I suppose, knocking about in the gutter?'

I echoed her laugh as naturally as I could. 'If the photograph was in the gutter, it did not catch my eye,' I replied. 'As there was nothing in the letter about a photograph, it did not occur to me to look for one. Well, I mustn't keep you from your bridge. Good-night, Miss Bullen.'

She was nearer the door of the little room than I was, and she stepped out into the hall. 'Good-night, and thank you so much,' she said. 'The man will let you out.'

She ran upstairs, and I turned to the front-door. It was promptly opened for me by the beetle-browed servant, who was standing ready. The door was slammed behind me, and I embarked on a short walk—during which I believe I was nearer death than I shall ever be till the real call comes.

III.

I had come to two conclusions from my visit. The first was that Miss Gertrude Bullen carried too many guns for the like of me, and that she had seen through my suspicions of her. The candid avowal that her friend was an interned German pointed unerringly to that being the

case, and to its having been made as a species of bluff. If I had been taken at my surface value, the avowal need not have been made at all, there being no hint by name or otherwise of any German taint in the letter. She must have suspected that I had seen the envelope as well, and her bold declaration was aimed at leading me to betray that fact. I wondered if my facial expression had withstood the assault. Whether that was so or not, I was conscious of a more serious flaw in the fictitious case I had presented. I had fairly given myself away in the matter of the photograph. While denying all knowledge, I had practically confessed not only to having seen it, but to having traced her by its aid. Without it all the information gleaned by my fellow-boarder would have been all but useless, because, but for the picture, I could not possibly have told that the letter had been written by this particular Gertrude Bullen.

The second conclusion was that the secret communication to 'Dear Fred' was hidden in the photograph at present reposing in my desk at the office. I argued this from the fact that she was wearing the same low-cut bodice, but with this difference—the fluffy lace corsage which she had worn for the sitting had been removed. Did this mean that, when she had confronted the camera, the lace had served a special purpose?

These questions had hardly taken shape in my mind when I came to my own boarding-house, and turned sharply to mount the short flight of steps to the front-door. My change of direction must have surprised the individual who had followed me. He had evidently assumed that I was going farther, where I should have fared worse, for his dagger missed my back by a hair's-breadth, striking the area railing with a metallic clash, and clattering into the basement below.

Wheeling round, I saw clearly by the light of a near-by street-lamp the beetle-browed manservant from six doors higher up. I raised my fist at him, but, weaponless, that was not his way. Growling a guttural curse, he fled up the street, with enough Hun cunning left to direct his flight in the opposite direction from his place of abode.

IV.

I was early at the office next morning, and again sought the laboratory where photographic and chemical experts toyed with treachery. They were a little tired of me, I think, after the abortive task I had set them the day before.

'What maggot is biting you now?' the head of the department asked as I handed him the photograph of Miss Gertrude Bullen.

'I want that photo enlarged to its utmost capacity,' I replied. 'You will find a message in the lace, which, though invisible in the original, will appear in the enlargement.'

'You are very confident,' said the expert.

'Naturally, since that pretty lady tried to have me murdered by a compatriot last night because of my discovery,' I replied; and I detailed the dangerous game I had played.

'But, my dear fellow,' the expert protested, 'this charming young person and her accomplice will have taken to wing hours ago if there is anything in all this.'

'Probably,' I said; 'but their flight is not likely to carry them far. Before I went to bed I took the liberty of communicating with Scotland Yard on the personal matter. The police will effect an arrest the moment they have the corroborative evidence hidden in that lace.'

The superior person caved in.

'In that case,' he said, 'there is a quicker way than enlarging the photograph, though that, of course, shall be done too. I mean the method by which the recipient would have read it.'

He took up a magnifying-glass the size of a small frying-pan, and, after a minute's scrutiny, got busy with pencil and paper.

'You've done it,' he said, handing over the result. 'The message is woven in the lace, and they didn't even trouble to code it. Herr Fritz Schubert, you see, being a valuable spy, was to be assisted to escape, and this gives him all the necessary pointers.'

'Thank you very much,' I said meekly. 'I will phone the police to go ahead. I had thought of chucking censorship, but now I shall carry on for a bit.'

AT DUSK.

WHERE the paven streets go down
To the edges of the town,
Where the long white roads begin,
Leading far from stress and din,
Look! he beckons us away,
Floating in the shadows gray.

Where the paven streets arise
To the starry evening skies,
Where the long white roads begin,
Leading far from toil and din,
Winding through calm hills of night
To the round moon, distant, white,
See! he beckons us away,
Up there in the shadows gray.

Far away from din, from noise,
Banging guns and shouting boys,
Clattering cart and jolting car,
Out to where still places are—
Country places, lonely, calm,
Hazy in the evening's balm—
Look! he beckons us away,
Beckons 'mid the shadows gray.

And a song blows through my ears,
Throbbing mirth, yet throbbing tears,
And a mist floats in my brain
As I see him, here, again,
Beckoning—where the streets go down
To the edges of the town,
Beckoning—away! away
To the wild at close of day!

NITA H. PADWICK.

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SEVENTH SERIES

STOLEN GUESTS.

By ALBERT G. MACKINNON, Author of *Hospital Jock.*

CHAPTER I.—THE DISEASE.

MISS MARY SMITH suffered from an incurable disease. At least, it would be incurable so long as she continued the method of treatment she had adopted. She was afflicted with *shyness*, and had banished herself to the remote Highland parish of Auchinbruich.

In her heart of hearts she yearned for a little human society, and yet she fled from it. Once she had been a poor relation, and it was during those years that she had developed that shrinking timidity which was the bane of her life. Then her relatives, one by one, began to die, and all in turn left her their possessions, until now she was no longer poor—except in friends.

She was tired of wills and bequests to 'poor dear Mary,' and only wished that her kinsfolk would show their regard for her by remaining alive and cheering her with their presence, instead of putting their pity into a codicil. Her uncle had really done her the cruellest turn of all by leaving her his pretty little Highland cottage, so far away from everywhere. In an evil day she had gone to visit her new property, and she had never had the courage to face the big world again.

Auchinbruich was the very last place in which she should have buried herself, for it simply bred the microbe of shyness. When she came to the parish she was in a pretty hopeless state, and her few years there had rendered her recovery well-nigh impossible. She could count on her fingers all the people, her equals, to whom she had spoken during that time. Yet she had not been idle. She had made a really charming home of her Highland cottage. She was gifted with extremely good taste, and her drawing-room was 'a perfect dream.' All it lacked was some one to appreciate and admire it.

Janet, the cook, certainly remarked every time she entered it, 'It aye makes me think of a fairy palace, whateffer.'

But then such abodes had always a prince and a princess and a host of lesser spirits to enjoy their beauty, whereas Auchinbruich Cottage wasted its sweetness on the desert air.

True, in an act of desperation Miss Smith had purchased a motor and engaged a good chauffeur—but only to take her excursions farther into the mountains with her lunch-basket and her dog.

On this particular morning she was surveying the work of her hands with supreme satisfaction. She had just arranged the flowers in their vases. Never before had she blended such perfect colouring. Then she sighed, 'How I do wish some one would only call!'

But, of course, that was a vain desire. Her nearest neighbours were many miles away, and she had never returned their visits.

Just then the telegraph-boy came riding on his bicycle through her gate and up the avenue. He actually had a little brown envelope. Instinctively Miss Smith began to count over in her mind all her relatives. Were there any that were not yet dead? Did this mean that she had lost another kinsman, and inherited another legacy? No, she could think of none, except her second cousin Marion, who lived in London, and was 'not the dying kind,' or at all likely to leave her a single sou. Once in the days of Miss Mary's poverty this same cousin had patronised her, and taken her into her home to act as nursery governess to her nieces. The memory of those months was a nightmare now. What snubs, what reproaches, Mary's tender little soul had endured, until one day her prosperous cousin happened to come upon her talking to a certain young man! It was the first and only time she had ventured such a daring deed, and it was a bit of the most wretched ill-luck that she should have been discovered in the very act by her cousin. The latter had a fit of righteous indignation, and had turned poor Mary out as unfit for the charge of her nieces. No, this message could not be from Marion, her one and only surviving relation.

With nervous fingers Miss Mary Smith tore open the envelope, while Janet and Margaret, the cook and the housemaid, loitered in the hall; for nothing so sensational as a telegram had come to the cottage for many months.

'General and I arrive by last train from south to-night. Please send car to meet us at station. Can stay a week if convenient.—JACK WRIGHT.'

Miss Mary read the telegram several times

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before its meaning penetrated her amazement. Guests were coming. Whoever they were, she would have to put them up for the night—there was no hotel or other house within miles. By the time she had completed her sixth perusal of the message she was wonderfully calm. After all, she was made for emergencies. This was really the first big one that had ever come into her life, but she rose to the occasion with a clear head. She was conscious that her staff was waiting impatiently for some inkling of the news, and she had a duty towards it.

Surprised at her own coolness, she turned to the maids and remarked in a tone quite unperturbed, as if it were an everyday occurrence, 'A nephew, who is bringing a general with him, will arrive to-night by the last train, and will probably spend a few days with me. We 'll put the dinner back to half-past eight. Tell Macleod that he must have the car ready to go to the station. And, let me see, Margaret,' she added, addressing the housemaid with deliberation, 'we will give the general the front spare room. He can use the adjoining one as a dressing-room. We will have the door between them unlocked. The bedroom at the back will do for my—er—nephew.'

Only for a second did she waver over the word, so subtly did deception bait the hook; but already Miss Mary had made up her mind that she was going to take possession of these stray guests.

She was a born hostess, though not till that moment had she discovered it. What a pity that such gifts should remain unused! This was the very first opportunity she had ever had of displaying her arts as an entertainer, and she was not going to let it pass. Never had hours been happier or busier. She knew instinctively just what kind of dinner men would like after coming off a long journey, and she was a clever cook. It seemed as if her whole life had been a preparation for that hour. Janet was flurried, but not so her mistress. Nothing was forgotten. It was wonderful how well stocked Miss Mary's larder was—just as if she had been expecting guests.

She had time to go into the garden and select flowers for the bedrooms. How pretty the general's room looked when she had added the finishing-touch that filled it with the beauty and sweetness of summer! Very carefully she made a selection of a few books that might especially interest him, and placed them on a book-shelf near his bed, with a small lamp on a table close by.

Amongst other things, her uncle had left her in the house several boxes of the choicest cigars, which he had received as presents from sundry potentates during his travels in the East. His wine-cellar, too, she had hardly ever opened before. Thus the preparations for the coming guests proceeded apace.

At last the motor rumbled off, well laden with rugs and cushions, for, though it was midsummer, the nights in the north were chilly. Then Miss Mary bethought herself of evening gowns. She knew how to dress to perfection. There is a zest in doing things when one feels certain of appreciation, and notwithstanding that Miss Mary had never seen this mysterious Jack or his friend the general, she was convinced that they would admire her gown.

As the hour approached for the return of the motor, Miss Mary had to confess to a little flutter at her heart. What if her guests had already discovered their mistake, and refused to come farther than the station? She would have to eat her tasty dinner all alone, as she had done during those many years. The very thought gave her a distaste for the dishes upon which she had expended so much trouble. All her decorative art would have been in vain. As she waited impatiently she felt a sinking at her heart, an overwhelming sense of solitariness. Just as she was escaping from her past, it seemed to rush on her again. Now that she was really going to have guests, how lonesome her days appeared!

At last she saw the lights on the road. The motor was coming bounding along as it had never done before. It was certainly not Macleod's driving. She took heart at the sight. The car swung into the little avenue and flew up to the door as if on wings. There in the front seat, with his hand on the wheel, was a young officer—just a boy by the look of him; and inside—yes, there was the figure of the general. The cooking had not been in vain.

With a sigh of relief Miss Mary stepped forward. She had mastered her shyness by a supreme effort. She had said to herself with determination, 'I have allowed it to ruin my life up to now, but for the next few days I will bid it defiance.' Besides, it is easier for a woman to be brave in the presence of men, if no other of her kind is watching and criticising.

CHAPTER II.—ITS UNEXPECTED TREATMENT.

THE khaki-clad driver was over the side of the car in a second, and holding her hands in his.

'Well, aunty, here we are!' he exclaimed. 'But, I say, what a ripping car you have got! I hope you will let me drive it while I am here.'

'Of course, Jack,' she answered quite naturally, acting with perfect ease the rôle thus assigned her (the very rôle, fortunately, that she herself had determined to play). 'I see you are an accomplished chauffeur. You must take us out every day for a run.'

Meanwhile the figure inside the car was divesting himself of his rugs.

'Come, aunty, I must introduce you to my friend, General Cockburn Davidson.—He's a jolly big gun, you know,' Jack added in a whisper.

'General, here is my aunt, Miss Smith.'

The senior officer had stepped out on to the gravel path. Certainly he had a most distinguished bearing—every inch a general, thought Miss Mary to herself. Really a young old man, he carried himself well, though many campaigns had left their furrows on his face.

'It is awfully good of you to invite me with your nephew,' he said, as he took the hand of his hostess. 'What a charming spot you have here amongst the mountains! It is just the kind of place I have been searching for, far away from anywhere. I hope you get no mails here.'

'Just once a day. We always receive our morning paper in time for dinner,' she answered with a smile.

'That's ideal,' said the general. 'I want to forget that there is an outside world, and I think I can do that here.'

Miss Mary was conscious that already her gown had made an impression; but it was not until twenty minutes later that she got the first direct compliment. Jack had finished his toilet much quicker than his senior officer, and came bouncing into the drawing-room, then stopped amazed. It was not a large room, but it was really perfect, and there in the centre was Miss Mary, a vision in pale blue and white.

'I say, aunty, I never knew you were so lovely before,' he blurted out in his exuberance of spirit. 'I remember long ago, when I was a kid in Australia, seeing a photograph of you in my mother's album; but it did not impress me then, and I had not the faintest idea you were like this.'

There was admiration in his tones, and that gave Miss Mary confidence.

'A woman's appearance changes so much with the fashion of the moment. Possibly I wore my hair quite differently in the photo you saw. Now, we have a great deal to talk about. You must tell us all that you have ever done. What a distinguished-looking man your friend is, Jack!' remarked Miss Mary, as if she had known this young man from childhood. Her disease of shyness had suddenly been cured.

'Rather!' replied the youth. 'He is one of our crack generals on the Western front. I had the greatest bit of good luck last year. The general got wounded in the big German offensive. We were being pushed back, and he would have fallen into the enemy's hands if I had not managed to carry him in. He has taken a fancy to me ever since, and had me staying down with him in his rooms at Hove. At first when you invited him he did not feel like coming north; but I think he is jolly glad already that he has come. He is charmed with this place. He said to me just now that he had never seen a prettier bedroom in all his life.'

'In his rooms? Has he no house of his own?' she asked in surprise.

'No; he "baches." You see, he has been all over the show, and has never had time to settle down.'

'Or marry?'

'No; he is not that kind. He is a born fighter—though I think he ought to be getting a little tired of it by now. There is no war, however small, that he does not seem to have had a hand in. To hear him talk makes one feel how shocking one's history is. He mentions all kinds of scraps one has forgotten about. You will enjoy his company, and I am certain that he will yours—though he told me that he did not care much for women. The thought of meeting you almost kept him from coming north, and it is only because I pressed him that he came.'

'I am glad that you won your point. Now, I want to give you both a good time while you are here, so you must just tell me what you would like best to do.'

At that moment the general entered. Miss Mary noted with admiration how graceful his figure looked in his well-cut evening clothes; while he could not hide his appreciation as he glanced round the room, and then rested his eyes on his hostess. The gong sounded, and Miss Mary, conscious of victory in the drawing-room, led the way to fresh triumphs round the dinner-table.

'I know what you would like to do to-morrow,' she said between the courses, just as if she had a thorough acquaintance with men and their tastes.

'I am sure you are going to suggest something nice,' responded the general.

'A day's fishing,' she replied. 'I know a splendid pool for trout about ten miles from here. We shall start in the car after breakfast, and take lunch with us. You gentlemen will find rods and everything in the gunroom, and we shall have a splendid basket of trout for dinner.'

'Ripping!' exclaimed Jack. 'And, I say, aunty, you have hit the bull's-eye so far as the general's tastes are concerned. He was just asking me if I thought we could get any fishing about here.'

'Really, Miss Smith, I fear you are going to spoil us,' added the general.

And if ever two men were spoiled, these two were the next day. The weather joined in the conspiracy; the sun smiled its benediction all day. The Highland stream, with its shady pools, proved an anglers' paradise; and the luncheon-basket was a perfect marvel of delicious

surprises. The two officers vowed that they had never spent a day like it. The general was too tired even to ask for the daily paper after dinner—perhaps he preferred the talk in the drawing-room.

'To-morrow I have arranged that we shall have some deep-sea fishing. I have secured a boat,' Miss Mary announced at dinner, and her suggestion was applauded. The second day was voted even a greater success than the first by her guests. On reaching home Miss Mary picked up the daily paper and took it to her room. A general could not go missing without the public discovering it. The guests themselves did not know that they were lost, but the fact could not be hidden.

It was just as Miss Mary feared. There was a short paragraph, headed 'Mysterious Disappearance of a Famous General,' stating that General Cockburn Davidson, C.B., D.S.O., and a young friend, Lieutenant John Wright, were missing. Last seen on their way north to Scotland, they had, for some unaccountable reason, never arrived at their destination.

Miss Mary clipped the paragraph out, and then took the paper down to the drawing-room.

'Would you like to read the latest news?' she asked the general as she innocently handed it to him.

'Really, Miss Smith, in such a delightful spot as this one begins to forget that there is an outside world. Just to assure myself that it is still in existence, I 'll glance at the headings; but we must let nothing encroach on our game of cards.'

So, while Miss Mary was arranging the table, the general hurriedly scanned the news of the day, oblivious of the fact that, like himself, an important paragraph was missing.

Next morning at breakfast the hostess announced that they were going to try inland loch fishing for a change. She knew a delightful little lake away up amongst the glens of Sutherlandshire, and she had already wired to the proprietor and obtained permission for a day's sport there. A boat would be in attendance. It was about forty miles distant, but the road lay through some of the finest scenery. Jack drove, and the chauffeur sat beside him; while Miss Smith and the general made themselves cosy with rugs in the back-seat.

She had the art of being a good listener; and, before he knew, her companion found himself telling her the whole story of his life. She was a great discovery to him, for he had never before met one whose sympathy had such a magnetic power. It seemed to draw out all that was in him. She was a bigger discovery to herself. All of a sudden she found that she was possessed of a startling capacity for holding another's interest, she who had shunned society, and had accepted the lot of an outsider.

Jack, when he was disengaged, took as much delight in her company as the general.

As they sat on the heather eating lunch, he looked up at her with all the admiration that is a nephew's privilege.

'I say, aunty,' he remarked, 'I'm jolly glad I accepted your invitation. At first I thought it would be a bore—relations usually are—and that you were just having me as a matter of duty; but when you kept pegging away at me'——

'Did I?' said Miss Mary, arching her eyebrows and smiling.

'And when you insisted on the general coming too, I capitulated; and it was the luckiest thing I ever did.'

'So you were very hard to win,' she teased. 'And how did you discover this out-of-the-way place?'

'Oh, I knew it was "Auchin" something, so I looked up a gazetteer, and found it on the map. After that it was plane sailing. I piloted the general along without a slip. It was really worth coming so far. I have never been in Scotland before. You see, until I joined up I had never been out of Australia.'

By piecing little bits of the conversation together Miss Mary gathered, without betraying undue curiosity, a sketch of her 'nephew's' past history. What was more difficult to discover was where he had intended to go. One of the greatest surprises of the whole experience was the spirit of naughtiness Miss Mary detected in herself. These two strangers had, through no scheming on her part, become her guests, and she did not mean to give them up.

When they returned that night she was quick in laying hands on the paper. To her consternation, she found a whole column, the last on the page, devoted to 'The Missing General.' What was she to do? Then her inventive genius came to her aid. She found an old paper, and after cutting out the tell-tale column, very skilfully gummed in its place a column advertisement of 'Somebody's Summer Sale.'

'I do not think he will ever notice,' she said to herself.

Then she read the account which she had excised so cleverly from the paper. Apparently General Cockburn Davidson and Lieutenant Wright had been expected to visit a Miss Smith at Auchinbreck, which is in the south of Scotland.

'Of course I know now,' murmured Miss Mary; 'that is my cousin Marion. I did hear that she had taken a shooting of that name. So she is the disappointed one!' and Miss Mary smiled a naughty smile. Then she added, 'That being so, I will just keep them a little longer. I have an old account to square with Marion.'

(*Continued on page 586.*)

BEYONDS.

By Bart Kennedy.

I OFTEN think and wonder about them. I think of the glorious lands there are in the worlds that whirl as they move on their stupendous journeys around the shining suns. I think of the many and varied beings that live upon them. For to me these worlds of the far beyonds are inhabited. I mean that they must surely have their time when there comes to them what we earth-men call organised life.

How glorious it would be to adventure forth to them—to pass from strange world to strange world! That would be a voyaging indeed.

And there are times when I feel that we do go forth into these beyonds. I feel that immortality is no mere myth born of human imagination. We change and pass, and change and pass, and change and pass.

Death is but a gate that opens to a voyage of wonder.

This I feel at times: Souls go out to the worlds that circle round the stars, and to the worlds of the stars behind the stars. Life on this whirling atom of a planet is but the thing of an hour. Our souls go for ever on an infinite journey, passing from strangeness to strangeness.

And well may it be that we meet in some world of the beyond beings whom we loved and were at one with here on earth. Who is there to deny that this may be so? No one. For no one knows, any more than you or I. True, there are arrogant men who would measure all things by a little gauge called human reason —a gauge woven mainly from our blindness and egotism. But these men are not to be heeded. They turn away their heads from the light of faith.

To me the fact that these worlds of the beyond teem with life at the appointed time is as simple and as clear as the fact that our earth teems with life.

These wondrous beyonds! Is it that we get a glimpse of them sometimes in dreams? Do our souls ever go out to them when we are in the half-death that we call sleep? Are the vague monstrous dreams that come upon us scenes from vague monstrous worlds? Are beautiful dreams scenes from beautiful worlds? I wonder. And I wonder if the people who have passed through the gate of death, and whom we see in dreams, are really seen because of some sense that comes to our minds as we lie in sleep.

The power is not given to us to answer these questions, for our consciousness in the waking life is at best but a blind thing. Consciousness holds sway in a realm as yet uncharted. There are powers and lapses in the mind of man that it knows not of.

It is the soul that is all. This earth-envelope is but a thing transient and passing—the vesture of a moment. It falls from us, and we go forth.

We go forth to lands of unimaginable beauty that are away in far worlds; or we go forth into lands of worlds monstrous and horrible. Heaven is surely no myth born of the mind. Neither is Hell. These two concepts have been cramped and mutilated by stupid, iron dogma. But they are surely in themselves real. Man is dealt with in the lives to come in accord with his actions here on earth.

There are times when I dream that I am in a world of mighty, stretching plains; and times when I dream that I am in a world of music of a beauty inconceivable; times when I am in a world of tumultuous waters where lands exist not; times when I am in a world of palaces transcendent, where live gods; times when I am in a world where beings reign that are shaped not as men. I have received, as it were, messages even in the midst of the waking life as I have listened to certain music.

Surely dreams are of the woof of the mysterious, stretching life that lies behind the small figment that we call reality. True, it may not be so—but who is the one that knows?

These magical beyonds! They stretch out and out and out. To them there is no end. End is but an arbitrary notion that man has conceived for the measuring of things that are limited by his touch and his vision. There is no end to the beyonds—no boundary. To grasp their extent defies the power of the imagination. Nay, there is not extent, for extent contains within it the concept of limitation. These beyonds stretch and stretch and stretch into illimitableness. There are stars behind the stars, and stars behind these, and stars on and on and on.

Strange is it to think of the wondrous, never-ending immenseness that is out from our earth. And strange is it to think that, small though we are, we are still of it. We are even of these stretching beyonds.

We are the heritors of God. We are the heritors of a glorious destiny, immense and profound. We are of the woof of change that has always lived and ever will live.

How glorious for the soul to pass out through the far stars!

Death! It exists not in the sense in which it is pictured by the blind minds that have not faith. It is often a gate of joy and strange beauty, an opening to light effulgent, a stage in an eternal journey. So fear it not.

The destiny of man is the destiny of God. It leads to harmony—harmony even for the soul that is blind.

For man to have the faith that gives him the power to see that he lives for ever is to have the secret of content. He has then attained to the highest wisdom. He looks into the unknown with the calm of a god. He takes pain and sorrow and joy and happiness as they come.

And when he faces another phase of his profound journey, he faces it invincibly.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OUR energies had been focused in a singular degree upon the search, and in consequence thoughts of the murder and the man-hunt had in a measure been checked; but now, with the grave beside me and in the knowledge that our quest was at an end, my mind turned sharply to the hut down the Pass, where, his body broken, his evil schemes in the dust, 'The Searcher' lay watching a shadow—the grim shape of the gallows—creeping closer to him.

His sudden entrance into the Chanter Corrie had stunned me, and, truth to tell, I was still shaken and bewildered. In my attempts to unravel the affair, a thought of the doctor had never crossed my mind; and now, as I recalled his professional equipment, his friendliness and sympathy, his offers of help, the knowledge that I had seen him do cowardly murder, and that beyond doubt he was the 'Prowler' at The Bield, still filled me with complete mystification. Who was Dr Hall?'

Tony was looking at me, a smile in his eye. 'Well, Didymus?' quoth he.

'Who is "The Searcher," Tony?'

To my surprise, he shook his head. 'I don't know, Neil,' he replied. 'Indeed, I can tell you very little about him further than that he is not a known criminal, and I don't think he is a professional one. However, he realises (in his own words) that "the game is up," and I fancy that he may yet confess the truth. There is a lot that I can't fathom. Let us go back to the hut. One of the men can take a message to the police, and on the way down I'll tell you the story of how I got on the trail.'

Duncan was despatched to the Glen with a message for Sparke and the police, and to arrange for two conveyances to be ready at the end of the forest road. Tony and I with our own hands placed the skeleton in the hollow, and, having covered it over with stones until such time as we could return to give it decent burial, we left the defile, carrying the long-lost casket and its amazing contents, and turned towards the Pass.

Hardly had we struck the track of the Larig when I heard a shout from away behind us, and with a field-glass picked out Duncan and three others. These proved to be Sparke and a couple of police-officers. Duncan must have met them within half-an-hour of leaving us. Soon they joined us, and in a few minutes Sparke had been told the story and a formal statement had been given to the police. Then all turned towards the hut below Cairn Toul.

Sparke had something to tell us which tightened the noose about 'The Searcher's' neck. On the previous evening, while loafing in the Afries Wood, near the south road, having a quiet pipe after his day's work, and keeping his eyes open, he had spotted Dr Hall, alone, walking briskly towards the forest. 'He did not see me,' said Sparke; 'but even if he had, in my working rig-out he would have put me down as one of his humble patients. I had arranged that the inspector—who, in case of accidents, had a warrant for his arrest—would take possession of his belongings at the surgery during his absence. I lay low and watched him long enough to be reasonably certain that he was marching into the Chanter Corrie trap. The rest, I thought, could be safely left to you! When you didn't turn up, I got a couple of conveyances, and, with the inspector and his man, drove up to the end of the forest road, and—here I am! I hurried, you bet; but, my hat!'—he mopped a steaming brow—'the Larig isn't Ludgate Hill! I wish I had arrived in time to see the finish.'

'Never mind, my friend,' said Tony. 'Between us we contrived a pretty useful round-up—better than we bargained for, since we have accounted for two "Searchers" instead of one. I wish we had roped in old Benedetto as well. I wonder where *he* is! However, this is the *coup de grâce* to the gang, I fancy!'

'All thanks to you, Mr Keene-Leslie,' was Sparke's verdict. It was a generous one. If it was Tony who had first hit the trail and planned 'The Searcher's' capture, Sparke had been an alert and capable ally.

On the way down the Pass towards Cairn Toul, Tony told me his too long delayed story.

'On the day after the colonel's funeral,' he began, 'I was sitting by an open window in the dining-room, reluctantly making up my mind that I was beaten. The doctor—I doubt if we shall ever know his real name—was bending over his car at the door. He had found something wrong with the starting-gear, and after tugging away without result, straightened himself and rapped out an ill-tempered oath. A detail this, but two points in it instantly strung me to attention. Firstly, the oath, "*Sangue di Dio!*" was in Italian; secondly, no sooner were the words out than he checked himself and

looked round, on his face a shadow of apprehension, come and gone in a second, swift as the sudden flight of a swallow across one's line of vision. I drew back at once, and he did not see me. Once more he looked cautiously round, and, whistling softly to himself, bent to the car again. After a minute or two he started it and went off.

'The use of Italian might have been a mere accident of speech, but often the look on a man's face when he thinks he is alone is illuminating. The real man shows. Here, his instant check and the swift wariness in his eye, like a fencer recovering his guard, struck me as curious, and at least worth attention. Was it possible that there was a link between this quiet and competent professional man and the Duff Street gang? I passed the rest of the day shut up in the library, studying the situation and the history of the affair. I confess that I thought the idea too fantastic, but I did not throw it aside as negligible—nothing in my line is—and I thought that it would do no harm to see a little more of Dr Hall and satisfy myself that I was wrong. Suddenly I began to suffer from insomnia.'

'And you consulted him?'

'Yes. Although I had never lost a night's sleep in my life, I described a few imaginary symptoms in detail, and found him a very sympathetic listener—the same well-mannered, thoughtful-looking man as ever.

'Now, in a matter of this kind my maxims are cast-iron. Suspect nobody. Absolve nobody. However far-fetched a clue may seem, exhaust it. At my first meeting with him I chatted carelessly and watched carefully. After the professional part of the interview, a casual reference to the mysterious affair at The Bield gave me a chance of telling him that it was clear we were beaten, and that to worry longer over the business would only be a waste of our time and nervous energy. Apparently rattling on quite carelessly, all the time I kept well in front of him the notion that we were sick of the whole affair, and weren't going to bother any more about it. He agreed with my view, and when we parted I had something to think about. He had lied to me at least once.

'I had purposely turned the conversation to foreign travel. From travel to foreign languages is a short step, and I contrived to get out of him the statement that he did not know a word of Italian! Lie number one! A man in a temper who thus blurts out an Italian oath, with an excellent accent, has more than a smattering of the language. My interest in him grew wonderfully. I telegraphed for a copy of the Medical Register, and found only one man of his name in its list. Here is a copy of the entry.' He produced a slip of paper and read out: '"Hall, Kenneth Richard, Logan St Mary, Galloway, Licentiate Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, 19—; Licentiate Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, 19—."'

'I understood that he had been abroad lately,' I cut in. 'I had a vague idea that he had been a ship's doctor. He came here not many months ago to take up the late Dr Marshall's practice.'

'Yes. His recent arrival might have been easily explained, but I wanted to make sure of this. It was necessary to trace his movements before he came to the Glen, and at our next meeting I cast a few flies over him. I had to throw them warily. An unguarded word, a look too anxious, and he would have winded danger like a stag. But my chance came. I could not put a direct question to him, but after one or two gambits, I began to talk about big game. I never mentioned Logan St Mary—the place in Galloway where he was supposed to have practised—but from big game I "engineered" the conversation to big-game hunters, and mentioned that one of my best trips had been after caribou in Newfoundland with Sir Jim Dunbar. I was considerably interested to discover that the suave doctor, whose address in the Medical Register bore that he had once practised in Logan St Mary, had never heard of Dunbar. Lie number two! Jim is a well-known sportsman, and laird of half the parish of Logan St Mary! No one could have lived in that somnolent district without having met or heard of him. But it was plain that the doctor was ignorant of his name. From that moment I knew there was something fishy, and perhaps worse.

'I wrote to Dunbar asking him if he knew Dr Kenneth Hall, who used to be, and, for all I knew, still was, at Logan St Mary. The reply was that a doctor of that name had been in practice there some years ago. Dunbar had often met him. He was a clean-shaven chap, afflicted with an incurable thirst, through which he had ruined his chances. He had gone abroad, and Dunbar said that he would be surprised to hear that he was alive. This made it clear that the doctor was either using a false name, or that he had returned from abroad, and, not wanting his whereabouts to be known, had pretended ignorance of Logan St Mary! So far, so good!

'But during all this time something was worrying me. There was something which I felt I ought to remember—something mislaid, asleep in my brain. It was irritatingly vague, yet it refused to be dismissed. I was haunted by the idea that there was a possible link which I had neglected in the chain. For a time it baffled me; but one morning, lying awake, I sat bolt-upright, for I remembered in a flash that you had met the doctor on the day after the foggy night in Edinburgh! I rose early and wired the C.I.D. people. Sparke arrived next day, and had a long interview with me.'

'A most interesting one,' Sparke contributed.

'After I got the facts, hoping that I might "spot" a previous acquaintance, I called at the surgery in the working-kit of a lumberman, and pitched a tale about indigestion. But I was disappointed. I had never seen him before, and I was certain that he was not on our books.'

'The peculiar thing about Sparke's subsequent calls,' continued Tony, 'was that the doctor was invariably out, and that Sparke had to wait for him in his surgery. As you probably guess, I arranged this, for, when the doctor was at The Bield in the evenings seeing you and me, friend Sparke had always a note of the hour, and made a point of calling at the surgery in the doctor's absence.'

'And when there,' said Sparke, 'I took the liberty of giving a "run through" my medical adviser's rooms. I found, among other things, some hair-dye and a carefully concealed pair of heavy boots.'

'Not the ones with the triangular mark?'

'The same, Mr Forbes. Of course, I left them where they were.'

'From that moment "The Searcher" was doomed!' Tony went on triumphantly. 'We didn't want to scare our bird, for the essence of the business was to collar the other half of the paper as well as "The Searcher." Sparke watched him night and day, and in case of emergency—an attempt to bolt, for instance—had a warrant for his arrest ready. But "The Searcher" suspected nothing, and I began the fashioning of a trap to catch him with the paper in his possession. Have you heard of ceralac?'

'Never.'

'The making of it is a secret. Indeed, there are few people know of its existence, but I have some here.'

He took from his pocket a little glass phial filled with a light-gray fluid.

'Detection by finger-prints is nearly infallible if your man is a known criminal, but the difficulty sometimes is to get an unregistered man's finger-prints. Now, ceralac can be artistically smeared on any surface—a piece of paper, a table, or a door-handle. Exposed to the air for ten minutes, it becomes invisible, and can hardly be detected by the touch of one's finger. The prints on your shirt at Edinburgh were those of a right thumb and a right forefinger.—Sparke, while I light up, oblige me by continuing.'

'When I called at the surgery,' said Sparke, 'Mr Keene-Leslie always took good care to keep the doctor at The Bield long enough to give me time to lay the "bird-lime" there. I got two fairly clear prints, both from newspapers, but Mr Keene-Leslie got a beauty at The Bield—as good a one as I have seen, and I've seen a few thousands.'

'Yes, I was lucky,' said Tony, taking out his cigar-case. 'As you may remember, the doctor liked a good cigar. My cigar-case, you observe, has a "pull-off" top. I prepared it with ceralac, and when I handed it to him, I noted with great delight that he drew the top off exactly in the way that I had hoped. He used his right thumb and right forefinger! Next day I sent the three sets of prints to London.'

'I remember! On the night when you came home late from fishing on Loch Ruie there was a reply waiting,' said I.

'From the Yard. It told me that the print was identical with the Edinburgh one. You know the rest. The bait of the bogus half of the paper was put in the escritoire.'

'How did he know that it was there?'

'I played the gabbling, indiscreet ass, reiterating that the old story of the lost jewels was a myth; that the paper was a cabalistic string of letters; that neither you nor I cared two straws about it; and I wound up by asking him (in the strictest confidence, of course!) if he would care to see it. He controlled his face admirably when I took the "cooked" paper out of the escritoire, and having looked at it, handed it back with a shrug and the remark that he agreed with us that it was probably a mare's nest. My back was towards him when I replaced it in the escritoire, but I knew that he was watching me for all he was worth. I laid the key down, and when I turned there were two bright spots of colour in his pale face. Before he took his leave I made another appointment with him at The Bield, and left instructions with the maids to ask him to wait if I happened to be out. That was the day when you went to Castleton. Of course, I too made a point of being out when he called. The coast was thus left clear for him. He was gone when I returned; but, as I proved to you from the little tell-tale specks of paper, the escritoire had been opened, and although the paper was still there, it had been taken out and replaced.'

'And he had made a copy of it?'

'Nothing more certain. From that moment the Chanter Corrie filled his mind. I must say that his make-up was excellent. He was always closely shaved. His hair and eyebrows were carefully dyed black, with a streak of gray, and not a trace of reddish hair could be detected. His real colouring was, I think, too indeterminate to show on his hands, and I dared not stare closely at them. But I knew that he was "M'Nair," and Sparke shadowed his every movement. You thought you heard suspicious footsteps in the shrubbery when you parted from the doctor at the lodge gate on the night before we left The Bield. You were right, but the footsteps were those of the vigilant Sparke, who, of course, knew every detail of my plan. Well, it has been a good week,' Tony wound up, 'and I don't think I shall ever put in another like it.'

By this time we were nearing the wild country

at the base of the striking mass of Cairn Toul. The air was very hot and still. We had halted to drink from one of the many ice-cold springs in these altitudes, when Duncan's keen ears heard distant cries. They were from the south, and wondering what their portent was, we clambered up a hillock of tumbled granite and looked down the Pass. The cries came from one of the watchers at the hut. He was signalling excitedly to us, and when he saw us coming in his direction, he hurried back towards the hut. Something had happened. An uneasy silence fell upon us. We covered the last half-mile at a cracking pace, and about fifty yards from the hut Angus ran forward to meet us, his face very pale.

'I left him for a minute or two. . . . When I went back'—— He broke off, and pointed with a shaking finger to the shelter-hut.

We hastened towards it. The door was half-open, and a deadly odour met us on the threshold. I flung the door wide open. The sun cast a broad bar of light across the floor, and in its bright centre lay 'The Searcher,' his eyes closed. Tony bent over him.

'Gone, quickly and quietly. Cyanide of potassium, probably! I didn't think of that, I confess,' said Tony.

On the floor a little phial lay on its side, empty, and beside the dead man was the section of notebook, its leaves covered with writing.

Tony bent closer over the body. 'Look!' said he, as he turned back the dark hair behind the dead man's ear. Near the scalp a curious rusty shade showed.

'"The red-haired traitor!"' I whispered.

Tony nodded.

(*Continued on page 579.*)

SILVER.

By R. MORDAUNT

THE currency system of England from the time of the Saxons to the days of Henry III. was based entirely on silver. About forty years after his accession to the throne Henry III. coined gold pennies, and from that time (1257) to 1816 England was a bimetallic country—both gold and silver were recognised as legal tender. Silver coins of various denominations were circulated, while the gold piece varied in quality, value, and name during the reigns of succeeding monarchs.

It was not until 1696, in the reign of William and Mary, that it was discovered that an enormous number of shillings had surreptitiously disappeared from circulation. On inquiry it was found that they had been undervalued, and that twenty-two silver shillings, which were recognised as equal in value to the then golden guinea, were worth more than the equivalent gold piece. In consequence it was decided that twenty-one silver shillings should represent the value of the guinea, but even this was intrinsically about fourpence too much. The silver coin continued to disappear, and as time went on dealings were made entirely in gold, England became accustomed to recognise gold as the medium of exchange, and when rearrangements in currency were made in 1817, gold was adopted as the standard of the coinage in the United Kingdom; and by the same Act silver ceased to be legal tender for sums exceeding forty shillings.

Silver was first discovered in India about the ninth century. The metal was known to the ancients, and it is repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. In the time of the patriarchs it was employed in the transactions of nations.

The United States is the greatest silver-producing country, the silver-mines in the State of Nevada having proved the richest in the world. Mexico, Peru, and Chili are other most important silver-producing countries; while on the continent of Europe, Spain, Norway, Hungary, Saxony, and Bohemia produce appreciable quantities of the metal. As silver is found associated to a large extent with gold, the territories under the authority of the British Crown which produce gold, such as South Africa, Australia, Canada, India, &c., also contribute silver towards the world's output.

America is, nevertheless, the greatest silver-producing country, and nearly all the countries in the world rely upon her for their necessary requirements of silver for coinage and commercial purposes. In 1917 the output of silver from the mines in the United States amounted to seventy-one million seven hundred and forty thousand three hundred and sixty-two fine ounces; in 1918 it amounted to sixty-seven million nine hundred thousand fine ounces. The world's total silver production for 1918 is computed to be one hundred and seventy-nine million nine hundred thousand fine ounces.

A good deal of silver occurs native, and it has been found in a pure state in Cornwall, although it is frequently found mingled in ore with other metals, such as gold, copper, lead, &c. Sulphide of silver is one of the commonest forms of combination in which silver occurs in nature.

The mode of extracting silver varies according to the nature of the ore in which it is found. A silver ore—that is, an ore worked for its silver contents—may be either free milling or

refractory. By the former term is meant one that yields its silver contents by simple amalgamation with mercury; and by the latter, one that necessitates a more complex process. The different methods may again be classified under the heads of 'dry' and 'wet,' the 'wet' process being subdivided into extraction by amalgamation or by dissolution of the silver, leaching, and precipitation.

In the dry process the silver is recovered by smelting, either alone, if the ore be sufficiently rich, or in conjunction with lead or copper, which are used as collectors.

In the wet process, the silver, if it occurs native, may be recovered by direct amalgamation with mercury. The ore is first crushed in batteries, and then passed into tube mills, where, in a grinding process, the silver 'freed' by crushing amalgamates with mercury with which the tubes are charged. The 'pulp' may then be separated into sand and slime, which undergo further treatment of cyanidation. The silver and mercury, called 'amalgam,' is distilled in iron retorts. The mercury evaporates, and is recovered by condensation and used over again; while the melted silver is poured into moulds, and then refined.

A method of extracting silver from ore if it occurs as sulphide, either alone or associated with other sulphides, is by crushing and roasting with common salt. The chemical reactions that take place are rather complex, but the ultimate result is that the silver sulphide is converted into chloride of silver. The ore is then transferred to pans or barrels, mercury being added, and sometimes copper sulphate. It is then well mixed, either by revolving the barrels or by grinding-arms in the pans, and intensely heated. The silver chloride is converted into a fluid amalgam with the mercury, which acts as a collector. This is distilled, the mercury is recovered, and the silver remains.

There are other processes of extracting silver from ore. There is the leaching process, by which the silver mineral is converted into chloride and leached with strong solution of common salt, the solution being then led over copper, on which the silver is precipitated in metallic form. Another method is, after conversion of the silver into chloride, to bring it into solution, and then precipitate with sodium sulphide, the resulting silver sulphide being roasted in a muffle-furnace for elimination of sulphur and the recovery of metallic silver.

A leaching process which has within recent years come into favour is dissolution of the silver mineral in potassium cyanide, and subsequent precipitation on zinc or aluminium dust. More recently still, advance has been made in the treatment of silver ores by flotation, in which the coarser particles of valuable mineral are separated by oil from the bulk of the ore. These concentrates, as they are termed, are then treated separately for the recovery of the silver by cyaniding or other process, whilst the bulk of the ore containing the silver values is treated direct by cyanidation.

In 1816 the market price of silver was five shillings an ounce, and an ounce of silver was converted into coins of the nominal value of five shillings and sixpence. But with the opening up of new silver-mines and increased outputs, the price of the metal depreciated until in 1914 it was about two shillings per ounce. During the war, however, its price doubled, to about four shillings an ounce, and would have further appreciated had not the American and British Governments prevented it and fixed its price. But on 7th May of this year the United States Government withdrew its control, and a day or two later the British Government intimated that the official maximum price was removed. The immediate effect of this release was very great. The price leapt in one bound from four shillings to four shillings and sixpence, thence to four shillings and tenpence, the latter constituting a record price since January 1877. The price has, however, eased, and from its present quotation of four and sixpence per ounce experts believe that it will gradually decline. The call for silver during the war was so great that America passed a measure, known as the Pittman Act, providing for the melting down and sale of silver dollars. In all two hundred million ounces were disposed of in this way, the whole of which went to India.

In India perhaps more silver is being used as currency than in any other country in the world. This is explained by the fact that India, like all the Great Powers, withdrew gold from use as currency as a result of the war, but, unlike other empires, was not able to substitute notes as a circulating medium. It was consequently forced to coin silver in abundance; indeed, sufficient quantities of the metal were not available, and the Indian Government was compelled to release gold coins.

The peoples of India in the presidency towns of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, &c. readily use paper money. But the native population—in the rice, jute, and corn districts—are suspicious, and have never been induced to accept money in the form of notes; metallic currency only has been recognised. Its use is traditional; it is bound up with age, long habit, and custom; and it has been found impossible to convert the masses to the use of paper money. The silver coin, in the whole, the half, and the quarter rupee, is what the natives love. They cherish and hoard it. This habit of hoarding, implanted in the Indian native's mind, is another influence responsible for the huge amount of silver used for the population of over three hundred and fifteen millions, scattered over an area of one million eight hundred and three thousand square miles.

TWO RAILWAY STATIONS.

By William T. Ellis.

I.

KIEV, RUSSIA.

Mist and Mud,
Over and under all.
A soldier mob—
Unordered, uninformed, unorganised, aimless;
Homeward bound, but not knowing how.
Officials, obsequious, but not efficient.
Of system—civil, military, railway—there is none.
All is crowded chaos,
Plus incredible patience.

Waiting-rooms, hallways, dining-rooms, platforms,
All are jammed with patient, gray-brown troops,
Every man burdened, but no two bundles alike.
Hundreds stand for hours in the muck,
Munching sunflower-seeds,
Waiting, waiting, waiting.
Sour odours reek from their clothes and persons,
And vermin pass from man to man.
So stand cattle in the stockyard sheds,
Leaderless, dumb, and stolid.

Other hundreds lie on the ground
And sleep—
Yes, and dream
Of distant village homes,
And unforgettable fond faces.

Every passageway and platform and room
Is a chamber of slumber
For weary waiters.
Though they wear the nation's uniform,
No man cares for their souls,
Or their bodies.
The thickness of the crowd,
Which prevents haste,
Also saves the sleepers from the feet of their fellows.

Out of the mist comes a train,
Unannnounced, unexpected, and with destination unknown.

Rushing madly, the multitude make for it.
Through the doors and windows they struggle,
Screaming the while,
In ineffective altercation.
Every seat is overfilled;
Luggage-racks hold men;
Corridors are impassably jammed;
Platforms are so crowded that some men
Have each but a hold for one hand and one foot.
Couplings, too, are weighted with men and women;
On the roofs are crowds of fortunate ones;
While others have thronged the footboard of the engine.
Importunate ones scream and struggle;
Women weep;
Oft-disappointed men show white and panicky faces,
And curse their fate and the world.
There is no authority,
No order,
No helpfulness,
No patriotism,
For this is Russia.

II.

VICTORIA STATION, LONDON.

Grim grayness;
Mist, but no mud.
A quiet, almost like Sabbath,
Enwraps the soldier scene.

These are the men from the trenches,
Each with his ordered kit.
Grimy, but not dishevelled;
Eyes tired, but not wavering;
Faces strained, but serene.
These men have been doing business with death,
So they are neither merry, like schoolboys,
Nor yet panicky, fearful, nor dismayed.
Red, raw reality
Has been their daily companion,
So their souls have been steadied,
Like ships that have outridden the storm.

By trains arriving on time at the expected spot,
In ordered lines they come,
Self-assured and self-respecting,
For the restful touch of the homeland.

Great London opens out her arms to them—
Her strong, sufficient arms,
And her tender, guiding hands.
Without haste, without confusion,
All things having been made ready,
The tired heroes are led away to hostels and homes,
Where baths and sleep and pleasure await them.

There are no bands, no flags, no shouting, no singing, no excitement.
Deft and tireless women,
Past all posing or parade,
Serve food and drink to the lines,
In token that these boys have come home to their own;
While women in khaki,
Soft-spoken, sure, and soldierly,
Guide detachments through the city,
That harpies may not enmesh the tired feet.
There are no flirtations or idle jests;
For these noble women are also about the business of war,
Ministering to the men who serve the nation.

Others, men who cannot fight,
Also serve the swift lines of soldiers,
Without fussiness or delay or heroics.
All is ordered and efficient,
After our Anglo-Saxon heritage.

Men wearing the Maple-Leaf
Stretch the home-hand to boys from overseas—
Not in fulsome words, but in sure service,
Quietly given and naturally accepted.
Self-consciousness is gone
From both helpers and helped,
Since this is war,
With system in service,
And brotherhood expressed by action.

Outside the railing,
Scanning the orderly lines,
Wait women and children,
Whose work in war is waiting.

There are no idle crowds.
Each expectant face seeks one man only.
When he comes—
Ah! the joy of hope fulfilled!—
There is no outburst, for this is England.
Instead, for one man in a hundred,
A kiss,
A swift embrace,
A child's leap to arms that are strong from carrying a rifle;
And, quietly, soldier-wise,
Off to all the indescribable happiness of home they go.

A strange contraction grips my throat,
Tears steal from eyes not wont to weep,
Thrills course my being,
As I watch how our people,
Soldiers, women, stay-at-homes,
Thus 'carry on' beneath the burden of war.
This steadiness,
This simple strength,
This sufficiency,
This order and adequateness,
This sentiment shown in service,
This patriotism in practice—
This is Britain!

THE AIRY PRINCE.

PART II.

IV.

THE airman glanced at his wrist-watch; it was half-past nine. The miller slept by the side of the stove, his chin crushing his beard against his chest. Louis also slept, having curled himself into a black, furry ball, apparently possessed of neither head nor tail. A clock, brazenly stating the time to be five-thirty, ticked lazily as though, finding itself four hours behind the correct hour, there was no chance of its ever catching up, and it only kept going because it was the sporting thing to do. Just over the clock a picture of Marshal Joffre gazed paternally on the quiet scene.

Seated at the table, which was covered by a geranium-shaded cloth, the girl and the airman sat silent, while a shaded lamp lent a crimson glow through which her deep eyes gleamed, like the first stars of a summer evening.

To her romance had come.

She was no longer the miller's niece, but the girl who had seen the Fairy Prince. All the sighs, all the questionings, all the longings of her girlhood had culminated in this amazing adventure of a fair-haired knight who, descending from the clouds, had proceeded to terrorise her uncle, who was feared for miles around. It was wonderful. And he was so droll, this young man; and his voice had a little soothing drop in it, at times, that left a fluttering echo in her heart.

She had left the convent when ten years of age, on the death of her mother. Her father—but then gossip was never kind. He was an officer who had deserted his pretty little wife for another woman—or so rumour had it; and her mother had died, a flower stricken by a frost. The daughter had been taken by a relative, the owner of a lonely mill, and for six years had lived in solitude, her horizon of life limited to the adjacent village, her knowledge of women gained from the memory of a sad, yearning face, paler than the pillow on which it rested, and an occasional visit to the curé's sister. Of men she knew only her uncle and the few villagers that had not gone to fight for La Belle France.

From unquestioning childhood she had passed to that stage in a girl's life when the emotions leap past the brain, fretful of the latter's plodding pace. Her mind untutored, unsharpened by contact with other minds, left her the language and the reasonings of a child; but her imagination, feeding on the strange longings and dreams which permeated her life, pictured its own world where romance held sway over all the creatures that inhabited its realm.

It is the instinct of a little child to picture unreal things—the unconscious protest of immaturity against the commonplaceness of life. But with the education of to-day and the labyrinth of artificiality which characterises modern living, the imaginativeness of childhood disappears, except in a few great minds who, retaining it, are hailed by the world as possessors of genius.

Unhampered (or unhelped, as the case may be) by association with the patchwork pattern of society, the miller's niece had retained her gift of imagination, without which the solitude and the monotony of her days would have been unendurable; until, blending it with the budding flower of womanhood, she found mystery in the moaning of the wind. When the sun danced upon the grass her spirit mingled with the sunlight; and when the moon exercised her suzerainty of the heavens the poetry in her soul thrilled to sweet dreams of lovers' wooings (though her unreasoned rapture often ended in unreasoned tears upon the pillow). . . . She found melancholy in the colouring of an autumn leaf, and laughter in the music of the mill-stream. . . . There were smugglers' tales in a north-east gale, and fairy stories in a summer's shower.

The doctrine of pleasure so feverishly followed by her sisters to-day was unknown to her—as was its insidious reaction which comes to so many women, with the dulling of the perceptions, the blinding of eyes to the colours of life, the deadening of ears to the music of nature, until they cannot hear the subtle melody of happiness itself, so closely allied to the sombre beauty of sorrow.

'Little one'—the aviator's voice was very soft, so that the ticking of the clock sounded clearly

above it—'in a few minutes I must go. It is a dark night, and of necessity I must get to the village to-night, and be on my way before dawn.'

Her eyes were hidden by her drooping eyelashes. 'You will return—yes?' she asked, without looking up.

He smiled rather wistfully. '"When the red-breasted robins are nesting,"' he quoted slowly, '"I shall come."'

The clock ticked wearily on. . . . A few drops of rain fell upon the roof.

'Monsieur'—the crimson in her cheeks deepened—'you must not smile; but it is in my book, here.'

She took from the table *The Fairy Prince*, and handed it to him. He gazed at it with a seriousness he might have shown towards a book of Scottish theology.

'You know, monsieur'—she appeared deeply concerned in the design of the geranium table-cover—'I never leave the mill-house unless to attend mass, and sometimes—perhaps you would think so too—it is very lonesome; no brother, no sister; just Louis and my uncle.'

He nodded, and, with an air of abstraction, his brow wrinkled sympathetically, and his fingers strummed five-finger exercises on the table.

'It must be very dull,' he said.

'But no, monsieur'—her eyes looked up in protest—'not dull—just lonesome.'

He sustained an imaginary note with his little finger, frowned thoughtfully until his eyebrows almost obscured his eyes, then came down the scale with slow and measured pace.

'Well, little lady who is never dull, and what has all this to do with *The Fairy Prince?*'

'It is because I have no sisters, no friends, that—that I pretend. But you do not understand.'

He played some chord with both hands.

'Very young people and very old ones pretend,' he said, with dreamy sententiousness; 'pretending is what makes them happy. But the Prince?'

She smiled deprecatingly. 'When I read, monsieur, then I think that the girl—there is always a girl, is there not?' He nodded gravely. 'I do not think it is she,' she went on, 'but myself; and when the book is finished, and she marries her lover, then I am happy . . . and dream.' . . .

'"We are such stuff as dreams are made of,"' he murmured, and trilled with his first and second fingers.

'So, monsieur,' she continued, glancing shyly at him, 'in that book'——

'There is a girl.'

'Yes. And a Fairy Prince who was very handsome.'

'Like me?'

'It does not say, monsieur.'

'Ah!'

'But I think so,' she said earnestly, 'for he was the handsomest man in all France.'

'It said nothing of England?'

'No, monsieur, only France.'

He nodded with great dignity, and motioned her to proceed. She leaned forward with her elbows on the table, and rested her chin on her interlocked fingers.

'To-day I was reading it to Louis,' she said, 'when, just at the moment that they met—*vous voilà!*—you came. Monsieur,' she said naïvely, 'are you a fairy prince?'

He considered, with his head characteristically on one side.

'N-no,' he said, 'I cannot claim that; but'——

'Ah yes?' Her face lit up with delighted anticipation.

'I am a prince of the air.' He struck an attitude, and held it.

'Oh!' Her lips parted in ecstasy, and her cheeks, which had been crimson, became scarlet. 'You—are really a prince?'

'Of the air, mademoiselle.' He folded his arms and tilted his chair back. His face was still grave, but his voice had a sense of distance in it, and his light eyes widened as though they saw the world his words were picturing. 'My kingdom is greater than all the kingdoms of the earth, and when I ride, my steed with wings takes me towards the stars. For sport I play with clouds and race the wind; at night the moon gives me light; and when I travel there are no mountains to climb, no lakes to cross. I go faster than the swiftest horse, and ride from villages to cities, out into the country, and over the sea with a steed that never tires.'

'But, monsieur,' she cried, 'this is wonderful!'

He looked frankly into her eyes. 'It *is* wonderful,' he said.

For a few minutes neither spoke, and the soft symphony of raindrops played through the quietness of the night.

'Your Majesty,' she said timorously, 'are you very brave? You understand,' she hurried on as a slight blush darkened the tan of his cheeks, 'in fairy books the prince always fights a dragon or a wicked giant.'

'Don't uncles count?'

She made a pretty *moue*.

'As a matter of fact,' he said slowly, 'there was a wicked Emperor—a blustering popinjay with a madman's vanity—who decreed that all the world should be his slaves, and sent his armies into France and Belgium to enforce his will. My brothers heard of this, and came from countries and dominions thousands of miles away. Across great continents of water they sailed, and, with their brothers from the little Islands of the North Sea, came to France.' . . .

'Your voice is very sad,' she said tenderly.

Her nature, that knew every mood of a summer breeze, had caught the inflection of his words, understanding by their tone what the vagueness of his words hid from her mind.

'So many have died,' he said, looking away from her. 'Almost every day some one rides out into the sunlight to his death, young, brave, and smiling. . . . Mademoiselle, it is wonderful how they smile.'

Tick—tick—tick.

For more than a minute neither spoke; then, with a smile that was strangely boyish, he squared his shoulders and ran his fingers through his rumpled hair.

'Ha!' he laughed; 'what fancies get into a scatter-brain like mine when the rain 's a-pattering on the roof! If you will allow me, little Pippa, I shall smoke.'

'Little Peepa?' she laughed delightedly.

'Pippa,' he assented, puffing smoke as he lighted the pipe. 'I think I shall call you that. You see, according to her biographer, Mr Browning, she worked in the silk-mills all the year, but one day she had to herself, from dawn to midnight, and so as to enjoy it to the full she—well, she pretended, like you.'

'But that is droll,' she said eagerly, 'for every Easter, after Sunday, my uncle, who is fatigued from so much chanting in the church, always goes to Boulogne and becomes drunk for one whole day. On Wednesday he returns. These six years he has done it always the same; and on the Tuesday it is wonderful. I am alone with Louis, and we ask all the people in our books to visit us.'

A sudden gleam of excitement lit his eyes.

'The Tuesday after Easter?'

'Always it is so.'

'Pippa,' he said, then checked the remainder of his words. He placed the pipe in his mouth and ran five-finger exercises at a terrific speed.

'Pippa,' he said again, then, ceasing his display of virtuosity, leaned back and gazed at her from beneath his eyebrows. 'Next spring, on the Tuesday after Easter, I will come for you.'

She caught her breath deliriously.

'Beyond the village road,' he went on, speaking slowly and distinctly, 'I saw a big pasture-field at the top of the hill. Be there as the sun is just above the horizon, and I will come in an aeroplane.'

'And, your Majesty, you will take me to your kingdom?'

'For one day, Pippa, to the great city of London—the city that is open to all who possess a golden key. We shall return by the stars at night.'

'Then'—her voice shook, and the brilliancy of her eyes was softened by sudden tears, as the rays of an August sun are sometimes tempered by a shower—'then—at last—I am to see the world?—boys and girls and palaces and'——

'To say nothing of prunes and potentates.'

'Oh, but, your Majesty, it is too wonderful. I am certain it will not come true.'

He rose and quietly placed his chair against the wall. 'Pippa,' he said, 'there are only two things that could prevent it. One, if there is a storm and—the other'—— He shook his head impatiently.

The girl took down a work-basket, and after searching its contents extracted a tiny trinket.

'You mean,' she said, stepping lightly over to him, 'that you might go to join your brothers—those who smiled so bravely?'

'We never know, Pippa,' he answered.

She reached for the lapel of his coat and pinned the little keepsake on it. 'Tis a black cat,' she said. 'I saw it in the village store, so small and funny, like Louis. It is a gift from little Pippa, who will pray to the Virgin every night that her Prince may not be killed—unless'——

He looked at the little mascot, which dangled above a couple of ribbons.

'Unless?' he said.

For a moment there was a flash in her eyes and a sudden crimson flush in her cheeks that startled him. For the first time in her life she had felt the instinct of a tigress—that strange fusion of passion and timidity that comes to women of her kind when it seems they may lose the object of their love.

'Unless he—forgets.' The words were spoken between lips that hardly moved.

'By the sacred bones of my ancestors,' he said, with a sort of sincere grandiloquence, 'I promise to come. So that I shall always think of you, my Pippa, I will paint a black cat upon the machine, and woe to the Hun who dares to singe its whiskers!'

A few minutes later the heavily coated figure of an aviator was ploughing its way, through a drizzling rain, along a dark and solitary road. His pace was extraordinarily long for his height, and he appeared to be stepping over a perpetual array of obstacles at least one foot high.

By a casement window a girl, with hair like the dusk, stood gazing towards the road that was hidden in darkness. Silently and motionless she watched the melancholy drops of rain as they fell upon the glass, until, unconsciously, her lips parted and she sang, very softly, the little song taught to the maiden in the story by the lonely shepherd:

'Maman, dites moi ce qu'on sent quand on aime.
Est-ce plaisir, est-ce tourment?'

She paused in the improvised melody, and repeated the words slowly:

'Est-ce plaisir, est-ce tourment?'

And then the little mistress of the mill laid herself upon her bed and wept profusely;

but whether it was because she was happy or because she was sorrowful, let those explain who understand the psychology of a woman's tears.

Downstairs, Louis and the miller slept profoundly.

V.

It was several months later that an airman emerged from his hut into the chilly air of an April night that was lingering grudgingly over its last hour of darkness. There was a sullen rumble of guns borne on a restless breeze that stirred the long grass of the fields and set the leaves in the trees whispering and quivering. The drone could be heard of a lonely aeroplane returning from its night-ride over the enemy lines. . . . Above the distant roll of the artillery, one gun stood out like a pizzicato note on a giant bass violin.

The airman passed the silent aerodrome, and, with difficulty accustoming himself to the darkness, made out the shadow of a machine in the adjoining field. He heard the sigh of cylinders sucking in the petrol as the mechanics warmed the machine, and walked over to it. For a moment he spoke to the men before climbing into the pilot's seat. There followed the incisive monotone of the flier's incantation between himself and the non-commissioned officer.

'Petrol on: switch off.'

'Petrol on: switch off.'

'Contact.'

'Contact.'

The propellers were swung into action, hesitated for a moment, then wheezily subsided.

The incantation was repeated; the propeller-blades coughed, and leaped into a deafening roar. The mechanics sprang aside, and the machine, stumbling forward for a few yards, turned into the wind. There was a sudden acceleration of the propeller, a crescendo from the engines, and the machine made swiftly across the field, rising as it attained flying speed, and disappearing into the night.

A few moments later its light was mixing with the dulling stars, and the drone of its engine could be heard only at the whim of the breeze.

'I wonder what the Black Cat's up to now,' said mechanic No. 1, rubbing his hands together for warmth. 'Rum beggar, isn't he?'

His companion slapped his breast with his arms and blew on his fingers. 'Mad as a March hare,' he growled; 'takes a two-seater out at this time of night.'

'And did you notice the extra outfit?'

'He's mad,' repeated the before-dawn psychologist—'mad as a rabbit.'

'But he's a mighty stout boy,' interposed the N.C.O., who was torn between his duty of keeping discipline and his love of character study; 'and he sure puts the wind up Fritz when he takes off with his Black Cat Bristol fighter.'

The blackness of night was beginning to give way to a dull and sullen gray as the solitary pilot made a detour over the lines. In the gloom beneath he could see a long crescent of orange-coloured flashes where the British guns were maintaining their endless pounding of the enemy. Farther east was a large patch of winking, yellow lights, giving to his eye the same effect as flakes of gunpowder dropped upon a heated stove: it was the bursting of the British shells. Beyond that field of death he could see other and larger flashes, and knew the Hun was replying in kind.

Everywhere the darkness was being penetrated by long, rocket-like lights with a white, starry burst at the end, and, as though to give variety to the scene, a few red and green bursts mingled garishly with them.

To the airman, from his refuge of height, it all combined in an uncanny pageant of fireworks—a weird spectacle of death, as though hell had opened and the passions of men were feeding the flames to make a devils' holiday.

A searchlight woke him from his reverie. A couple of anti-aircraft guns barked at him. With a smile he noticed the rapid approach of morning's light, and turning to the west, he set his course by the compass and made for the lonely mill-house of Picardy.

VI.

From a meadow at the top of a hill a girl watched the horizon of the east as the first glow of daylight heralded the arrival of Aurora's chariot. The hurried walk from the mill-house and the climbing of the hill had set her pulses throbbing with vitality, and as she watched the dull gray give way with the promise of dawn, a wild, unthinking spirit of exaltation seized her. Like the Pippa of Browning's song, she felt her spirit rise with the triumph of nature:

Day!
Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last:
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim
Where spurting and suppressed it lay,
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the world.

But he had not come—her Prince with the solemn face and the laughing eyes. Day after day, through the long winter, she had lived for this hour, thrilling over it, picturing it, dreaming of it—both awake and asleep. . . . And he had not come.

Supposing—supposing——

Her heart leaped painfully. She had heard a sound, like the humming of an insect—faint—then more clear. The hum became a drone, and in sheer intoxication she reached her hands towards the east as the sun, well above the horizon, illumed the sky with gold-red flames. Blinded by its brilliancy, she turned away; but her ear heard the cessation of the engine as the pilot brought his machine towards the earth. She knew that he must be approaching her; yet she kept her face averted, on some caprice of sixteen years, until she heard his voice calling, a few yards off.

He bowed very low as, with lowered eyes, she gave him her hand; then, indicating a coat on his arm, he leaned towards her, with some effort making his voice heard above the impatient throbbing of the aeroplane's engine.

'Take off your hat,' he cried, noticing with quick approval the pretty costume she wore (for, however poor she may be, no French girl is without one becoming frock), 'and slip your curls into this helmet. It's the largest I could find.'

She did as she was bidden, laughing delightedly.

'Now then, youngster, climb into this.'

He wrapped her in a fur-lined leather coat, and after buttoning it securely, lingered for a moment over the amusing and dainty picture she presented. Then, picking her up in his arms, he carried her over to the machine and deposited her in the observer's seat, fastening the belt. He was just about to climb into his place in front, when, changing his mind, he leaned over to her and placed both hands on her shoulders.

'Frightened?' he smiled, speaking so close to her ear that a truant curl brushed against his cheek.

She shook her head decisively—for a considerable period she had been beyond the power of speech.

He looked into her eyes, which seemed to have borrowed something of the sunlight, and patted her reassuringly on the shoulder. . . . And Mademoiselle Pippa, niece of the absent miller, would have gone straight to the moon with him had it been his wish and in his power.

She watched him wonderingly as he lifted a heavy sandbag, used as ballast, and dropped it on the ground. The next moment he was in the pilot's seat, there was the crescendo of the engine, a waddling sensation as the aeroplane went forward, the sudden development of the crescendo, the burst of speed, and . . .

The earth was receding!

She caught her breath, and hid her face in her hands to stifle a cry and keep the sight from her eyes. She had been afraid that she would faint with dizziness, and for a full minute sat, terror-stricken, until, gaining courage, she tremblingly parted two fingers and cast a timorous glance below. A cry escaped from her—but it was not one of fear.

Beneath her, though she was not conscious of height, the country-side spread, a great masterpiece of colour, the light brown of ploughed fields standing out vividly against the green of meadows where sheep (she laughed out at the thought) were huddled in little groups like peanuts; roads had become paths, and cottages were dwarfed to miniature dwellings for the tiniest dolls.

But—she felt no height.

Only, the landscape, refreshed after its long winter repose, kept closing in—closing in, displaying new beauties every minute, as though she were in real truth a Fairy Princess summoning villages and rivers and farms into one vast tapestry of nature.

And this was France! As far as the eye could see, it was France, the mother of greatness. For the first time she pictured the wide, charred plains where the Hun had been, and scalding tears hid everything from her sight.

Several times her cavalier of the clouds had turned around to see that she was not frightened, and, as often as he did so, she nodded excitedly, and waved both hands after the manner of an orchestral conductor calling for a fortissimo. Once he shut off the engines, and they seemed to lie in the wind, a becalmed ship of the air.

'All right?' he queried inelegantly.

She tried to think of some word to summarise her emotions, but, failing utterly, raised her goggles and thanked him with her eyes. A woman's methods are not affected by altitude.

It seemed to her that they had flown for an hour, when, in her tapestry of landscape, she found the gradual inclusion of the steeples and the roof-tops of a city, the streets of which gave the impression of having been drawn with a brown crayon with the aid of a ruler. The aeroplane appeared to be turning with the wind, and she grasped the side of the fuselage, when the whole scene was obliterated by a sea of billowy foam that left her cheek wet. She laughed with delight, and reached out with her hands, as though she would grasp the foam and compress it like snow in her fingers. She sang and clapped her hands in sheer joyousness. She was alone with her Prince in a world of dreams. The billows of foam grew less dense, became a mist through which light gleamed, and they emerged once more. Beneath them lay the Channel, shimmering in the April sun. The magic wand drew the Strait to her gaze as it had done the fields of France. . . . Suddenly there was no throbbing of the engine, and they seemed to float, motionless, in space.

He turned around and pointed to a border of white that lay against the blue of the water.

'*Enfin!*' he cried. 'England!'

(*Continued on page 590.*)

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THE ROMANCE OF THE SMYRNA FIG.

By CHARLES RAY.

MAN'S conquest of the plant world is a romance than which nothing more thrilling could be written; and of the wonderful stories that make up that romance none illustrates more strikingly the triumphant persistence of the human mind than the establishment of the Smyrna fig in the United States of America. It is a romance of modern times, and shows the thoroughness with which our kinsmen across the Atlantic carry out any task on which they set their hearts.

It is scarcely necessary to give a reminder of the prominent part that the fig has played in human history. Its abundant growth in the old cradles of civilisation, and its high nutritive value, have always rendered it an object of desire and a symbol of fruitfulness. It was in this latter sense that Cato used it when, denouncing Carthage before the Roman Senate, he plucked fresh figs from the folds of his toga and exclaimed, 'This fruit has been brought from Carthage—so near to us is a city so strong and prosperous. Carthage must be destroyed.'

History and literature are full of references to the fig, as when the wife of Nabal appeased David with a gift of figs, and Lycurgus decreed that figs should be one of the principal articles of food at the common meals of the Spartans. Curiously enough, we have a reminder of its early importance in our word *sycophant*, which means literally 'an exposer of figs.' This fruit was considered of such value by the Athenians that they prohibited its exportation from Attica. Many persons, however, found the illicit trade in figs exceedingly profitable, and a class of informers grew up known as sycophants, from two Greek words meaning 'a fig' and 'to show,' who denounced the smugglers for gain. Informers are never popular, and the word soon came to be a term of contempt, and has survived as such to the present day.

It is not, however, with the ancient history of the fig that we are here concerned, but with the most modern development in its culture, and the story of how fig-rearing became one of the settled industries of the New World, after successive failures extending over three hundred years or so. Of course, the Spaniards, after their conquests in America, took the fig-tree across the ocean, and the French also carried it to their colonies; and for several hundred years it flourished and bore fruit of a kind. But while the figs that were produced could be eaten green, they could not be dried so as to compare in appearance, size, and flavour with the well-known and luscious Smyrna figs. They were shrunken and sour and had no seeds, and although horticulturists and botanists spent much time in studying and experimenting, nothing could be done to remedy this defect.

It must be explained that the pear-shaped objects which appear on the fig-tree in summer are not fruits at all, but flowers. Their curious form may perhaps best be explained by comparing them to a sunflower or a daisy, the florets or rays of which, instead of being spread out flat in a disc, are gathered up and made to meet. This construction gives the fig-blossom its fruit-like appearance, and we may see the florets by cutting open any fresh fig that has formed on a tree in a British garden. The blossoms, when fully grown, may be eaten; but as they are unfertilised, they do not form seeds or mature into fruits, and so are deficient in the sugar that is essential if they are to be dried and preserved.

How could the blossoms be fertilised? was the great problem that the American horticulturists set themselves to solve about the year 1880, and it took twenty years of hard work and careful experimenting before success crowned their efforts.

So far back as the time of Pliny, the Roman naturalist, it was known that the wild fig, or caprifig, as it is called, was necessary to the fertilisation of the cultivated variety, and that in this work a tiny insect was concerned, though exactly what it did Pliny could not say. As a matter of fact, it has taken nearly two thousand years to get at the actual truth, and to the perseverance of our American kinsfolk we owe the knowledge that we now possess of the life-stories of the fig and the fig-wasp.

The method of fertilisation followed from time immemorial in Asia and North Africa is to grow a certain proportion of caprifig-trees—that is, wild fig-plants—in the plantations where the edible or Smyrna figs are cultivated, and then, when the Smyrna fig blossoms appear, to tie on the boughs above them branches of the wild fig-tree bearing caprifigs. The fig insect, which is really a small wasp, leaves the wild fig, where it has been hatched, and, covered with pollen,

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penetrates the cultivated fig, after which the latter swells and becomes the rich and luscious fruit that we know so well in its dried form.

Now, in 1880 a Californian fruit-grower, having determined to produce Smyrna figs in the United States, took over from the Old World cuttings of plants, which by care and attention he reared, so that they produced figs. But these would not ripen, and while still small dropped off the plant. The attempt had proved a failure. Nothing more was done for about eight years, and then Mr George C. Roeding, a planter of Fresno, California, went over to Asia and himself selected choice Smyrna plants. He used the utmost care in choosing these, thinking that possibly the previous failure had been due to the supply of cuttings being from inferior stocks. He also took with him to America some caprifig-cuttings.

The plants took kindly to the new soil, and in two years both Smyrna and caprifig trees bore figs. Mr Roeding believed in the necessity of fertilisation, and so collected pollen from the caprifigs, and introduced this into the Smyrna figs by means of a quill. There was great jubilation when, as a result of all these costly efforts, four ripe figs were obtained. The next year the process of artificial fertilisation was extended, and a glass tube was used, with the result that one hundred and fifty ripe figs were produced. It had taken nearly a dozen years to obtain these, and there was much satisfaction at the measure of success that had been obtained. At the same time, it was realised that if the Smyrna figs were to be produced in large quantities on a commercial basis, the slow, laborious, and costly method of mechanical fertilisation would have to be replaced by natural methods.

In the Old World this was evidently carried out by the tiny fig-wasp, *Blastophaga grossorum*, as it is called, which was hatched inside the caprifigs. But on the young cuttings of caprifig-plants which had been imported there were, of course, no figs, and therefore no wasps. The next step was to introduce the fig-wasp into America; but before this could be done a thorough study had to be made of the life-history of the insect.

American men of science came over to the Old World and gave their unremitting attention to the subject. They found that the caprifig of the Mediterranean regions has three crops—one in the spring, another in the summer, and a third in the autumn, which last remains upon the trees through the winter. It is in the figs of this autumn crop that the little wasp spends the winter, living upon the substance of the fig, and coming into the light of day during the spring. It finds the spring caprifigs already forming, and, creeping into them, lays its eggs. Then, having done its duty of propagating the race, it dies. The eggs soon hatch out, the insects live upon the spring caprifigs, and then, when they have exhausted the supply of food, go in search of further nutriment.

These spring caprifigs are full of pollen, and when the wasps emerge they are covered with it. Now, it is the branches bearing the spring caprifigs that the natives of Asia and Africa take and tie upon their Smyrna fig-trees in order to bring about fertilisation. What really happens is this. The wasps come out of the spring caprifigs, covered with pollen, and in the ordinary course enter the summer caprifigs and there lay their eggs, which in turn hatch out, the wasps eventually emerging and entering the autumn caprifigs, and remaining inside for the winter. The people of Asia and Africa, however, have learnt that they can deceive the little insect and make it work for them. They take the branches with the spring caprifigs and tie them to their Smyrna trees, and when the wasp comes out it is deceived into thinking the edible figs are caprifigs, and goes into them to lay its eggs. But the edible figs are constructed differently from the wild figs, and the wasps are unable to find comfortable positions in which to operate. They therefore blunder about for a time, discover their mistake, and eventually come out and fly elsewhere in search of caprifigs. While they were in the Smyrna figs, however, they were rubbing much of the caprifig-pollen off their bodies, and this in due time fertilises the Smyrna figs, which swell up, produce seeds, and ripen.

So much, then, the American entomologists discovered by infinite patience and perseverance. It was clear that the wasp was essential to the production of ripe Smyrna figs suitable for drying, and therefore they decided that the wasp must be introduced into California and acclimatised there. The first attempt was made in 1891, when boxes of autumn caprifigs were packed in North Africa, and carried across the Atlantic Ocean and the North American continent to California, where they were unpacked and placed under a caprifig-tree in the plantation of Mr James Shinn of Niles. The season, however, was too far advanced, and the experiment proved a failure. The Americans were not to be beaten. The United States Department of Agriculture had taken up the investigation as a matter of national importance, and, after several further attempts, at last in 1899 success was attained.

Caprifigs, with the hibernating wasps inside, were taken to America from Algeria, and placed beneath a caprifig-tree in the orchard of Mr George C. Roeding, and the tree was covered very carefully, so that the wasps, when they emerged from the figs, could not escape. In the autumn it was found that the tree was loaded with fruit, and that the caprifigs were full of wasps ready to settle down for the winter. One or two wasps had escaped through the covering and had fertilised Smyrna figs in other parts of the orchard, while a few had gone into caprifigs on adjacent trees, there to spend the winter.

Here was the promise of success, and great excitement prevailed among the entomologists

and fruit-growers of California. The original caprifig-tree that had been covered and two others were found to have on them about a thousand figs containing wasps. They were carefully covered with canvas houses so as to be protected from frost, and then everybody settled down to wait for the spring, which would tell whether success had been achieved or not. At the beginning of spring special experts from the United States Department of Agriculture visited the orchard to spend their days watching for results. At last, at the end of March, the wasps woke up from their winter sleep and began to come out to see what the world looked like.

The caprifig-trees were producing their spring crop, and into the caprifigs the wasps went to lay their eggs. The swelling of the wild fruit showed that the eggs were hatching out, and in the early days of June, having eaten up the insides of these spring caprifigs, the wasps began by ones and twos to emerge. Now had arrived the really exciting moment, the climax of the experiment. Would the wasps go into the Smyrna figs as they did in the Old World, and change them into the rich and luscious fruit so much sought after? It all depended on what happened during the next few days.

Parties of workers gathered the caprifigs containing the wasps and carried them to a building in the orchard, where they were tied in bunches and hung across long poles. Then these poles bearing the caprifigs were taken into the orchard, and the figs were suspended on the branches of the Smyrna fig-trees. It was a strange sight to see these bunches of wild figs hanging on the edible fig-trees up and down the rows in the orchard.

The watchers—entomologists, Civil servants, and fruit-growers—almost held their breath as they kept their eyes on the caprifigs to see what the little wasps would do. Would they come out; and, if so, would they go into the Smyrna figs? At last all doubt was set at rest. The wasps began to emerge, and after looking about for a time, entered the edible figs. It was a great moment for the men who had spent years in trying to establish the Smyrna fig in America. The insects remained inside some time, and then, coming out once more into the light of day, sought for caprifigs, into which they crawled and laid their eggs. The Smyrna figs were now carefully watched, and soon they were seen to swell—the sure sign that they had been properly fertilised, that seeds were forming, and that they were ripening, with plenty of sugar to preserve them and render them palatable when dried. The American fruit-growers and entomologists had scored one of their greatest triumphs.

That season about fifteen tons of fine Smyrna figs were produced. They were dried, packed in boxes, and when examined later were found to be equal, if not superior, to the Smyrna figs imported from Asia and Africa. Three years after the crop had increased to sixty-five tons, and now very large quantities of Smyrna figs are grown and dried in California, and they will no doubt eventually supplant the figs of Asia and Africa on account of greater cleanliness exercised in their packing.

The fig, it may be added, when dried is, weight for weight, more nourishing than bread, and a pound and a half eaten per day would supply four-fifths of the total amount of nutriment required. The fig contains nearly as much gluten as wheaten bread, and is 16 per cent. richer in starch and sugar.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXXV.

I TOOK the notebook-leaves, and we stepped into the clean air outside the hut, where the men were standing in awe-struck silence.

The dead man's statement was addressed to me. After a glance at it, I took Keene-Leslie and Sparke aside, and in the shadow of a boulder read it to them. Around us a profound stillness, and the old, wise, scarred mountains—where Nemesis had been keeping her immemorial vigil—looking down upon man's littleness and the two enemies in the equal sleep of death, made fit setting for the telling of tragedy.

Here is the black, strange story:

'Do not try to find out who I am—I mean, who I was.

'"Once upon a time"—— No; I'll begin again.

'I was once keen on research, and although the worldly rewards for pioneer-work in Britain are contemptible, I, being young and foolish, proposed to dedicate my life to it. But when I was eight-and-twenty my career was murdered: my name was struck off the Register by the General Council, a chartered anachronism with powers greater than King, Lords, Commons, trade unions, or any institution in this country—powers wielded without intelligence by a camarilla steeped in blind prejudice, and with neither judicial training nor equipment.

'The details are unnecessary. Only let me say that I strove with heart and brain for my goddess Science, and that the charge against me was blind and stupid, brought by reactionaries, terrified at the thought of a revolt against their moss-grown conventions. A few years hence and the savagery of my punishment will be regarded as a medieval horror, impossible in a civilised community as burning at the stake.

'For nearly a year my reason left me. When I came back to the world I was broken in health, penniless, and filled with a sense of injustice that bit like an acid. A few good men, who knew the inner history and the true perspective of my degradation, interested themselves in my behalf. I threw myself as a free-lance into my work again, and for a time found in it a blessed relief, for I was fool enough to dream that if I helped humanity by original work I might regain happiness. But my story pursued me. I soon discovered that a free-lance in medical science (unless he has money or backing) is an impossibility. I was a pariah. Gradually the mixture of despair, *ennui*, the sense of defeat—what men call a broken heart—crushed me, and, weary of it all, I disappeared. Followed years of wandering abroad; poverty; unspeakable loneliness; worst of all, the torture of uncongenial work.

'I contrived to make a living. There are avenues—some of them sombre enough—for a man under a cloud, if he has medical skill. Two years ago I found myself assistant—no questions asked—to the doctor in a mushroom township of tents and hutments, peopled by a couple of thousand Italian navvies who were laying a railway-track in South America, north-west of San Paulo. The doctor's name was Kenneth Hall, and he had once been in country practice in Logan St Mary, Scotland. On a generous estimate he was sober two days a week, but he paid me decently, and left me alone; and there was not much to do except dose his cut-throat patients with quinine and stitch them up after their brawls. While there I fell in with a lovable rolling-stone, Hugh Forbes, your uncle. Why he took to me God knows, for I was soured to the verge of misanthropy, while he was cheerful, kind, and a "white man," if ever one lived. Yet with all my heart I wish that I had never seen him, for it was through him that I first heard of the Glen Ciuin jewels.

'He loved to speak of the Old Country. Many a night when the camp was quiet I joined him in his quarters, and the talk harked back to his younger days in the North. Little thought had I of the dark road down which a chance remark of his was to lead me. A few belongings had stuck to him in his wanderings—a photograph or two, a water-colour sketch of the Glen, perhaps ten or a dozen books. One night—it is etched on my brain—I happened to look at the water-colour. The talk drifted to folklore, genealogy, and so forth. Clan traditions were touched on, and he showed me a little piece of paper, a duplicate of one at The Bield which had been in his family for generations. It was supposed to be part of a clue to some lost jewels. He regarded it merely as a curiosity, and the jewel story as a hazy family legend, but he had carried the paper about with him so long that, as a matter of sentiment, he did not care to burn it. Truth to tell, I was not interested in it, and neither was he.

'I fancy that Hugh Forbes never could stick long at one job, and I was not surprised when he threw up his post in the contractor's office and said good-bye. He promised to send his address, but I never received it. He was the only gentleman I had met at close quarters for years, and when he left I felt very much alone.

'The only other man whom I met at your uncle's was an Italian. He was one of the overseers, a suave old man of education and capacity, a good linguist, travelled, interesting, and of an imperturbable temper. I suspected that he had a "history." One does not find his type herding Italian navvies. You will be interested to learn that his name, or the name the old fox chose to go under, was Benedetto Alfieri.

'After your uncle left, old Benedetto asked me to attend a fellow-countryman of his who was ill. I went, expecting to see one of the wage-grubbing Dago crowd; but I found an exceedingly handsome and well-bred-looking man, palpably out of place in his environment. I wish my first visit had been my last, for he was the man with whom I have just been forced to settle accounts—Guidotti. When first I saw him he was pretty far gone with typhoid. Thanks to his constitution of steel, I pulled him through; but it was a long time before he was fit to crawl out, and I saw him every day, and became—worse luck!—friendly with him.

'About this time my employer completed the slow process of drinking himself to death, and I was offered his post. I hesitated, for I was sick of the life in the place; and when Guidotti, who had plenty of money and was grateful to me, offered to pay my passage home, I jumped at the chance. Would to God that I had remained where I was, at honest work! I came with him to London.

'I need not narrate the story of my downfall. Guidotti was rich. My scientific knowledge interested him, and his was a dominant and in some ways a fascinating personality. In the end I joined "The Searchers." He confided in me, and told me the origin of the gang's name: how they had kept from generation to generation one half of a certain paper; that the other half was in existence somewhere, and that the junction of the two would establish a clue to hidden wealth.

'At the time I thought Guidotti's story fantastic; but when he let me see "The Searchers'" half of the paper I could hardly believe my eyes, and blurted out, "Why, the Englishman Forbes who used to be in the railway camp showed me the other half!" I could have bitten my tongue out the moment afterwards. Questions showered on me. Who was Forbes? Where was he? Had he written me? What had he said about the paper? Had I read it? Could I remember it? Guidotti's intense and unconcealed excitement steadied me, putting a curb on my tongue. I told him the truth—that I knew nothing of Hugh Forbes's whereabouts or

whether he was dead or alive, and that I had not paid the slightest attention to the paper. But I did not tell him the whole truth—that I knew that its duplicate was in Glen Ciuin. Never a word did I let fall that might have put Guidotti on the track of the paper at The Bield. I knew my man. He would have used my knowledge, and given me a jackal's share of the spoil.

'In a week I had thought out the general idea of a scheme. I kept the secret of the whereabouts of the duplicate to myself, and set to work devising ways and means whereby I might get a copy of the paper which "The Searchers" held. Guidotti kept all the arcana of the brotherhood at his own house, but I had hopes of one of the gang called Salvi. His position was indefinite. He was next in importance to Benedetto, a sort of half-secretary, half-factotum of Guidotti, and a man devoured by an overmastering vulgar passion—the love of money. It took me a couple of months to ingratiate myself with the creature, but in the end he rose to a bribe, and agreed to copy the paper for me at the first opportunity. This required a considerable time; but while I was waiting impatiently for him to earn his money, there came a strange fall of the cards.

'One day I was turning over a medical journal, when an advertisement caught my eye. It concerned a country practice for sale in—of all places—Glen Ciuin! Fate had thrust the cards into my hands. Could I play them? No sudden lucky snatch at a trump, but a carefully conceived, indefeasible plan! I read and re-read the advertisement. My scheme took more definite outline. Why should not I, by one stroke, break from "The Searchers," and further my design on the paper at The Bield? To practise under another man's name would be a risk, but not so great a risk as might be supposed. The number of undetected cases is surprising.

'I had a little money saved, enough to serve my purpose, and the name of the dead doctor—Hall—of the railway camp in South America suggested itself at once. Personation is never an easy undertaking, but there were compensating features. Hall's name was not an uncommon one. He had been abroad for years; in life he had no link with the North; I knew something of his history; I was familiar with his looks and his colouring; to "make up" like him would not be a difficult matter.

'I found out that the practice in the Glen was a fair one, and—most important this!—the owner of The Bield was a patient of the former doctor. I had no time to lose, for medical practices are disposed of quickly. So one fine morning a dark, clean-shaven gentleman, "Dr Hall," began practice in the quiet northern Glen. "The Searchers" knew Royce—that was the name I then passed under—no more. I had dropped out suddenly and completely, concealing my whereabouts even from Salvi. His letters to me were sent to an address which I had given him, and were then forwarded to me. He told me that Guidotti and Benedetto were puzzled and suspicious about my sudden disappearance, and could assign no reason for it.

'The practice grew. I made a number of friends, and one of them, as I had fervently hoped, was the colonel.

'Two or three months passed before Salvi had an opportunity of copying the paper, but at last a telegram from him was forwarded asking me to meet him at a rendezvous in Leith. If I arrived first I was to wait for him. From the Glen I went to Leith, and lay low for three days. The rendezvous was not one suited for a decently dressed professional man to be seen at, and it was quite possible that a stray patient might recognise me. By the end of the three days the clean-shaven doctor had disappeared, and in his stead was a sandy-haired, shabbily dressed vulgarian. Doubtless you remember M'Nair! Two days afterwards Salvi turned up with the paper, but in a state of pitiable terror. He had very nearly been caught in the act of stealing it, and had just had time to pocket it. He had no chance of copying and replacing it, and he knew that when "The Searchers" missed it—as they speedily must—swift and certain vengeance would follow. I don't blame the poor devil for being in a cold sweat. I once saw a suspected member of "The Searchers" when Guidotti was "persuading" him to confess. I don't want to see another.

'Salvi lost his nerve, and, like a fool, bolted and hid in London. "The Searchers," of course, were at once on the alert, and discovered the theft. (Guidotti told me a few hours ago that he divined instantly that Salvi was in league with me.) They were soon hot on his track, but he managed to shake them off, and, after a couple of days in hiding, got, as he thought, clear away. My own belief is that from the first they never lost sight of him, but laid their plans to capture or kill us both.

'Terror-stricken, convinced that he was a doomed man, Salvi was a helpless hindrance. The problem of getting him safely away almost baffled me. But one night there came a dense fog. You remember it! I gave him his choice between risking slipping out under its cover along with me or being left to his own devices. He came with me. We had a nasty drop from a back-window, but we managed it, and with the precious bit of paper in my pocket-book, rolled up to resemble a cigarette, made off quietly up Leith Walk. But the devils were too many for us. They must have been watching like cats at a mouse-hole, and when we were in Durham Place—a quiet enough street for their purpose—Salvi was knifed. There was no scuffle. He dropped like a stone.

'I made off for dear life, and in Jura Street just missed the same fate, for the sailor-man

with the ear-rings, beside the railings, whom you stumbled across in the fog that night, was Guidotti himself—disguised, of course; but I knew his voice. He heard my running footsteps, and closed with me. Luckily, I managed to swerve in time, and doubled back with nothing worse than a cut shoulder. Then came our strange meeting when I collapsed at your door. I knew you at once, and thanked my stars that I had dropped my doctor's disguise and was my sandy-haired self. Let me concede that self-preservation compelled me to act somewhat disingenuously under your hospitable roof.'

'"Disingenuously" is good. A cool customer! He lied most skilfully for half-an-hour, didn't he?' commented Tony. 'But go on, Neil.'

'My knowledge of dialect was useful (I regret to say that I have some Scots blood), and for the night I appeared as "M'Nair," the bewildered clerk, and deposited my pocket-book and some odds and ends with you, as evidence of my *bona fides*. I didn't want any police meddling! After I left, a shave, a little attention to details such as the colour of my hair, and a change of clothes transformed me into Dr Hall again, and a few hours afterwards I called in your absence and recovered my pocket-book and its contents. Had you been at home I should have introduced myself as your uncle's doctor—which, by the way, I did about one o'clock on the same day, when I met you by accident at the Caledonian.

'You know the rest, all except the darkest chapter—one so dark that I hesitate to set it down. But the sands are running out. I shall tell it to you.

'I returned to my quiet country practice with half of the precious paper. My plans were ripening. Could I contrive to get a copy of the other half at The Bield, what a vista opened to me! A fortune, abundant leisure, means to pursue my research-work, fame, rehabilitation, victory over the crass blockheads who had ruined me. Call it revenge on the world if you like. The world had treated me scurvily, and I had no scruples in getting even with it. I saw myself, my back turned on the black and meagre years, snapping my fingers at Fate. But no man escapes the reckoning. The Devil, with all his faults, keeps his appointments.

'The plan was designed so as to turn the slightest suspicion from myself, and to induce the colonel to show me the paper. An atmosphere of disquiet was essential. I created one. "The Prowler" who left imprints of large, peculiarly marked boots was, as you now know, myself. I lied about the man with the melodeon. He never existed. Nor was there any one who consulted me—it was I who left the tell-tale footprints in the Afries Wood. The scheme succeeded up to a point. Although the colonel spoke to me about the mysterious Prowler, it was a long time before I managed to locate the paper. But bit by bit, a hint here, a casual question there, I found out that it was in the little hidden safe, and that the colonel kept the key on his person. So far, so good. I played a waiting game, and lost no opportunity of impressing you with my concern for the colonel's health.

'Then came your brush with the gang in Duff Avenue. I was horribly certain that Guidotti would discover your connection with The Bield, and find his way there. If that happened, my fate was sure, for my disguise would not deceive him. Both of us had occasionally found it prudent to change our appearance.

'Every day brought the danger nearer. Delay might mean disaster. I dismissed the thought of trying to break into the safe. I was not a professional cracksman, and the safe was a fire-and-burglar-proof one. I decided to play a bolder and a safer stroke. The colonel himself would be the witness of the dark Prowler's theft of the paper.

'To have "doped" him with an ordinary sleeping-draught would have been easy, but it might have caused suspicion to fall on myself. But after I joined "The Searchers," Guidotti showed me, among many queer things, a mysterious poison of peculiar power, which, he said, had been in the hands of "The Searchers" for hundreds of years. He may have been lying, but the drug was quite unknown to me, and my own view is that it actually had been handed down from medieval Italian days.

'"The Searchers'" drug fascinated me, and Guidotti, knowing my interest in it, had given me access to it when I chose. I made countless experiments with it on animals and twice on myself, studying it patiently and thoroughly until my labour was rewarded. I mastered it, and decided to administer it to the colonel. It has similar properties to the well-known drug curare, with which the South American Indians poison their arrows. Like curare, it paralyses the motor nerves, but for a purpose such as mine it has tremendous advantages over curare. It is, for example, tasteless; it can be administered in a liquid; and if death occurs, it resolves into cadaveric alkaloids, the metamorphosis rendering it untraceable. I had foreseen the possibility of my being forced to use it; hence my suggestion to you that the colonel's heart was weak, and that a sudden shock might be dangerous. But I swear that murder was never in my mind. I had, I thought, tested the drug until the results of its action were mathematically certain, and at the worst I anticipated that the colonel might be in bed for two or three days after my giving him it.

'Now I come to the "burglary." It was a night of wild wind. I sat with the colonel until about half-past ten o'clock, and slipped the dose of the drug into his glass when I was helping myself to soda-water at the sideboard. I left shortly afterwards, went back to the surgery, and waited. I knew to a minute when to return. Having changed into the black-bearded

one with the hob-nailed boots, on the stroke of twelve I made an easy entrance to The Bield. I had seen to the unfastening of the gunroom window. I found the colonel exactly as I had anticipated—paralysed, speechless, but conscious of what was going on. Nothing could have been better. Any evidence by him afterwards (as was actually given in his deposition) would make it clear that the person who had entered the room was identical with the Prowler. I should be the last man in the world to be suspected. I took his keys and his papers from his pocket, and opened the safe before his eyes. In a few minutes I was back in the surgery, and found that the paper from the safe for which I had risked so much was an illegible half-sheet, yellow with age, and the papers from the colonel's pockets were trivial! I burned them all on the spot. Soon there came, as I expected, an urgent summons to The Bield.

'There I saw at once that the colonel had not long to live. I shall not describe my feelings. You would not believe me. I had overestimated his powers of resistance, and I was, therefore, the cause of his death; but, on the brink of the Unknown, I tell you that it is false to say that I designed it.

'With his death, my hope of getting the paper was farther off than ever, and the possibility of Guidotti's appearance in the Glen haunted every moment. I had almost made up my mind to vanish abroad again, when your friend Keene-Leslie had a conversation with me in the Laird's Room. He was communicative enough to show me a copy of your paper, and careless enough to leave it where I could lay hands on it. I thought him much too confiding, but to-day's events have caused me to revise this view. I regret that I shall not be able to follow his career. He ought to go far.

'I took the paper from the escritoire, copied and replaced it. Next day I watched you leave, as I thought, for the South. In the evening I started for the Chanter Corrie. At nightfall I hid in Glenmore Forest, and at daybreak went up the Larig, never dreaming that you were there, waiting for me. Nor did I know that my worst fear had come true. Guidotti was here—had seen and recognised me. After the Duff Avenue affair, he had lain low for a time; but having discovered your Edinburgh address from the letters which Benedetto had taken from your pockets in the car, he had traced you to the Glen. The luck of his master the Devil followed him, for in tracing you he found me. All this I got from his own jeering lips a few minutes before his death. Through one of the village hotel windows, he had seen me passing in my car, and as I had used a similar disguise in his company in many a left-hand business, he recognised me. He watched, saw me start for the hills, and followed later under cover of the dark; but he lost me, and at dawn found himself near the Larig, below Muich Dhui.

'You saw the rest. When Guidotti confronted me, I pretended to give in, surrendered my revolver and pocket-book, and to gain time told him that I believed the cache of the jewels to be near the top of the Goats' Ladder. But although I felt sure the secret was in the lining of my pocket-book, not for all the jewels in the world would I have shared it with him. I knew that, sooner or later, he meant to kill me. It was my life or his—and I took his.

'And now—FINIS. *Cras? Ubi ero, cras?*'

(*Continued on page 596.*)

R. L. S. AS PLAYMATE.

By 'LANTERN-BEARER.'

I WAS a mere child when I first made the acqaintance of Robert Louis Stevenson, and in a sufficiently unusual and dramatic manner. His father and mine were friends of a lifetime, drawn together by some likeness of character and the same profession, and interested in one another by the dissimilarity that frequently cements a friendship. I had in my quiet, guarded childhood, passed in a lovely and all-sufficing old garden, smaller occasion and less liberty for adventure than the wild spirit of R. L. S. He was spoken of as 'a curious boy,' unlike others; and perhaps the mothers of my generation had an unacknowledged distrust of the thin, elfin lad with the brilliant eyes. In any case, we had not met save at those terrible entertainments called 'children's parties,' and had eyed one another with the reserved and clear-sighted silence that in thoughtful children is the substitute for older diplomacy.

Our family had in the 'sixties settled for August and September at North Berwick, then a small, unfashionable seaside place, with an East Bay, and a very nebulous West, that had about half-a-dozen villas. The East Bay was to us then a real Elysium—rocks, sea, a safe beach called 'the sands,' on which we had any amount of unusual liberty; and, under the eyes of tenants of the line of villas, little danger could come to the boys and girls who played and dreamed there. The Black Rock was an Alp to be climbed, and I had, with another playfellow, a dear cousin now long dead, begun the ascent. The rock was very hot and dry, and polished in places by the many feet that had gripped in its few niches. Just at the top I found I had the wrong foot foremost, nothing to hold to, and a sensation of fear. My head barely reached the top, but my hat did. To my relief, a thin, brown hand with long

fingers came over the edge of the rock, and a thin, brown face, with very keen, interested, gray-brown eyes, looked over. 'Take my hand,' said a boy's voice, and the fingers curved for the grip. I looked at the very thin, very long wrist that reached out of a pepper-and-salt shabby coat, and hesitated to trust to it, it looked so very unequal to any efficient help, then up to the eager gray eyes bent on me, and felt that I might trust to the owner's willingness. 'All right,' I said, and put a sandy paw in the thin one. 'Hold tight and change your foot;' then, 'One, two, three,' and a good pull landed me on the top. 'I am Louis Stevenson,' the boy said. 'I was lying up here in the sun, on the warm rock. Isn't it fine?' I still think of him as 'Louis,' French fashion, without an 's,' as his surname obliterated the final consonant, and it was many years before I realised that it was the English Louis. Our elders, for some unknown reason, never spoke of him without the surname, a kind of unconscious tribute to his difference of temperament. It had a curious effect on my young mind. 'Bob,' 'Fred,' 'Jim,' 'Harry,' seemed a homely crowd, but 'Louis Stevenson' stood out with a kind of uncanny glory to that strange thing, a child's mind.

We soon 'made friends,' and began on the top of the Black Rock a firm friendship that was never broken, although life set our paths wide apart in his early manhood, and death's dark river flows between us for a time. Louis was two and a quarter years older than myself; we were both Mercurians in colouring, hair, and eyes; both dreamers and readers. We loved adventure—and its shadow in fancy, for our area of liberty was not very great. But even now, in middle age that verges on the hateful 'elderly,' the East Bay of North Berwick holds for me the glamour and richness that was so great for us in that long-gone childhood. The mound that rises at the end, rippled all round by old sheep-tracks, was to us an ancient fort. Louis thought if we dug into it we might find bones of dead Vikings, or their equivalent in North Berwick. Children accept such ideas without cavil when the rainbow of fancy plays over them. Many a game we played on that little terraced hill, and many a time did we run down, to the imminent danger of our legs. Once, indeed, I fell and dislocated my left arm very badly, and suffered great pain. But the leeches that were put on to reduce the swelling were so black and mysterious, so interesting to talk over with Louis afterwards, the sling in which my painful arm reposed so important, that I felt the injury was a feather in my cap. For a time my share of digging sandpits was suspended, and I was a wounded warrior recovering for fresh feats of arms! Louis was sympathetic and kind, and had a wonderful way of making everything, even injuries, an adventure. A modern Don Quixote, who could stifle the common-sense and dull accuracy of his followers and make them see the giants he saw—the light that never shone here—perhaps the truth that is so well hidden from so-called wiser eyes. In the years that followed, the long years of early youth, Louis and I and some cousins had many ploys together on the Pactolian sands of North Berwick. When the tide was out we fished for a large-headed, stout little fish called a 'podley,' and put partan-cleeks into crab-homes on the red rocks near the harbour. Where these red rocks merge into the yellow wave-marked sand of the lower beach are many mounds of sand beaten by the waves into a kind of embryo rock, covered with green grass-like weed. Here the falling tide leaves clear pools, in which shrimps dart and burrow. One day Louis and I were wading there, he with very skinny legs well displayed by much rolled-up thin trousers. 'Were you ever marooned?' he said suddenly, with the strange look in his eyes that always indicated with him 'an idea.' I was not at all sure what 'marooned' meant, but, unwilling to show my ignorance, said, 'No,' while wondering if it was something Louis meant to do to me. 'Well, look here, suppose you were on a desert island with nothing to eat, what would you do?' I had not the faintest idea, but suggested, 'Fish.' 'Silly, how could you catch fish in the sea? They aren't trout that one can guddle. Shrimps now—there are lots in the sand, and not bad to catch.'

I suggested that we should need a pot to boil them, remembering the pink dainties of a sea-side tea-table.

'No,' said Louis, with sparkling eyes; 'raw would do. Father eats oysters, and I once had one; it wasn't very nice, but I heard him say they were very nourishing.'

'Oh Louis!' I cried. 'Those nasty gray things!'

'Yes,' he replied; 'I think shrimps much nicer-looking. Let us be marooned and try some.'

So we imagined ourselves alone in the wide ocean without food or fire. That was easy. Then we caught a few silver-brown wrigglers, and paused.

'Where are we to begin, Louis?'

He looked at the morsel, and said slowly, 'The head would be best; it would die at once—bite quick!'

So we bit quick with sharp young teeth, and found the shrimp quite as good as Louis's oyster; but somehow the movement of the small fish made the meal more cannibalistic than the lethargic oyster would have done. It was, however, an experience added to our store, and Louis was always on the look-out for something new and uncommon.

There was a gloomy building to the west of the bay that always appalled us. A long dead wall without windows, and only one small door. It was the beach door of the 'abattoir,' and once only did Louis and I look in there. One glimpse was enough, and we fled, sick and horrified, to remember for ever the description

in the Book of Isaiah, to reject, as too hideous for acceptance, the interpretation of the metaphors of the Bible. 'Could you do that?' we asked, and needed no reply. I see yet the snowy victim, hear the beating of my heart, and the hurried closing of the dark, dreadful door.

The foundry was another whilom haunt, where we watched the glowing iron of our partan-cleeks beaten into shape, bent, and plunged into the water with a hissing sound of remonstrance against the embrace of the enemy of Fire. The grimy figures that worked the iron in the firelit gloom were to us good-natured devils, the skin-aprons and hairy arms helping the delusion, for in the wonderful brain of the boy Louis everything suffered a seaside change into something rich and new. Sometimes we went, with some older comrade to shepherd us, to a bay far to the east, beyond the dark tufa cliffs. Round by the rocks we picked our way, and sometimes paused to look at the green lips of the sea moving against the weed of the far-out rocks. Clear and deep, streaked with streamers of brown tangle, the sea seemed to breathe and pause, and we felt unsafe on the edge of the deep pool. Farther on, the sea-pink nestled in crannies above the reach of the waves, and glowed like tiny rosettes on the breast of the cliff. At our feet the empty houses of dead, wonderful sea-beasts, with sometimes a bit of rope, a broken spar, and once a baby's mattress-bed. Of things like these we wove, with Louis as taskmaster and inspirer, strange tales of wreck and sorrow on the sea, till, as the successive Augusts and Septembers multiplied, we had a store of witching fancies, from which one of us wove masterpieces of thought and literature.

Later we all haunted the West Bay, where more houses were beginning to be built, and, being larger, were more suited to growing families and purses. Here our ploys were huge sand-pits, and lantern expeditions, golf, and croquet for a very short time. But the latter game was no favourite with us; there was no make-believe about it, no glamour, and far too much standing still at a 'beastly hoop.' Of the sandpits I have written elsewhere, and the Argonaut voyages we made in the brown herring-boats drawn up and glistening on the beach. A favourite but rare adventure was enjoyed at the spring-tides. For a very short time the long line of jagged rocks below Point Garry, a kind of rampart of the shore, was possible to our reach by wading. There starfish of unusual colour and size abounded, sea-urchins with encrusted jewelled shells, and feathery sea-anemones. By dint of long legs and very short trousers the waders might spend a few delightful and dangerous minutes before the tide turned. Louis was in his element then, anywhere that was off the beaten track, with possibilities of danger, otherwise adventure. His eyes glowed; his very hair, long and lank, seemed to stiffen into more elf-like locks. He always led the band, was always the master-spirit and inspiring force. A kind of magnetism seemed to emanate from him, some of his great, though then undeveloped, personality. Animals came under his charm as readily as we did, and he was always tender to the lame or unlucky, although his sympathy showed itself in the robust form of understanding without words, and his power of diverting the attention to other things. His odd faculty for adventure, his power of throwing glamour over everything he touched, must have been to himself a source of immense pleasure. Dull he could never be, even in sickness. In a letter to my cousin he described himself when ill as a 'pallid weevil in a biscuit.' His extraordinary gift of self-observation suggested a power of detachment of the inner mind, and the exercise of an onlooking faculty.

One game we had with other children that I have not seen mentioned in the many notes on Louis's boyhood. An old gentleman, Mr Girle by name, passionately fond of young people, used to gather round him a little crowd of boys and girls, vowed to look the other way and sent to a little distance; then Mr Girle hid in the sands a china egg, for which whoso found it got sixpence. We scraped in the dry golden sand like rabbits or dogs, and of course saw the china egg as more like that of the fabled roc. Louis was not energetic as the other boys, held by his delicate health from strengthening his slender body. But his eyes shone with that fire of concentration that made him later 'a sedulous ape,' and he always invested our most homely game with a kind of magic, which still endures in the memory of his playmate.

There was in one part of the sands a broken drain, from which bubbled a black and evil-smelling stream. This, Louis had told me, was like the 'Sticks,' as I spelt it in my mind. It fascinated me with its slow, thick ooze, and, regardless of typhoid and diphtheria, we speculated on its origin. One day I went too near; the sand and pipe crumbled, and my leg went in to the knee. This was very amusing to the others, but I was punished for my daring. My parents sent me to my room to wash and be clean, with dry bread for my early dinner. There was a hot raspberry-and-currant tart for that meal, and the strong, fine odour of that dainty still recalls my longing for the forbidden fruit, with a queer memory of gloomy Styx. There are not many things that one can more easily recall than smells, or that so bring back other memories.

My father sometimes joined our games, and set us to one called 'Rosamond's Bower.' He drew with his walking-stick on the smooth, wet, unmarked sand, after the tide went out, a series of lines that started from a semicircle and went round and round in interlaced and crossing lines. I think the secret of getting into the bower was to keep always to the right. But, in any case,

we might wander for an hour if the rule was not kept. Mr Thomas Stevenson and my father were martinets over this puzzle; we must go on till we arrived, and no shirking was allowed. To Louis and myself the thin furrow in the sand was a green hedge above our heads, and we always hoped to see a fair Rosamond in the bower. Perhaps she was just as real to these little kings who ran round the maze as some less fair who engaged their fancy in later years. The ideal was always before Louis, and he passed on the power of seeing wonders to his devoted followers. I wonder if any one now draws Rosamond's Bower on the North Berwick sands; if the children of to-day have half such a good time! Louis was an object of envy to me for many an August and September, for he had an iron spade, and I only a wooden one. My mother had once seen a bad accident with the metal delver, and feared to give the opportunity of another to her children. This iron spade somehow set Louis on a pinnacle, and, like other child memories, is clear and strong. As if with wood and iron we worked in later life, and the results were as then, the iron spade cut clean and true to the heart of the sand, and the wooden one confused the outlines we had traced. In nearly every ploy that I remember there is the light of fire. If possible at all, Louis must have a fire. As a boy, the small smoky altar in the sand-house was the core of his enjoyment, and the hidden eye of the little lantern at his feet gave his wild heart dreams and thoughts that till manhood he himself did not understand. In a wind-swept, almost roofless cottage, where we played long ago, the fire was his share of housekeeping, and other joys paled before its ruddy glow. 'More fair than laughter, lo! the flowers of fire.' To him it was a wizard with its change and movement, and strange, vivifying light. Red in all its tints called to him as the master-colour in the rainbow, and his red tie, then a source of derision, became famous the world over. Strong, pure colour attracted his keen sight, as in a savage, and he saw nature from a barbaric point of view. In his love of wild, untrammelled life, sought for then in sand-houses and ruined cottages, he unconsciously reverted to a more primitive condition, a less civilised age. Given the strength that was denied him, but of which he dreamed, he would have looked on the 'bright face of danger' in untrodden lands, would have climbed great mountains, to see below him 'the snowy hills lie bowed like flocks of sheep.' The life of tent and caravan would have called to his fearless spirit, and been transmuted to golden story by his alchemist brain. He saw life and nature unroll their endless magic web, and caught something of their own fire and colour. 'On the loud stairs of honour' he looked back to the joys of childhood and youth, and found in the glamour that his own mind has cast over simple, everyday events more music than came from the clamour of praise, the loud blast of fame. His dreams, beginning in early boyhood, carried him on the wings of the morning to high, enchanted places, and lasted to the end, through seeming failure and hard misinterpretation, and the more dangerous conditions that follow the glory of this world.

As I write I see, not the writer in Vailima, famous the world over, but the strange, thin, glowing face, the slender hand that came down to my aid on the Black Rock with the words that were perhaps the unconscious watchword of all his work—'Take my hand.'

STOLEN GUESTS.

CHAPTER III.—THE RELAPSE.

IT was a little shooting-lodge that Miss Marion Smith had rented in the small parish of Auchinbreck, in Kirkcudbrightshire. Thither she had taken from London her family of nephews and nieces. Since the death of their parents she had brought them up, and made a good thing of it, for her brother had left his children well off. Years before one of her sisters had gone to Australia, and married out there. Beyond occasional letters, she had never kept much in touch with her. Recently, however, she had received a letter saying that her sister's son Jack had been wounded in France, and taken to a hospital in England.

'That means that I must invite him to Auchinbreck when he is convalescent. I hope he is not a dreadful Colonial,' said Marion in rather contemptuous tones to her niece. Ever since her sister had married an Australian, she had made slighting references to the Antipodes. Possibly they were prompted by jealousy.

She sent a rather lukewarm invitation at first to the wounded youth, which he was long in answering. In his reply he mentioned that he was staying with General Cockburn Davidson. Miss Marion, who had made good families the study of her life, knew all about this famous officer—that he was considered one of the great prizes in the matrimonial market for ladies of mature years. At once she wrote to her nephew a gushing letter, begging him to come, and to bring his friend, and picturing in exaggerated terms the attractions of Auchinbreck. Jack was not at all eager to accept, but her persistence won the day, and he prevailed on his host to come with him.

'Whereabouts is it?' asked the general.

'Oh, somewhere in Scotland. I'll look it up on the map and in the time-table, and steer

you straight.' But Jack, in his thoughtlessness, turned up Auchinbruich instead!

'It is away up in Ross-shire,' he said; 'but my aunt says she has got a motor, so I am asking her to send it to meet our train.'

Thus had arisen the mistake which had brought an unexpected flutter to the heart of Miss Mary, and dismay to that of Miss Marion.

The latter had got a post-card (addressed before Jack's exploration of gazetteers and time-tables) stating that the general and her nephew would leave on a certain day, and that a wire would be sent later mentioning the train by which they would travel. On the strength of this Miss Marion had invited all the best people in the neighbourhood to meet the distinguished general on the day following his arrival, and her invitations had been accepted. Great were the preparations that she made for this dinner-party. She had ventured to ask people who hardly knew her, so proud was she of the celebrity she was about to parade.

The day came for his arrival—and passed without even a wire. That night poor Miss Marion could not sleep, as the fear haunted her of the chief guest being absent on the morrow. In the morning she telegraphed to Hove asking for an immediate reply as to when she might expect the general to arrive. The reply she got caused consternation. It was that the general and Lieutenant Wright had left two days before, and were going straight to Auchinbreck, where they ought to have arrived on the previous evening.

The day dragged on and the hour of Miss Marion's dinner drew near, but there was no sign of the general. She wired to the leading hotels in Edinburgh and Glasgow to find if the missing pair were there, but no trace of their whereabouts could be discovered. Poor Miss Marion! Her guests arrived, but the distinguished man they were to meet did not appear, nor had he deigned to send any explanation. It was a terrible affront. Inwardly she vented her wrath on Australia, blaming the casual ways of the Colonial, and yet that left much unelucidated.

'But surely the general, if he had accepted your invitation, and was in any way prevented from coming, would have sent you a wire,' insinuated one of her lady guests in a tone that implied that Miss Marion had not been quite straight.

Never was a dinner-party so flat. In vain did Miss Marion protest that the general had promised to be present. Her excuses only provoked unbelieving smiles. The conclusion of her best friends was that she had been let down badly, and that there must have been some reason for such a snub, or the general would not have inflicted it.

Then the matter got into the papers, and Miss Marion felt more relieved. A British general had actually gone amissing in his own country. Some journals hinted at foul play and the hidden hand of revenge, but as the days passed the mystery only deepened. The unconscious fugitives were too busy enjoying themselves by river and loch to be concerned with how the world was occupied with them.

Only one inmate of the cottage had a guilty conscience, and that was poor Miss Mary. She did so enjoy having guests. She tried to soothe her guilty qualms by the thought that they had come to her house uninvited, and to put off from day to day the evil hour of explanation. In fact, at the very thought of it her heart almost stopped. What could she say? Meantime she was happy, and her dinners surpassed each other, and the sun shone, and the hours sped far too quickly. Fortunately no other person in the parish got a daily paper, but the Saturday weekly would soon arrive. Of course, it would be full of the sensation of the hour, and then the cottagers who had noted the strangers might draw conclusions. Yes, it would be impossible to keep up the deception much longer, and yet she was so happy—and so were the general and Jack. They never grumbled at not getting letters.

'I told my man to forward my correspondence here,' said the general, 'but I think he wants to give me a holiday.'

Meanwhile it was arriving at Auchinbreck in budgets. Letters and telegrams were piling themselves up for the general, while he was innocently playing dummy whist in the little drawing-room at Auchinbruich.

'Really, aunty,' said Jack on the Friday night, 'you have given us such a jolly good time that we are loath to go, but we cannot stay here for ever.'

'Just one more excursion,' she pleaded. 'I want to take you up to a new loch to-morrow.'

The general assented at once, and Jack readily acquiesced. But Miss Mary had other intentions. She realised that the hour had come for confession, but she had not the courage to do it openly. She would write a note to Jack that night, and escape by the first train in the morning. She would go to London, and hide herself there, and never come back to her Highland home again. In her inner soul she felt that it had been worth it. Never before had she enjoyed such a week. Now there was the price to pay; but she had a stout little heart, and did not flinch.

She gave orders that night for the motor to be ready to take her to the station to catch the 6 A.M. train for Inverness on the following morning. Then, when the house was quiet, and her guests had gone to bed, she sat down in her drawing-room to write her confession.

It was the most difficult piece of composition she had ever faced. Several times she tore up what she had written.

'I must not make it long. Jack and the general hate lengthy epistles. I'll try to get it all on this little scrap of paper,' she said to herself as she spread out a small sheet, and began again.

Miss Mary Smith wrote that she thought that there must have been some mistake, and that her guests ought to communicate at once with Miss Marion Smith of Auchinbreck, as possibly they might have been expected there. Still, as they had come to her, she had tried her best to extend to them Highland hospitality, and had thoroughly enjoyed their visit. She was sorry she had to leave so unceremoniously, but she would be glad if they remained as long as they liked. She had quite liked being 'aunty' to Jack, and if they ever met again, she hoped they would continue their relationship.

Folding the paper up, she tiptoed along to Jack's room, and shoved it under the door, and then went to complete her preparations for departure.

About five o'clock next morning Jack Wright was disturbed by the throb of the motor. Lazily getting out of bed, he walked over to the window. To his amazement, he saw his aunt loading it up with travelling-trunks, and then springing in herself and driving away.

'Where can she be off to at this unearthly hour? I hope she is not going to desert us, she is such a ripping aunt. Possibly gone to order the breakfast at the nearest town. She has taken no end of trouble to make us comfy. It must mean a lot of planning to run a house in this out-of-the-way corner. Well, I will have a smoke to console myself.' Putting on his dressing-gown, he seated himself in an arm-chair, and searched in his pockets for matches. In the box there was only one left.

'What a nuisance! Ah, there is an odd bit of paper on the floor. I will use it as a spill.'

Walking over to the door, he picked up the folded note, and in the uncertain light—for the curtains were still undrawn—he did not notice his name scribbled on it. In fact, he never dreamed of there being any message for him. Very deliberately he rolled the paper into a spill, and lit it with the match. Then he applied it to his pipe, and when it was half-burnt flung it into the grate, and unconsciously watched Miss Mary's effort at composition end in smoke.

The general and he found their usual appetising breakfast waiting for them—but no hostess.

'Where is Miss Smith?' asked the general with some concern after a few minutes of impatient waiting.

'I saw her set off in the motor this morning at five o'clock,' answered Jack carelessly.

'Alone?' The general was getting a little tempery.

'Yes, except for no end of trunks and bandboxes, as if she were going off for a regular week-end.'

'And has she left no message?' The general was showing signs of desperation.

'No; but Margaret let out to me that she thought her mistress had gone to London.'

'To London! Without even saying good-bye! Jack, my boy, I'm to blame for this,' groaned the general as he sank into a chair, leaving his coffee untasted.

'You, sir?'

'Yes. I do not mind confessing to you, but I made a silly ass of myself last night. When we were playing bridge I pressed your aunt's hand under the table while I was handing her a card she had dropped. That has frightened her, and she has flown, terrified, this morning. I have been a brute, Jack.'

The young man, with an effort, kept his face straight. The anguish on his senior officer's face was too real not to evoke sympathy.

'She has lived a very quiet life up here, sir, you see,' he said. 'She told me herself that she seldom had any visitors.'

'Yes, that is the charm of the place—and its mistress,' murmured the general. 'Both are absolutely unspoiled. I ought to have been more careful. And now she is gone! Can you get her address in London?'

'No, I fear not. Even the servants don't know. She said that she had never any letters to send on. She would write them instructions in a fortnight.'

'A fortnight!' gasped the general. 'That is an eternity to wait. Can we do nothing?'

'We could stay on here, sir, until she returns. She left orders that we were to have the free use of the house as long as we wished.'

'But without her it would not be the same. It is beautiful and all that—a perfect little paradise. I could spend the rest of my days here in perfect bliss—only not alone. It is horribly empty without your aunt. We must try to find her.'

'Let me see,' pondered Jack aloud. 'I remember studying the time-table when we came up here. I thought out our return journey at the same time. I did not imagine then, of course, that we should be remaining so long. There are just two south-going trains in the day. The one that leaves at six in the morning is awfully slow; it stops and shunts at every station. I do not know what made my aunt choose it.'

'She was in a desperate hurry to get away; that's why,' interrupted the general.

'The other is the fast mail, leaving at ten-thirty. I believe now that it catches the first one up at Perth.'

'Catches it up!' repeated the senior officer, rising from his chair in his excitement. 'Are you sure of that?'

'I will get the time-table and see,' responded Jack as he went over to the writing-table and picked up a railway pamphlet.

Miss Mary Smith, like many stay-at-homes, was a poor traveller. She looked up only the starting-hours of trains. She never considered how long they took on the journey. Besides, in this instance it was imperative that she should slip away unnoticed, and she was in such a mood that she did not mind whether it took a week or a month to reach her destination. Her one

desire was to leave Auchinbruich behind her for ever.

'Yes, my aunt has selected an abominably slow train. The mail gets exactly the same connection at Perth,' was Jack's comment on the information he had extracted from his study of the time-table.

'Then tell that chauffeur to hurry with his car. You drive, Jack, for you can make the thing go. If we miss the train here, we must race it to Inverness. We shall catch your aunt yet. Never mind packing up. Perhaps we may bring her back with us, when I have apologised.'

Jack had never seen the general in such a flurry before. He obeyed orders, and in a few minutes they had started in pursuit of their fugitive hostess.

(*Continued on page 599.*)

LACONICS.

By GEORGE F. M. COCKS.

THIS is not an art to which orators seem likely to become addicted. They all pay it lip-service, admit the necessity for compression of the other fellow's speech, and, having caught the Speaker's eye, will advocate it for hours without showing the least desire to be accounted a wit by the exhibition of that brevity which is proverbially the foundation of all wit. Yet short and successful—and successful because short—speeches have been made. Let us give pride of place to Lord Tredegar, who confined his speech to one word. He was down to reply to a toast, but the company insisted upon his responding to an earlier one than the programme had arranged for. He rose, and into the consequent silence dropped the one word, '*Resurgam*,' which some understood, and all appreciated. Lamb perhaps went one better. Believing that 'a speaker should not attempt too much, but leave something to the imagination of his audience,' he rose to reply to a toast, bowed to his audience, said, 'Gentlemen,' and then resumed his seat. That seems rather like taking a mean advantage of good imaginations.

If in our search for the words few but fit, we turn from the orator to the soldier, we are cheered on the threshold of our search by Cæsar's classic report to Armintius of his victory over Pharnaces at Zela in 47 B.C., '*Veni, vidi, vici;*' which, however, is beaten by Drake's legendary report to Elizabeth of the Spanish Armada, 'Cantharides' (the Spanish fly). That report was equalled by Lord Napier's despatch, as terse as apochryphal, '*Peccavi*' (I have Scinde), which is surely the greatest pun that Tom Hood did not coin.

Cæsar's despatch has been paraphrased on at least two occasions. When the Poles beat back the tide of Moslem invasion from the walls of Venice, their leader, John Sobieski, sent the standards he had captured to the Pope with the message, 'I came, I saw, God conquered.' Turenne's paraphrase had no mock-humility about it. Recovering Dunkirk from the Spaniards after Dünen, he reported, 'The enemy came, was beaten; I am tired. Good-night!' And we must not forget our own Admiral Blake, who won a fine victory and penned a fine despatch which ran—nay, *galloped* rather, 'Please your honour and glory, met with the French fleet, beat, killed, took, sunk, and burned as per margin. Yours, &c.'

If now we turn from soldiers to men of letters, we find that they are not always, like Pascal, too busy to be brief. Of the living two deserve mention—A. B. Walkley, and an unknown American critic quoted by *The Bookman*. When the former was dramatic critic on *The Star* he went to a play entitled *A Dreadful Night*. At the head of his critique he put the title of the play, added the word 'Exactly,' and then let the matter drop. The American literary critic was equally to the point. He set down the title of the book, added its price and the author's name, and all he had to say in addition was 'Shake!' a review pleasing both to author and publisher.

But it is the French who have the best reputation for polished precision; it was one of their authors who confessed that he had a craze for packing a volume into a chapter, a chapter into a phrase, and a phrase into a word. Talleyrand, for instance, is credited with having written two letters to a widow. His letter of condolence was '*Hélas, madame!*' and when, a few months later, he heard of her engagement his note of congratulation ran '*Ho! ho! madame.*'

The rage for brevity seized upon Voltaire, who challenged Piron to a trial of epistolary terseness. Voltaire went into the country, leaving for his competitor the following letter, '*Eo rus*' (I am going to the country). If he thought he had won, Piron's reply disabused him. All it said was '*I*' (Go). But Victor Hugo and his publisher did even better. When *Les Misérables* was being published the author sent off a letter, the sole contents being '?' The publisher's reply was equally brief and entirely satisfactory—'!' After this one hardly dare venture to quote the shortest letter to *The Times;* it seems positively verbose in such company. It appeared under the heading 'How to Make Burial Harmless,' and all it said was, 'Sir,—Put in the coffin, quicklime. J. HOSKYNS-ABRAHALL.

'Coombe, Oxon., *Dec.* 21.'

Epitaphs cannot be excluded, though they are usually not sparing in words. There is the

classic instance in Westminster Abbey, 'O rare Ben Jonson!' Dr Fuller's epitaph runs 'Here lies Fuller's earth;' but Dr Fuller suggested an even shorter one for Dr Caius of Caius College: '*Fui Caius*,' which just managed to beat Maginnis's for brevity, '*Finis Maginnis*.' Douglas Jerrold suggested that Charles Knight's should be 'Good Knight,' and for Camden the title of his chief work, 'Camden's Remains.' Upon an auctioneer's monument was engraved, 'Going—*Going*—GONE.'

But a monument so inevitably marks the end of one's aspirations that we will bring this article to an end on a note of 'happy-ever-afterwards' by giving the shortest of marriage services. It is performed daily by the Milwaukee justices. 'Have her?' 'Yes.' 'Have him?' 'Yes.' 'Married. Two dollars.'

THE AIRY PRINCE.

PART III.

VII.

THERE was a knock at the door of 'The Plough and Crown,' which, in spite of its similarity to the title of a treatise, is the name of an exceedingly cosy little inn less than twenty miles from the outskirts of London. The landlady answered in person, presenting just the stout, apple-cheeked, buxom appearance that any one would expect from the owner of so cheery a hostelry.

'Good-morning to you, sir—and to you, miss,' said the estimable woman, as the unlocked door revealed an airman of solemn mien, and a blushing young lady whose hair had been blown into utter and captivating disorder.

A small dog appeared, irritably, from some subterranean passage, and, taking in the sight of strangers, proceeded to bark with such energy that, with each effort, he was shunted several inches to the rear, like a gun recoiling after discharge, until from very ill-temper he barked himself completely off the scene and out of this history.

'Good-morning, madam,' said the aviator. 'This young lady and myself would like to have breakfast at your house.'

The girl glanced furtively at him. It was the first time she had heard him speak in English.

'Bless your baby faces!' cried the woman. 'Come in out of the chilly morning; though what you be doing at this hour is beyond the likes o' me to fathomate' (a word which performed its function by being thoroughly understood).

She led them into the coffee-room, where he removed his coat and helmet, and threw them, together with the girl's flying-costume, over a chair. A sleepy-eyed and slovenly young woman-of-all-work appeared on the scene, and proceeded to build a wood fire in the grate; while the landlady, after the manner of her kind, bustled about, shifting chairs, colliding with the fire-making girl, removing glasses from the bar to the table, from the table to the shelf, and back to the bar again, all the while talking incessantly, or making comfortable noises when words failed her (which was very seldom), and, in short, giving that feeling of hospitable activity handed down from the good old days when passengers used to arrive by coach at 'The Plough and Crown.'

'Madam,' said the flying-man, seizing a moment when a more than usually severe jolt against her assistant had deprived the good woman of breath, 'I must telephone the aerodrome at Hounslow to send for my machine, so I shall stroll to the post-office down the road. In the meantime—this young lady speaks no English'——

'Bless her heart! What heathen country'——

'——speaks no English,' he persisted, 'and has travelled a long distance in the air'——

'Well, I've often said that'——

'——in the air,' he repeated, stifling her philosophy in its birth, 'and I shall be grateful if you will give her any attentions that your kind heart may suggest. She is cold, and I suppose she wants to make herself look pretty.'

'Leave her to me, the sweet innocent. If she were my own daughter, me not having any, but'——

'When I return, may we have breakfast?'

'A simple breakfast 'twill have to be,' said the hostess, emitting the words with a forcefulness reminiscent of a geyser that has been supporting on its chest a mountain which has obligingly shifted its position. 'Things is awful bad, and the Government don't trust no one these days. But I'll see what I can get for you two children, for you're an officer gentleman, and my own good man's in the army—London Scottish he is, though he ain't any more Scottish than the Pope of Rome; but he always had a fine figure, had my man—Jacob Wilson is his name, for thirty year owner of "The Plough and Crown," which always is welcome to them as wants a pint o' bitter or a bed for the night, and always will be as long as Jacob Wilson or me is to be found in the taproom when opening-time arrives.'

After this announcement of the past and future policy of 'The Plough and Crown,' the worthy woman seized a chair that was innocently gazing out of the window, and placed it directly opposite a highly coloured picture of a young lady in pink, talking to a blue young gentleman, while a yellow horse, in proportion a little larger than the horse of Troy, looked soulfully at them over a hedge.

Having done this, she rested her hands on her hips and sighed like a woman who knows she is overworked, but is resigned to her fate.

'Excuse me,' said the airman politely, then

turned to his companion, who had been staring in wide-eyed bewilderment at the activities of Mrs Jacob Wilson. . . . Frowning heavily at his young passenger, he inserted his pipe into his mouth, and left the inn without another word, sauntering along the roadway, where hedges and meadow-larks and cosy thatched cottages were combining in the merriest of madrigals on the beauty of Old England.

Upstairs, in 'The Plough and Crown,' Pippa's toilet was being superintended by the estimable proprietress, whose hospitality, surmounting the difficulty of language, poured out in a stream of garrulity.

She described to her little guest how Mr Jacob Wilson first appeared in kilts, causing her (Mrs Jacob Wilson) to throw her apron over her face and bid her lord and master go upstairs and clothe himself in propriety. She further confessed that he was a poor correspondent (though a man of deep intellect, for he was given to long spasms of silence); but every time he wrote from the trenches, which was once a month (though one month he had written twice, but in September—or was it October?—he had not written at all)—at any rate, he always said that he had a cold in his head and would she send his medicine, which he had used for eight-and-twenty years, and which had never failed to cure him.

After this testimony to Mr Jacob Wilson's recuperative powers, despite his susceptibility to colds, his wife became confidential, and told the girl of the adoration showered on her during her honeymoon by the aforesaid absent gentleman, together with other and romantic details which, being told in the strictest confidence, naturally have no place in these pages.

And the little girl from the Picardy mill-house listened. She may have understood that somewhere in the landlady's bountiful breast a noble heart was beating, that behind her cheerfulness lay the shadow of the trenches, and that any moment 'The Plough and Crown' might be robbed of the good man who had marched away with the London Scottish.

She may have understood less than that—or more. Who knows?

Half-an-hour later the Airy Prince returned, and they sat down together to a breakfast served to the tune of chortling fowls and the neighing of a near-by horse, while the fire chuckled and crackled in enjoyment of some joke of its own.

'Well, Pippa,' said the Black Cat, seizing a moment when Mrs Jacob Wilson had absented herself from the room, 'and what do you think of the English?'

The girl of the mill-house pictured the only two she had met.

'I think,' she said timidly, 'that you are—how say you it?—great talkers, yes?'

'Bless my soul!' said he, cutting a loaf of bread with the melancholy of an executioner beheading an esteemed relative; 'aren't we?'

VIII.

The train for London came round the bend, and drew up, panting, beside the platform. The airman and his little companion glanced into four compartments which were completely filled, and, hearing the admonition of the guard, were forced to enter a first-class carriage containing five occupants, who glared at the intruders with that triumph of rudeness found only on an English railroad.

'Sorry,' murmured the airman, and added something unintelligible about the train being full. A fierce-looking gentleman looked up from the *Morning Post* and lowered the window to its fullest extent. An anæmic woman opposite sneezed and fixed a devastating stare on the fierce gentleman. A very young officer of the Guards felt his lip, and stroked that portion of it which was pregnant with promise of moustache, while his mind wandered into the future. Would he cut Lady Dazzrymple's beastly dance, and content himself with only three that evening? Or, dash it all! should he go the whole works? What a bore! . . . A young woman with a face of deep intensity read the *New Statesman*, every now and then looking up from its pages (as a horse drinking at a trough will raise its head between draughts), apparently defying any one to challenge her on anything.

With his hands lazily in his coat-pockets, an Australian captain leant back in his corner and took in the freshness and winsomeness of the French girl, with an admiring frankness that inspired sudden doubt in the airman's mind whether it was really desirable to maintain a huge Empire.

For ten minutes, in a funereal silence, the train hurried towards the Metropolis, while the temperature of the compartment, both actually and temperamentally, dropped to freezing-point. Once, as an unusually pretty meadow met her eye (and where are there such meadows as one sees in England?), Pippa emitted an exclamation of delight and clapped her hands.

A look of horror from the fierce gentleman caromed off the *Morning Post* to the face of the offender. The anæmic woman stopped blowing her nose, and concentrated all her energies on a disdainful sniff. The very young Guardsman brought his eyes out of the future, and stared right through the girl—rotten form, what! The intense young woman frowned and made a mental note that she would write an article on 'The Girl of To-day'—or, perhaps, a letter to the *New Statesman* would be more effective. One never knew, these degenerate times, if an author was writing from conviction or merely writing for a living.

The Australian smiled generously, and burrowed his hands deeper into his capacious pockets.

Very timidly the erring daughter of France shifted closer to her protector, and her hand reached appealingly for his, which caused all eyes

but the Australian's to disappear like the legs of a troupe of Japanese acrobats from a cross-bar.

'Your Majesty'—— she said.

'Hush, Pippa! You must call me just "monsieur."'

'But why?'

'Well—you see, a prince is very important, and'——

'Then that is why these people are so solemn? They know you are a prince, yes?'

The airman tapped the bridge of his nose meditatively. 'N-not exactly,' he said.

'But they are so sad.'

'They are,' he agreed; 'but my countrymen sink to their greatest melancholy when they travel.'

'But why, monsieur?'

'That,' he said, 'I cannot tell you. Perhaps travelling on a train reminds them of the brief journey of life itself. At any rate, all really well-bred people who travel resent others doing the same thing.'

'What are well-bred people?'

He gazed at an advertisement for pyjamas.

'Well-bred people,' he said sententiously, 'are those who base their superiority on such intangible things that they leave nothing on which one can contest it. Do you understand me?'

'No,' said Pippa frankly; 'but I like your voice.'

'Thank you, little one. It was one of the first things I learned at Harrow—to say something well rather than something worth hearing.'

'I wonder if Louis had his breakfast,' said she, at a tangent.

'I think so,' he said, with a man's vagueness towards domestic economy; 'but, to finish my definition of well-bred people'——

'Louis will be angry at my leaving him,' she said musingly.

'Pippa, you must listen to me,' he said gravely.

'But may I not talk as well?'

'Really charming women only listen.'

'*Tiens!* What a droll country! Do these people understand what we say?'

'I don't think so, youngster. Most Britishers look on foreign languages as immoral.'

The fierce gentleman, who had been growing bluer with cold every minute, suddenly endeavoured to suppress a sneeze by smothering his face in a large handkerchief, with the result that he produced a combustive cohesion of sounds, which caused a gurgle of delight from the miller's niece. Violently blowing his nose, the irate one resumed his newspaper, first turning his coat-collar about his ears as the bracing April air blew full against him, and looking as genuinely bad-tempered as his somewhat immobile features would permit.

'But he is amusing, is he not?' cried the little French girl, then shrank back as the New Statesmanist fixed her with a look of ineffable and disapproving intellectuality. 'Monsieur, why is it she looks at me so?'

The aviator transferred his scrutiny from pyjamas to a picture of Canterbury Cathedral.

'She is the New Woman,' he said; 'and all New Women resent the Old.'

'I am old?—but no!'

He lowered his eyes from the cathedral to her happy, flushed face.

'Pippa,' he said, 'you are as old as Cleopatra.'

'Cleo-patra. How many years has she?'

'Oh, about two thousand.'

She pretended to be offended, and ended by looking such a thoroughly engaging little figure, with her dark hair and innocently intriguing eyes, that the airman resumed his study of architecture from sheer self-defence, and the Australian contemplated the odds against his knocking the student of cathedrals on the head, and, *à la* caveman of old, eloping forcibly with the damsel.

Chimney-pots! Hundreds of them—thousands of them.

Chimney-pots! Standing like regiments in stiff and orderly array, waiting for a review that never took place.

Chimney-pots! Short ones, stout ones, crumbling ones; gray, blue, and indigo ones; pots of no colour at all, and just as little character.

Chimney-pots! Racing by, mile after mile; industrious fellows, some of them, puffing out black smoke as though the mist over London were their private and personal concern.

Chimney-pots!

'Waterloo!' yelled a dozen voices, and the bewildered Pippa heard a stamping of feet, a rattling of trucks, the din of two porters in a semi-religious discussion concerning the right of way, the din being aided and abetted by a young gentleman possessed of a voice which had recently broken, who howled, alternately in a deep bass and a shrill treble (giving the general effect of a Swiss yodeler running amok), that, in exchange for coin of the realm, he was willing to barter light refreshment—very light refreshment indeed—in the shape of small biscuits or popular magazines. A slim girl porter, far too weak for her task, dragged a trunk from the van for a vigorous indispensable, who stood by with sixpence in his hand. A sailor kissed a rosy-cheeked woman with moist heartiness. . . . A taxi-driver, outside the station, took a sudden and violent dislike to a horse-cabby, casting loud aspersions on the latter's respectability, and hinting at a doubtful pedigree; to which the other replied simultaneously, his remarks being quite unintelligible, but apparently giving himself the greatest personal satisfaction. Down the road a street-piano burst forth into 'The Lost Chord.'

'Pippa,' said the airman, opening the door, 'we have arrived. The Prince with the Golden Key welcomes you to London.'

'*Mon Dieu*,' said that young person, 'what a noise!'

(*Continued on page 604.*)

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE LINK.

A TALE OF ADEN.

By R. A. ADAIR.

It stretches—ten dreary miles of low-lying sand, flanked on either side by the blue deeps of the Indian Ocean; bounded here by huge heaps of salt, tent-shaped, looking, in the early and all too brief twilight, like the ghostly encampment of some phantom army, hedged in there by a lazy windmill, or again by some gently rising, scarcely perceptible dune—it stretches from Aden on the one side to Sheik-Othman on the other, a link between civilisation and barbarism.

I.

STAFF-SERGEANT JACK DORLEY, R.E., finished off his shandy with a long draught, sat deeper into his long chair, and with a sigh of contentment stretched his legs on to the veranda-rail.

'Well, that's that,' he remarked drowsily.

'Busy day, staff?' asked the R.A. sergeant sitting next him.

'Not particularly,' said Dorley; 'but I'll be at it all to-morrow. Have to find a fault somewhere between here and Sheikh.'

'Wish I had the job,' said the gunner enviously. 'Nice gharry, gallon jar o' juice, little to do, and all day to get it done, eh?'

'Hardly! The gharry's all right; but no beer, thanks. Far too hot out there. All right for you to talk—finish parade at ten; but I can tell you it's no joke fagging out in those sands between eleven and three. You're much better off here, sonny.'

'When do you start?'

'Oh, about nine, I think,' said Dorley.

'Nine! Poor, hard-worked staff! I'm for Morbut at five-thirty. How about that? And it's ten now, so here's off. Good-night, staff!'

The gunner struggled out of his chair, and left the veranda.

'Decently cool now,' said the schoolmaster, appearing from behind a magazine; 'quite a treat after to-day's heat.'

'Yes,' said Dorley, 'this veranda's practically always cool; we certainly get what breeze there is going.'

They were seated on the veranda of the R.A. sergeants' mess, perched up on the low *khuds* overlooking the primitive links that Aden boasts of. To their left front rose Fort Tarshyne, rugged and frowning, twinkling with a hundred lights from the officers' bungalows. A young moon lightened the sea into a shimmering mass, and made the rocks of Little Aden—far across the gulf—just visible. Brilliantly lighted, looking to those on shore like some blazing cheap jeweller's shop in far-off London, a German East African crept out of the harbour towards the open sea. Away to the right, straggling off from the more prominent little Aden rocks, the low-lying isthmus was just visible.

The schoolmaster indicated the latter with his pipe. 'Your job lies out that way, I believe. What exactly is it?'

'Still after information, Mr Bryce?' said Dorley with a laugh. 'Well, it isn't very exciting. Part of my work is to keep intact the phone line between here and Sheikh. We get plenty of faults reported. Sometimes it's a flaw in the line, sometimes—near Sheikh—a tree gets mixed up with the line, and at times even the line is cut.'

'Cut—by whom?'

'Oh, some fanatical Arab, I suppose, thinking to destroy British prestige with a jack-knife. It's a bit tougher than that, though—eh?'

'Slightly,' said the schoolmaster; 'but aren't the wires worth bagging altogether? They're copper, I believe.'

'Not now. We removed all the copper long ago. A new line didn't last a week. The present stuff is not worth the risk of taking.'

'Still, to me, fresh from home,' mused the schoolmaster, 'it's very strange to think we here are so near the verge of barbarism. Here in Aden we have civilisation, barracks, schools, links, big guns—all the things that spell British; while out there, half-a-dozen miles off, is—well, primitiveness, if I can use the word. It always seems to me that the isthmus is just a link—a link, and not a long or a strong one at that—between civilisation here and barbarism there. . . . And what if it broke?'

'Not much fear of that,' said Dorley. 'It's not so weak as one might think.'

'Still,' answered Bryce, 'it *might* break one day—stronger links have. Just supposing the Arabs did decide on a sudden raid—quick and with no warning—what then?'

'Oh, we'd be quite O.K., I'm sure. The news would be phoned over from Sheikh in a jiffy, and your Arab levy wouldn't get a quarter of a mile on the link—as you style it.'

'But you base your defence on the warning

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from Sheikh. Supposing it wasn't given? Native police have been bribed or murdered before to-day, you know.'

Dorley openly yawned. 'Bit pessimistic, aren't you?' he said, sitting up. 'Try a peg; it 'll help to get you out of the blues.—Boy'——

II.

Dorley was tired, sick, and cross. He lay stretched out under the trees in the Government garden at Sheikh-Othman, enjoying the only natural shade to be obtained in or near Aden. The morning had been fagging, and his day's work had produced nothing, for, in spite of frequent tappings, he had failed to locate the fault in the line. Worse still, during the morning a fitful breeze had bowled his topee over the sands, leaving him bareheaded for a full five minutes, and giving him quite a beastly sick headache. The shade in the garden was very pleasant, and the creaking of the wind-driven pumps, together with the gush of the water, was music in his ears.

It was as yet only a little after noon, and he vigorously damned the ill-luck that would make him go off again across the isthmus in the blazing heat instead of waiting till the cool of the evening.

'What was it that schoolmaster chap called the blasted thing?' he mused. '"A link!" And a damned hot un at that. Must have been forged in hell!'

He laughed feebly at his witticism.

'Wish I hadn't got this fat head; it 's just the last straw. Damn that wind! It comes once in a blue moon, and when it does arrive, if if doesn't choke you with a sandstorm it takes your topee. Still, I suppose it 's no use grumbling about it. Duty must be done, me boy; so here goes.'

III.

Three o'clock on a May afternoon on the Isthmus of Aden is not quite so cool as it might be. For the tenth time since leaving Sheikh, Dorley left the friendly shade of his gharry and trudged across to the telephone-wires. An Indian sapper swarmed up the pole and connected up, the while Dorley completed the earth connection. His head was throbbing wearily, making him long for a cool drink and a bed. He called up Sheikh. Yes, they got him all right; no fault here again—must be on the other side.

He looked up at the rattle of the gharry, only to see it careering madly towards Aden.

'Now, where the devil is that blasted fool off to?' he ejaculated wearily.

A call from Sheikh drew his attention again to the phone.

'What 's that?—What?—What 's that?—Hi!'

But the operator at Sheikh, after giving a ghastly scream, strangled almost at birth, was silent.

'My God!' said Dorley. 'Arabs? Surely the man 's mad; or has that damned schoolmaster, with his infernal croaking, something of the prophet in him?'

The sapper up the pole gave a sudden yell and scrambled down, in his desperate frenzied hurry falling the last eight feet. He picked himself up, and without a word made for Aden as fast as his trembling legs would carry him.

Then in the distance, towards Sheikh, Dorley saw them. On they came—in twos at first, then in groups of half-a-dozen, followed by the main mass. Splendidly horsed, they came on apace, spreading across the isthmus as they advanced. There were hundreds in sight already. God only knew their actual strength. Thousands probably.

The foremost halted for a moment, swarmed up the pole, and down again.

'Cutting the wires,' thought Dorley. 'The swines! But I've still got Aden. I 'll do 'em yet.'

As fast as his wearied limbs would allow him, he climbed the pole, and connected with the Aden wire. From here he could see a mass of the Arabs swerve off towards Khor Maxar. Evidently the plans were well considered.

Down again; and now for Aden.

'Are you there? Are you there? Hurry! For God's sake, hurry!'

But Aden was dumb.

'The fault,' he thought—'the fault! Hang it! of course, I 'll never get 'em.'

Over his shoulder he could see the advancing Arabs, now only a mile away.

Again to the phone.

'God—God—that fault! Break it! Clear it!' he raved.

Swift through his mind passed the conversation of the evening before. The link! Yes, the schoolmaster was right. The link was breakable, and was on the verge of snapping.

What was that? Aden calling? Yes, it *was* Aden.

'Arabs!' he gasped. 'Arabs—taken Sheikh—cutting the wires, and coming over the isthmus! D'yer hear? Arabs—Arabs—for Heaven's sake, listen!'

'Steady,' said the cool voice from Aden. 'Keep your hair on, old man, and start again.'

The nearest Arab, now only some eight hundred yards away, dismounted and knelt.

'This is the end,' groaned Dorley, 'and the link will go. Oh, the devil take that fool!'

With a crash, a bullet smashed into the pole some six feet up.

'Good,' grinned Dorley, 'but not good enough.'

Again he addressed the cool voice. 'Listen, you damned fool!' he said, endeavouring to be steady. 'Listen—Arabs have taken Sheikh, sent a party to Khor Maxar, and are coming across the isthmus. Many? Some thousands.

Get to work quickly—what? I'm Dorley of the R.E.'s. Yes, yes, hurry. I'm done. Oh, bad luck!'

'What's up?' said the voice, now rather agitated.

'Hit,' said Dorley—'only in the arm, but they'll get me next time. Get a move on. Ah-h-h!'

Yes, they had him this time. He felt it, hot and cold at once, in him, through him, tearing away body and life in its awful course.

. . . . . .

They found him later, face downwards in the blazing sun, with the gharry wallah and the Indian sapper doing their best to aid him.

The gharry stood by the roadside as he had left it. The wires were intact, Sheikh-Othman, lazy in the afternoon sun, drowsed on as usual. Arabs there were none. The isthmus was deserted.

And Dorley, lying in the sand, with flushed cheeks and open, staring eyes, babbled on about links and Arabs.

. . . . . .

Strange how a touch of the sun *does* affect a man!

A NEW PLATINUM SUBSTITUTE.

By G. Basil Barham, C.E.

THE price of platinum was at one time so low that it was used for many purposes for which other and cheaper metals must be used to-day. Thus, it was once employed for the contacts of electric bells and induction coils. A tiny button of platinum was used in connection with the old form of telephone transmitter, and the early carbon filament lamps had 'leading-in' wires of platinum of fair length and section. As a matter of fact, the old carbon lamps of, say, twenty-five years ago would be worth more to-day for the platinum alone than they cost retail at that time. Platinum rings, bracelets, and chains were comparatively cheap; the metal entered into the composition of fairly low-priced dental sets; and no one could have imagined that a time would come when platinum would be worth six or seven times its weight in gold.

There seems no immediate possibility of the shortage being relieved. Indeed, there is every likelihood of further increases in price. Since the outbreak of war the cost of an ounce of platinum has more than doubled. He would be a bold man who would venture to express the opinion that it has now reached its maximum cost.

As the metal is practically a necessity in many chemical industries, it is not surprising that metallurgists have given much time and thought to seeking an alloy which would possess all, or a large number, of the attributes which render platinum so useful. Many have seemed at times to be on the brink of success, and quite a number of platinum substitutes are now in use, but they all fall short of the pure metal in one or more respects.

It may be that the new alloy which has been discovered by Dr F. A. Fahrenwald may not be suitable for every purpose for which platinum alone could previously be used; but, if so, the purpose has not yet been discovered. And if time shows the truth of the inventor's claims, a number of industries will be saved from the necessity of raising their prices to the point of practically extinguishing their trade.

The bulk of the platinum used before the war went in dental sets, and of this only a comparatively small amount is recoverable. Jewellers used about the same amount, and the balance was utilised by chemical and electrical engineers and by scientific instrument makers, and for scientific purposes generally.

It has been pointed out that a substitute for platinum must resist temperatures up to 1300 or 1400 degrees centigrade; it must be unaffected by mineral acids or alkalies, either fused or in solution; and must not oxidise at any temperature up to and including its melting-point (1775 degrees centigrade). Further, it must be malleable, ductile, and sufficiently strong to resist stresses tending to change its form while in use. Jewellers would add that it must be as white as platinum, but Dr Fahrenwald says that platinum is valued in jewellery solely because it is so expensive.

By a process of elimination Dr Fahrenwald found that the only elements suitable for making an alloy which would take the place of platinum were palladium and gold. Iridium and rhodium might be used were it not for their rarity, costliness, and refractoriness; and silver had to be omitted because it is readily attacked by acids, and its melting-point is too low. His experiments finally resulted in a series of alloys consisting of platinum, gold, and palladium, which he calls *rhotanium*, distinguishing the different kinds as 5, A, A5, B, C, and D. These are from 60 to 90 per cent. gold. In the alloys for electrical use there is a minute quantity of rhodium, and in those for purposes other than chemical there is also a small quantity of silver.

An elaborate series of tests was made in the University of Michigan Chemical Laboratories, the report of which shows that for use with hydrochloric acid, hydrofluoric acid, dilute nitric acid, concentrated sulphuric acid, and many powerful alkalies, the alloys are better than pure platinum. They cannot be used with hot concentrated nitric acid or as anodes in electro-

lytic work, but serve well as cathodes in such work.

Rhotanium is practically white, can be rolled into sheets, drawn into wires, welds as readily as iron, weighs only half as much as platinum, does not oxidise, and below 1300 degrees centigrade is less volatile than platinum.

It has already been used by dentists for pins, baked into porcelain teeth, and as foil for other purposes. It serves well for contact terminals in automatic electric devices, telephones, switchboards, certain kinds of magnetos, &c. For jewellery it is better than platinum, because it is harder, stronger, takes a finer finish, does not tarnish or corrode, and in colour is practically identical.

THE SEARCHERS.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SUCH was the strange, sad record of wasted power and the searing consciousness thereof; courage and resource sapped and perverted by the insidious poison of self-pity and the corrosion of revenge; and the end—the glissade to the abyss. There were glimpses of finer issues, but the thought of the colonel's fate and 'The Searcher's' black dissimulation dried up the springs of pity.

Tony had taken the notebook-leaves. '"As a man sows,"' he said. 'He tells us that his mind once gave way. It is charitable to suppose that it never again became normal. An *idée fixe* grew from an obsession to paranoia—and he became a thing without a soul. Better dead!' There was a long silence as he slowly turned over the leaves. 'Aphorisms on the brink of death are rare,' he went on with unwonted gravity. 'He writes: "The Devil . . . keeps his appointments." But there is an older and a surer saying, Neil—"Them that honour Me I will honour." . . . Let us go home.'

Tired though we were, the return journey would have been set about at once, but when we looked up to the saddle of the Pass the ground was blanketed by the white fleece of a summer mist—not an uncommon weather caprice on a hot, windless day in the Larig. Malcolm and Duncan prophesied that it would clear in a couple of hours, but it was late in the evening ere it lifted and we turned our faces towards the Glen.

By the time we had breasted the slope up to the col, darkness hovered over the Pass, silent shadows gathering for their nightly tryst. The last red spark of the dying sun flickered and dipped out of sight behind far western hills, its afterglow short-lived in the sombre fastnesses around us. Colour and outline were lost as the sun lowered. Muich Dhui's deep red was the last to surrender, and then Night—stars acclaiming her—scaled the mountains.

The descent now became easier as the Pass widened. Soon we struck a path in the heather through the foothills, where the soft turf underfoot instead of the everlasting granite, the neighbourhood of friendly trees after the relentless moraines, and the dewy scent of the woods—myrrh and frankincense—growing stronger at every step, brought, to one of us at least, solace and an exaltation of the spirit. The kindly host of stars paled as the early June dawn began to stir, unveiling a delicate vista of pine-woods slipping from sable to green pavilions; the land breaking to the valley; a link of the distant river; and then—welcome sight—a score of white specks, the little homesteads asleep in the peace of the Glen. Another couple of hours through the forest, and the old house of The Bield, bathed in the clean radiance of the morning, saluted us with kindling eyes. The old casket had at last come to its rightful owner's door.

. . . . . .

From the Running Target Mine of bleak memory to the experts' report on the jewels was an Arabian Nights' transition. A cynic might arrive at their approximate value by pondering on the number of my hitherto unsuspected well-wishers who have expressed the hope that my sudden wealth may not be a source of unhappiness. I shall risk it.

Tony cherishes the Leopard's Eye, which I presented to him as a souvenir of those hectic days. It is a meagre recognition of his services, and it was only when I convinced him that I regarded it with an unconquerable aversion that he accepted it. To my fancy, its velvet depths change too suddenly to a predatory glower, and in its wonderful line is the challenge of a mocking spirit of Evil, imprisoned and unrepentant. Truth to tell, gems in themselves offer no attraction to me, and very soon, when the rest of them are put up at Christie's, the fall of the hammer will rejoice the august Order of the Highest Bidders.

Exeunt 'The Searchers.' The evil brotherhood has not been heard of since, and Tony tells me the authorities are confident that it exists no more.

Benedetto, *alias* This, That, and the Other, was laid by the heels a few weeks afterwards when he was stepping off the steamer at Ostend. He got a well-earned term of penal servitude for his share in the Italian Bank-Note Forgery; and as the smooth old villain is nearly seventy, it is extremely probable that the rest of his days

will be passed in company with his *bête noire*—hard and regular work.

Tireless and nerveless as ever, Tony continues his beloved and adventurous work. He promises to be a striking success, and has no enemies, other than his natural foes who love darkness rather than light. One of these days, with his permission, I may chronicle a few of his doings.

He runs north to the Glen now and then, and many a good day he and I have together on the moor and in the forest. Our friendship apart, he is a thrice welcome guest. He is a prince of story-tellers, and the Laird's Room, where the old casket has the place of honour, often sees my friends and myself chained round the fire until the small hours, listening to his tales of tight corners. He has figured in many exciting experiences, but I doubt if he recalls any of them with as keen a savour as the one that wrought to its end amidst the mountains, on the day when 'The Searcher' stepped into the hush of the Chanter Corrie.

THE END.

'THE PEARL OF THE PACIFIC.'

By W. Scott Lorrie.

THE steamer is besieged by a hundred boats, all gaudily painted. Standing in his *chalupa*, the bronze-faced *fletero* picks you out among the passengers wandering about the deck, and raising his hands melodramatically, fires at you some incomprehensible words which you take to be an offer to pull you ashore. Competition is running high, and his efforts to secure your patronage interest you as expressions of the human striving for a livelihood. Luck, naturally, does not always fall his way, and disappointment oftentimes runs at par with his prospects at their brightest. You have not intimated that you are going to engage him, but he rushes up the companion-way and makes for where you are. You say no; that you are a transit passenger, or that you have already made arrangements with somebody else. Disappointment has its effect on him, and his eyes sparkle under their jet-black lashes, revealing his bad temper. He walks away in a huff, and mumbles something that it is probably to your benefit to ignore.

As usual, a crowd on the pier awaits the arrival of the steamer at Valparaiso, which is often referred to as 'The Pearl of the Pacific.' A hundred yards away is the monument erected to the memory of Arturo Prat, the greatest of Chilian naval heroes, who is seen half-enveloped in the flag of his country. A large square faces the pier, across whose eastern extremity you walk to the custom-house, while the governor's palace catches the eye, nestling at the foot of a house-clad hill in the background. The people, the fine modern buildings, the busy thoroughfares, the dazzling sunshine, and the turquoise sky suggest that the place must be as good as any on earth, and your admiration deepens as you see more of it. It is no use trying to picture beforehand what the place is like, for you will be fated to discover that the reality is as far out of keeping with the preconceived notion as can well be. I had pictured Valparaiso to be a centre of Machiavellian revolutionaries; of half-civilised Araucanians, ever on the alert to take in a foreigner; of muddy streets, unpaved side-walks, and inadequate buildings. I was mistaken, though, for the city is in every respect as up-to-date as it can well be, ranking among the finest in existence.

Built on some thirty hills—each of which has a name of its own—Valparaiso is one of the most curious and uniquely formed cities in the world. On the fashionable hills of Alegre and Concepcion dwell the British and the German residents, who apparently live very happily and comfortably, so little regard do they have for the outer world. Both colonies have their own churches, large clubrooms and concert-halls, and schools and hospitals that do honour to the city.

There is no sign of slowness on the part of the people to take full advantage of the benefits of modern civilisation in all its phases. The climate is delightful, healthful, and sometimes even exhilarating, and the inhabitants are hospitable and pleasant to speak to. Saying this reminds me of a member of the editorial staff of a well-known London magazine, who said that Valparaiso was one of the filthiest and most insalubrious holes on earth, absolutely unfit for any European to live in. It is a pity that he had no personal experience of the place he so readily disparaged!

If those thirty house-clad hills could only speak, what tales they could tell of the days of long ago, when they frowned down on the pirates and buccaneers, and finally on the warriors of Philip II., whose last efforts to maintain the Spanish bureaucratic methods enforced in the colonies failed, thanks to the stubborn determination of the makers of their independence!

In the fifteenth century, when Valparaiso was sacked by Drake, Hawkins, and Van Noort, there were not enough houses to accommodate comfortably the two or three hundred inhabitants. Since that time, however, the city has grown prosperous and wealthy, although its people have experienced many a disastrous set-back.

In 1814 a fight took place, a few hundred yards from that part of the shore now occupied by the principal railway station, between the British vessels *Phœbe* and *Cherub* and the American *Essex*. The *Essex* had been despatched under the command of Commodore David Porter, who had received orders to do as much harm as possible to British merchantmen in the Pacific. The British Government ordered the frigate *Phœbe* and the corvette *Cherub* (which happened to be in Callao), under Commodore James Hillyard, to set out in search of the *Essex*, and capture or destroy her. She was at length found at anchor in Valparaiso. A terrific fight was the result. After several hours' hard fighting, the *Essex* was overpowered and sunk. When British and American tourists visit Valparaiso they never forget that the place was the scene of a naval action of which they are justly proud; nor do they ever fail to pay a visit to the graves of those who lost their lives on that memorable day. So it happened with me. I felt overcome by curiosity to see those graves and read on the marble slabs the inscriptions that commemorate the dead.

The Protestant cemetery is perched on one of the hills in the centre of the city. Access to it is gained from a street bearing an English name—Cumming. As chance would have it, the day I chose for my visit was the 2nd of November (All-Souls' Day). Now, it is customary in Roman Catholic states that every one on this day should visit the graves of the dead. That is why a procession of people in deep mourning filled the street almost all the way from the *plaza*, at the foot of the hill, to the Catholic cemetery, adjoining the Protestant one.

It was all so very interesting that before branching off towards the Protestant cemetery I decided to have a look at the other burying-ground, now so full of life and colour. The church bells crowned the silence of the morning with doleful cadences. They throbbed and lulled, broke out in one general and harmonious peal, then sank gradually as the hour to cease approached. In the little chapel in the middle of the cemetery a service was being held, and a murmur of prayer and hushed voices hung round the temple and filtered beyond the gravestones. In that small burying-ground there prevailed the utmost respect for those wrapped in eternal rest. Every one had a look of sorrow in his face; every one felt bound by the traditional duty of attending on that day.

There are many fine tombs and mausoleums in the Roman Catholic cemetery that tell of its being the resting-place of some of the city's greatest and best children, the last home of many illustrious men and women who were born to no titles, but achieved fame and fortune by their own energy and their own genius. At the foot of one of the graves a young widow and her child were shedding tears. They had laid carefully under the gray marble cross a dainty wreath of violets, and another of mixed flowers. None of the tombs showed signs of neglect. I cannot hope to convey in written words the surging emotions I felt as my mind absorbed such vivid and painful sights.

In the eighteenth century Valparaiso had grown to such importance that it could help the patriots in the definitive overthrow of Spanish rule. In 1817 there poured into the town the fugitives of the battle of Chacabuco, at whose head was General Maroto, who had ordered the destruction of all the villages lying between Santiago and Valparaiso. On 13th February 1817 several thousand defeated Spanish soldiers and settlers entered the place, followed by a no less numerous lot of leading immigrants, wealthy families, necessitous employees attached to the Spanish administration service, and innumerable harlots, of the sort that generally followed the Spanish armies through South America. These panic-stricken people gathered on the shore and implored the commanders of the Spanish vessels in the bay to admit them on board, and thus save them from the hot pursuit of the Chilian armies.

In the meantime the Spanish soldiers gave themselves up to looting and pillaging the houses that were nearest to the sea. They set many of them on fire, and the two or three thousand inhabitants felt their hearts sink within them, and prayed that the liberators might come soon to deliver them from the wrath and fury of the depredators. Of the four thousand odd Spanish soldiers, only about one-half were able to get away in the royal fleet, that set sail the instant the patriots' guns opened fire from the hill-tops. With no great difficulty the town was captured, and the Spanish soldiers who could not embark were taken prisoners. The flag of the victorious patriots, who had thus definitely established the cause of independence, waved above the great fortress that stood where the Plaza Echaurren is to-day.

In November 1822 Valparaiso and an extensive part of the coast began to be convulsed by a succession of shocks, the first of which was of great severity. The heavings of the earth were quite perceptible to the eye. The sea rose and fell to a great extent in the harbour, and ships appeared as if they were first rapidly forced through the water, and then struck on the ground. The town was completely overthrown. In some parts the earth opened, and discharged water mixed with sand, which gathered in heaps three or four feet high. At the promontory of Quintero fissures were formed in the solid granite parallel to each other and to former similar rents. It is said that sounds like those produced by the escape of steam accompanied this earthquake, which was felt throughout a distance of one

thousand two hundred miles along the coast, a portion whereof was permanently raised to a height varying from two to four feet.

In October 1829 the city was again severely shaken, and many houses were thrown down, with much loss of life. Other violent earthquakes were felt in 1835 and 1851. In 1866 the place was bombarded by a Spanish fleet, and the damage done was enormous. This was the last attempt of the fierce, reckless revellers of Spain to maintain their power and dominion in this part of the world. For forty years Valparaiso knew of no further trouble of any magnitude, except the mad acts of the overthrowers of President Balmaceda in 1891, until once more, on 16th August 1906, a calamitous earthquake struck the city. It was a rainy night, and the church clock opposite the Plaza Victoria would have struck eight in another five minutes. Soon the air was filled with the confused murmur of voices, that groaned and sank, that came in hoarse gusts and then subsided to a sullen hum, a murmur, caught up every now and then into a single prayer, which was flung wildly into the evening sky, and was followed by a general clamour, as if all the voices strove together, thrust each other aside, and trampled to be free. There was an onrush of voices pouring round the ruined houses, an interminable succession of voices—a multitude was praying for pardon and protection from the ire of Nature.

Rip Van Winkle, after his long sleep in the Catskills, could scarcely have been more astonished at the changed aspect of his native village than I was at the wonderful improvements that nine years had worked in Valparaiso. The destroyed city has been rebuilt. But there are still one or two nooks that serve as sad remembrancers of the terrible event of 1906.

There are in Valparaiso quite a number of places of interest to the foreigner: public buildings, parks, theatres, hotels, monuments, pretty suburban localities and house-studded hills and ravines, where the foreign residents seem to rival each other in the spectacular upkeep of their garden homes. There is the splendid arch-like monument presented to the city by the British residents on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the first struggle for the cause of independence, 18th September 1810. It is situated a little way down the Avenida Brazil. Every one knows it; every one recognises that Arco de los Ingleses running across the avenue.

Valparaiso lies between two particularly interesting suburbs, Viña del Mar and Playa Ancha. One is the home of the *élite;* the other is what might be called an extensive park, whose hillsides are studded with small cottages. Here the air and the climate are bracing and exhilarating. There is a large oval in the centre of the park, where football and tennis are the chief pastimes on holidays, and whence flowerbeds and tree-lined avenues lead down to a good lighthouse, propped on a hill at just the point where it breaks on its descent toward the sea. Near by are the fortifications of Yerbas Buenas and Punta de los Angeles.

Viña del Mar cannot be spoken of in too high terms. It is a small but beautiful town. The most striking object which it can show is its racecourse, ranking among the finest in the world. At any of the racecourses in England one will often meet some old fopdoodle who knows more about this or that particular racecourse than all the turf-masters put together. So it is at Viña del Mar, where I happened to hear many an interesting yarn about the place in its different periods of development.

A magnificent thoroughfare is that fashionable Avenida de la Libertad, full of palatial residences and pretty gardens, that speak eloquently of the progress of the country and the enterprise of its people. Driving down that avenue, one is reminded of some beautiful summer-resort in Europe—a Jean-les-Pins of the Riviera, for example. The bathing-place of Miramar stands at the south-western extremity of Viña del Mar. Hundreds of seats and numerous summer-houses are to be found along the promenade, where cheerful bathers make the best of an afternoon plunge, and mirthful little folks play on the sands, defiant of the northern breeze, which is strong and chill.

There is a house built out over the sea, with the waves splashing against it, and looking for all the world like the bow of an ocean liner furrowing its way through the billows of the angry deep. In the interior there are many habitués, seated at small tables, and outside a distinguished crowd of people roam about.

STOLEN GUESTS.

CHAPTER IV.—THE CURE.

MEANWHILE Miss Marion Smith had been doing her best to give the police authorities a worrying time. She inundated their offices with hourly messages demanding why they had not discovered the whereabouts of General Cockburn Davidson. Had she been his wife she could not have been more insistent. She hardly ever mentioned her nephew, Jack Wright; her concern was for his superior officer. For her relative she was bottling up the greatest scolding of her life.

'He has led the poor general away into some

mischief,' she muttered in anger. 'One would have thought that a man of the general's age would not have allowed himself to be guided about by a mere boy.' She forgot that she herself had been making use of that same youngster to bring the distinguished man within her reach, the unsafest place of all!

At last a telegram reached Auchinbreck that brought a ray of hope. The detective department was waking up. They believed they had got a clue. General Cockburn Davidson was known to have gone north to Inverness, and was doubtless now in the neighbourhood of the Highland capital.

Miss Marion hastily consulted time-tables. She determined to go in search of the lost pair herself.

'Those blundering police have taken days to discover this,' she said to her niece. 'I will give them a lesson in their own business. If the general is near Inverness I will ferret him out, and bring the pair of them here. They have made me the laughing-stock of the parish, and they will just have to come and put things right.'

So Miss Marion started north, and her train in due course brought her into Perth station. There the first person she met on the platform was her cousin Mary, looking very distracted and at sea.

'You here, Mary! Why, I have not seen you for years. You have become a perfect hermit. Are you on the outlook for another situation? For, if so, I fear I cannot give you any reference after what happened.' Miss Marion meant this as her little joke, but it struck a new terror into the heart of the timid runaway.

Poor Miss Mary had lost all her nerve, and her old disease had come back with redoubled vehemence, as if in revenge for her attempt to throw it off. She shuddered at the very sight of her cousin.

'No; I am going to London—for a change,' she gasped.

'By yourself, as usual. Really, Mary, you are living a useless life all alone. As soon as I get my present business off my hands I must come and root you out. I suppose in your journey from Inverness you have not seen anything of a general, have you, with a jackanapes of a young lieutenant accompanying him?'

'Do you mean—Jack?'

'I refer to General Cockburn Davidson, a friend of mine, who ought to have been staying with me at the present moment if he had not gone mysteriously amissing.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Miss Mary suddenly, with a new terror in her voice.

The north mail had just come in, and was emptying its passengers, and there, towering above the crowd, was the soldierly figure of the general, with Jack Wright beside him. In front of them a porter was carrying two portmanteaus, which Jack had insisted on packing at the last moment and taking with them. On each the name of its owner was painted, and it was this that caught Miss Marion's eye.

'Why, I believe,' she exclaimed, 'here is a clue right off. These bags must belong to the missing officers, and I am certain that must be the general and my nephew.'

Leaving her cousin without another word, Miss Marion accosted the general.

'Ah, I have found you at last,' she said playfully. 'You naughty man. What a lot of trouble you have caused me! But that is just the way with bachelors; they never think.'

'Pardon me, madam,' said the general, saluting; 'but you have the advantage of me.'

'You are General Cockburn Davidson?' said Miss Marion, a little more stiffly.

'Yes, that is my name.'

'And there is that young scamp of a nephew, Lieutenant Wright, behind you. I am sure it is all his fault.'

'And your name, may I ask?'

'I am Miss Smith of Auchinbreck, where you ought to be now.'

'We have just come from there,' replied the general, who had not yet grasped the distinction in sound of the two names, 'and we are searching for our hostess, Miss Smith; but you are certainly not she.'

'Indeed! Do I not know my own identity? Now, I see what's wrong. It must be shell-shock. Poor fellows, they have lost their memories!' The latter words she had mumbled to herself.

'Jack Wright, I am your aunt, Miss Smith,' she added, addressing the younger officer.

'Oh no—but I wish you would tell us where she is,' he replied.

Miss Mary, with beating heart, had dodged behind a big pillar, and, like a hunted animal, was glancing everywhere for a more secure hiding-place. For the moment she was out of sight. She was trembling in every limb.

'Well, you are a pair of fools,' blurted out Miss Marion, fast losing her temper; 'and to think that you have been trekking about the country like this for a whole week, and yet the detective department has failed to find you!'

'You seem deeply interested in our movements,' said the general icily, as he tried to force his way past. 'We wish to catch the London train.'

'You will do nothing of the kind,' she replied indignantly. 'You will come home with me.—Jack, you are my sister's own son, and I expect better behaviour of you than that.'

But she got no further. There was a sudden unexpected interruption. The general had actually pushed rudely past her, and started running down the platform. Miss Mary, like many a hunted creature, had done a foolish thing in her fear. She thought she might dart across the platform and through the archway unseen. She felt that she must do something,

so she risked it, and at once was spotted by her pursuers. It was the maddest thing to do. Had she simply remained where she was, and moved round the pillar, keeping it between herself and the general, she might have avoided his eye, and escaped detection. Now she realised too late that she had been recognised, and this gave wings to her feet. She bolted through the archway, not knowing where she was going, but seeking in desperation for some place to hide.

A train bound for Dundee was just moving off from the platform, and the door of a first-class carriage happened to be open. Without a thought except that of escape, Miss Mary jumped in, and threw herself into the farthest seat, as much out of sight as possible. But the general had just seen her action with the corner of his eye, as he bounded through the archway, and he made a spurt after the train, regardless of the shouts of porters. Giving one who tried to bar his way a rough shove to the side, he jumped on to the boards of the carriage, and opened the door of the compartment where poor Miss Mary was cowering.

He was breathless himself and could not speak, but he felt triumphant that he had succeeded. After what had happened, he was determined not to let her out of his sight again.

Suddenly a face appeared at the window, and a voice said, 'Tickets, please.'

'I have no ticket,' gasped poor Miss Mary.

'Will you give me your names, then?' said the persistent official.

'I am General Cockburn Davidson. Now get off and leave us alone,' replied the officer testily.

'Excuse me, sir, but you are the gentleman we have all been warned to be on the look-out for. Where are you going to?'

'Auchinbruich, *viâ* Aberdeen and Inverness.'

The general took command of the situation. He saw that Miss Mary was exhausted, that the one place she needed most was home, and he decided that he would pilot her back safely.

The man let go his hold of the window and dropped on to the platform as the train gathered speed, and the two were left alone.

'Can you forgive me, Miss Smith, for the way I have chased you?' began the general, with greater nervousness than he had ever manifested before in his life. 'I was afraid that if I let you out of my sight I should never find you again. Will you let me take you back to your own pretty Highland home, which looks so deserted without its mistress? And I wonder if, in that delightful Highland hospitality of yours, you would let me stay with you—for ever?'

The shock of his question, whose force lay in his glance and tones, gave Miss Mary's shyness its *coup de grâce*. The frightened look fled from her face, as she softly answered, 'My home is yours—now and always.'

Meanwhile, on a Perth platform, a young Australian subaltern was getting the scolding of his life from an irate, long-lost aunt.

THE END.

ST JAMES'S PARK.

By E. Beresford Chancellor, M.A., F.R.Hist.S.

WHAT Hyde Park is to the world of fashion to-day, that was St James's Park to our forebears in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—a place to lounge and gossip in; a place where the last 'toast' flaunted her beauty, or the fine gentleman *par excellence* flourished his clouded cane or toyed with his amber-headed snuff-box. To-day St James's Park is a pleasant spot of greenery, but it is little more. The only loiterers there are the happy children who, on summer afternoons, crowd the grass; or those of maturer age who may be seen feeding the ducks (like Charles II.), or wondering at the gulls. The place has been changed out of all knowledge. The Mall, once so umbrageous (to use a favourite eighteenth-century word), is now become a roadway so wide that only the greatly daring risk their lives by crossing it. Where the Merry Monarch once strolled with Rochester and Sedley, or conversed with Mistress Eleanor Gwynn or the sedate Evelyn, or where, later, those beautiful goddesses the Gunnings drew crowds of admirers, so that George II. once gave them a military escort to ward off the inquisitive, motors rush screaming up and down, and stately processions pass between the Palace and the hurrying world at Charing Cross.

Indeed, St James's Park has, in this way, kept up with its various periods of existence in quite a remarkable manner; rough and ready in the days of the Tudors, it was gay and picturesque in those of the Stuarts and the early Georges, as now it is active and business-like in our own Georgian era.

Its history, like that of every square yard in London, is full of interest. As an enclosed piece of ground, it came into existence under Henry VIII., who, when he obtained the land hereabouts from the Abbey of Westminster in 1531, and erected St James's Palace on part of it, built a wall round that portion which remained. He seems, however, to have done little more; and though even this was a vast improvement in a place which at a very early period had been but a marshy piece of ground, it was not very much; and centuries before Henry became possessed of the land this 'Slough of Despond,' as it was termed, was in a sufficiently sound

state to afford accommodation for an annual fair which was first held in St James's Fields in the reign of Edward I. The proceeds of this fair were allocated to the Leper Hospital, which then stood—having been founded 'long before the time of any man's memory,' according to Stow—on the site of the present St James's Palace.

During the days of the Tudors the Park was reserved for the royal family and the royal household, and in it, at its western end, was that Rosamund's Pond, once described by Warburton as 'long consecrated to disastrous love and elegiac poetry,' and filled up in the year of grace 1770, whose origin and name have baffled the diligent researches of antiquaries. In those days the Park was really such, consisting of grass land, with trees studded about it and deer wandering amongst them. Nor was there much alteration under James I.; for, although the salary of its keeper was doubled, and certain improvements, such as the bringing of water from Hyde Park to feed Rosamund's Pond, were made, the place remained in practically the same uncultivated state as it had been under the Tudors; and, besides, gravel was dug here, haystacks stood in various parts, and the menagerie of those animals of which the king was so fond was situated within it. What is now the Horse Guards Parade was then an enclosed tilt-yard where Henry, Prince of Wales, used to disport himself, and where those martial displays in which he excelled were given on the occasion of the visits of illustrious foreigners; and at that once rural spot (now so altered) where the cross used to stand, close to Spring Gardens, were formerly some trees which Henry and his brother Charles had planted with their own hands. At this time, and for many years after, the Park was not open to the general public, only such privileged persons as belonged to the Court being permitted to use it. In the time of the Commonwealth, however, it appears that the owners of certain houses on the Westminster side had a prescriptive right of entry, apparently from the fact that their premises abutted immediately on the royal enclosure. One of these was no less a person than Milton, who resided in what was then known as Petty France, later to be metamorphosed into York Street. Another famous man who was fond of wandering about the Park was the Lord Protector himself, what time he was living in Whitehall and thinking of assuming the royal title.

But St James's Park first sprang into fame in the time of Charles II. Charles loved to loiter about it, feeding his ducks or talking to his friends. The place is indeed sentient of his easy-going personality. If ghosts walk, the Mall must often see the gaunt, dark-visaged monarch strolling up and down it, or pacing it with the long strides which he so often affected. It was Charles who remade the Park, and brought it into fashion. The Merry Monarch was supine enough over the serious matters of State, but in the formation of a garden or the construction of an aviary he expended infinite pains. Fond of emulating the ways of Louis XIV., he commissioned the famous French architect and landscape-gardener Lenôtre to lay out St James's Park on the same lines as the grounds of Versailles. The result was a veritable transformation in certain particulars. But Lenôtre was luckily a man of taste as well as a genius; and, recognising the rustic simplicity of the place, he persuaded the king to allow much of it to remain as it was. What was done in the way of alterations was the construction of the river or canal which is to-day, in its less formal outlines, one of the most beautiful features of the place. Just at the south-west end of this canal was the so-called Rosamund's Pond, which remained till it was filled up in 1770. Another improvement made by Charles was the formation of a Physic Garden, of which Dr Morison (who is said by some to have largely advised the king in the alterations here) was made custodian; and yet another, the planting of a belt of trees round Rosamund's Pond. This spot was on a slight elevation, and became in time a favourite place for lovers' meetings, as may be seen in the many allusions to it in the plays of contemporary dramatists.

But perhaps the most memorable change made was the formation of the Mall, which was begun soon after the Restoration, and was laid out in order that the game of pall-mall, formerly played in the street of that name, might be indulged in with greater security and comfort. Pepys, who kept his eyes open to all the changes that were going on in London at this period, has various references to the work then proceeding in St James's Park. On 16th September 1660 we find him loitering in the Park and seeing 'how far they had proceeded in the Pell Mell and in making a river through the Park.' Again, on 11th October, he observes, 'Several engines at work to draw up water,' which was intended, of course, to feed the new canal—although this scheme did not prove very successful. In the August of the following year the diarist sees 'a great variety of fowle' there—the birds, in fact, which the king was so fond of feeding; and in the following month he is still astonished at the 'brave alterations' in the place. Pepys naturally felt particular interest in the making of the pall-mall ground, and on 15th May he had some 'discourse' with the keeper, whom he found sweeping it, and who told him 'of what the earth is mixed that do floor the Mall, and that over all there is cockle-shells powdered, and spread to keep it fast; which, however, in dry weather, turns to dust and deads the ball.' At another time the diarist visits the Physic Garden, and sees orange-trees there for the first time; anon he is diverted by observing people 'skaiting' there, a relaxation which was then a

novelty in this country; and yet again he, with Lord Brouncker, visits the 'new buildings . . . they being the place for the priest and fryers.'

Evelyn also noted the 'sliders on the new canal;' but his interest was naturally chiefly concerned with the aviary, and he specifies the various kinds of birds and animals which were then collected at this spot. He also saw a wrestling match which took place before the king in the Park, when 'many greate sums were betted.' The match was between the western and the northern men; and the former came off victorious.

Innumerable as are the references to St James's Park in contemporary literature, one of the most interesting is that given by Rugge, dated September 1661, which runs as follows: 'This month the road that was formerly used for all coaches and carts and horses from Charing Cross to St James's by St James's Park wall and the backside of Pall Mall, is now altered, by reason a new Pall Mall is made for the use of his Majesty in St James's Park by the wall, and the dust from coaches was very troublesome to the players at mall. The new road was railed on both sides five-foot distance the whole field length, also in the Park at the hither end of the new river cut there (the length of the Park) a brass statue set up upon a mound of stone, and the Park made even level to the bridge, taken down, and the great ditches filled up with the earth that was digged down; the rising ground and the trees cut down, and the roots taken away, and grass seed sowed to make pleasant walking, and trees planted in walks.'

The statue mentioned by Rugge is, of course, that of the Gladiator, executed by Hubert Le Sœur, which once stood on the Horse Guards Parade, but is now at Windsor. An interesting eighteenth-century print, given in Pennant's *History of London*, shows this statue and the spot it occupied, just at the east end of the ornamental water. By this print, too, a good idea may be gained of what the Horse Guards and the adjoining buildings looked like before the former was rebuilt by Kent and Vardy in 1751–53. The temporary galleries which were erected for the convenience of the spectators of reviews gave the place a rather untidy and ramshackle appearance, very different from its present solemn classicism. On the south may be seen the circular roof of the famous Cockpit, about the position of which so much controversy took place a few years ago.

Although the Park was much affected by Charles II. and his companions, its heyday as a fashionable lounge was during the eighteenth century. Innumerable prints show it thronged with the gaily dressed *beau monde* of that picturesque period, and its various promenades had then specific names, such as the Green Walk, between the Park wall and the Mall or where the roadway used to run before the present avenue was formed; the Close Walk, sometimes called the Jacobite Walk, at the west end of Rosamund's Pond; the Long Lime Walk, &c.; and these names are to be found in contemporary literature, where all kinds of amusing and interesting references to the Park as a lounge, a place of assignation, a nocturnal resort are frequent. The place enjoyed also the privilege of 'sanctuary,' where a man was out of the reach of bailiffs and duns, and where to draw a sword was regarded as a serious offence. 'I must not draw in the Park,' says Bluff in Congreve's *Old Bachelor;* while we know that Booth (in Fielding's *Amelia*) was accustomed to walk in the Park in security from his creditors.

It was when looking from the windows of St James's Palace over the Park that George I. made his famous remark. 'This is a strange country,' said he. 'The first morning after my arrival at St James's I looked out of the window and saw a Park with walls, canal, &c., which they told me were mine. The next day Lord Chetwynd, the ranger of *my* Park, sent me a fine brace of carp out of *my* canal; and I was told I must give five guineas to Lord Chetwynd's servant for bringing me *my own* carp, out of *my own* canal, in *my own* Park.' And it was *à propos* of this royal domain that George's daughter-in-law, Caroline of Anspach, once suggested to Sir Robert Walpole the possibility of closing it to the public, and asked what the cost would be, to be answered in the memorable words, 'Only three *crowns*, your Majesty.'

Kip's 'Bird's-eye View of London' gives an excellent representation of the outlines of the Park during this period; though the view prefixed to Lord Lansdowne's works, published in 1732, Hogarth's picture of Rosamund's Pond with surroundings, dated 1740, and Malton's later view showing Buckingham House, the picturesque red-brick predecessor of the present dingy structure, give a still better idea of the place as a resort of fashion during the days of the Georges.

The alterations which have been made in our own time have been so drastic that, except for the ornamental water, whose outlines, too, have been changed, in this case for the better, it is difficult to reconstruct the Park in our mind's eye as it was even in the time of George III. How much more impossible to bring back to our mental vision its appearance in those earlier days when it was a more or less uncultivated waste, and when its frequenters were not the *haut ton* of the period, but the miserable lepers from the hospital which preceded its palace!

St James's Park has seen many strange, and not a few stirring, sights. One of the earliest of these was in 1539, when Henry VIII. reviewed that great muster of the London Militia, which Hall, in his *Chronicle*, describes with such particularity, when no fewer than fifteen thousand men, 'beside whifflers and other waiters,' marched round the Park, so that 'the king himselfe

[might] see the people of the Citie muster in a convenient nombre.'

Another notable gathering here took place in 1560, when Elizabeth kept her Maundy in St James's Palace, and gave away much of her superfluous clothing to various poor women whose feet she washed, what time two thousand poor people were assembled in the Park, and each received twopence, a sum equivalent to twice as many shillings of our currency. One wonders whether the queen, on this occasion, called to mind the scheme for killing her sister Mary, which Bacon tells us was to have been effected 'by a burning glasse, when shee walked in St James's Park, from the leads of the house'?

Did, too, the Merry Monarch, as he sauntered here, remember—how could he fail to?—that wintry morning—30th January 1649—when the White King took his last walk from St James's Palace to the scaffold at Whitehall? That memory seems to haunt the place to the exclusion of all others: the snow-covered ground; the silent soldiery; the erect central figure, covered with its velvet cloak on which the Garter shined so idly; the sad, sad face which looked on these desolate trees for the last time. Or did the careless, loitering king remember (if he ever knew) that it was here that Cromwell once sounded Whitelocke on the subject of the very sovereignty that had been snatched from his father's grasp? 'What if a man should take on him to be king?' asked the Lord Protector. Ay, what indeed? Did not the terrible storm that raged when the presumptuous man lay a-dying, and uprooted so many 'immemorial elms' in the Park itself, give a belated answer?

As I have before said, Charles II.'s memory will always be closely identified with this spot; more so, indeed, than with any other in London. Charles with his poodles and his courtiers about him; Charles playing pall-mall; Charles suggesting the subject of 'The Medal' to Dryden, or in deep converse with Hobbes, or chatting with 'Nelly,' while Evelyn stood by and wondered; Charles in a hundred guises seems to dominate this place of many memories. And then at a later day—the day of Anne and George I. and George II.—when Swift walked here to make himself thin, and Prior to put on flesh; when the Duke of Wharton was seized by the guards for singing in the very teeth of royalty, as it were, the Jacobite ballad, 'The king shall have his own again;' when Bolingbroke is said to have once, in a fit of intoxication, run naked through the sacred precincts. In those times when the Clarindas and Belindas swept along the gravelled paths, and the Sir Plumes or the Sir Foppling Flutters strutted by their side; when great ladies were attended by their court of obsequious beaux and followed by their black page-boy—Pompey you're sure his name was; when the Montagues and the Bellendens were only less mobbed than the Gunnings and the Rutlands and Devonshires of a later day, then was the moment of the Park's apotheosis; and now when motors rush hooting up and down that road which was once threatened with the name of Processional Avenue, now we must close our eyes and think and think indeed before we can call back to memory those gay, thoughtless ones who once made the place like a kaleidoscope, but who are now

> Cold, cold as those that lived and loved
> A thousand years ago.

THE AIRY PRINCE.

PART IV.

IX.

IT was nearing the middle of the afternoon when the airman succeeded, after some difficulty, in piloting his little companion across Piccadilly Circus to Regent Street. It is something to be noticed in that most cosmopolitan of districts, but more than one turned to watch the solemn officer of the formidable stride and the French girl, whose wealth of hair and length of dress (barely revealing her ankles) made her seem a vignette from some past century novel.

It had been, for her, a day of wonders.

From her lonely little world, peopled with make-believe inhabitants, she had been transported through the air to the centre of reality. London, the 'Baghdad of the West,' huge, monotonous, garish, beautiful—what term is there in language that could not be applied to that great gathering of human souls?—London sprawled before her gaze in a yellow sunlight which played such tricks with its tired buildings that age-old stone looked bright and cheerful, and the very dust seemed like the coating of frost when a thaw succeeds a freezing night.

Before her eyes the pageant of passions passed in endless array. Poverty and hypocrisy rubbed shoulders with ostentation, greed, and lust. Streets, crowded with a suffocating similarity of stodgy dwelling-places, gave way to parks, fragrant with the atmosphere of romance. Vice stalked unashamed through the thronged streets, and dull, tired faces, leaving monotony in their trail, passed their next of kin without a glance, those to whom discouragement had come as some incurable disease. Sinister, sensuous eyes looked into hers, and children pure in mind as snowflakes laughed as they walked beside their nurses.

For the sun was in the heavens—and the same warmth that brings the beauty of a

narcissus into being gives life to the noisome, crawling things that feed on decay.

London's costume drama was at its height; uniformed men and girls paraded in their thousands. There were loose-limbed Colonials, slouchily-smart British Tommies, amazingly serious Americans; bus-girls, land-girls, girls on motor-cycles, and girls driving ambulances; graceful French officers, swarthy Italians, impassive Japanese, and ruddy-faced British sailors seeking a day's diversion from the sentry-go of the sea.

From the great, throbbing city a babel of voices rose, like the sound from a gigantic mart; hurrying, restless vehicles worried their way through the maze of traffic; Youth with its carelessness of years elbowed Age, waiting with weakening tread the call of the Reaper to whom all men's lives are but sands that run their brief course. Over the whole city brooded the Past.

Take all the comedies of the centuries; gather the tragedies of history; piece them together with all the fancies of a madman's brain—and what could they offer in the play of human emotions that would compare with one hour of London's life?

They had gone a little way down Regent Street when an exclamation of delight escaped from the girl.

'*Tiens!*' She caught the airman by the arm. 'Papa Joffre!'

A one-legged man with outstretched cap was seated on the pavement, and beside him were five coloured drawings vaguely suggesting men of the times.

'But he is wonderful,' cried the girl. 'See—it is Papa Joffre himself! Monsieur, you will give him a little present?'

The airman presented the art-exhibiter with half-a-crown, receiving a gin-and-watery blessing in return, as they strolled on their way.

'She's the fust one,' muttered the cripple, preparing to close business for the day, 'as 'as recognised that there dial of Juff's this last four month. It were a rotten drawink and no mistike. Blime! I'll give that cove this 'arf-crown to draw me a picter of this 'ere General Fush as what is getting hisself talked abaht.'

He saw a shadow on the pavement and held out his cap. A Jewish rabbi, with sallow brow and spiritual face, passed without a glance, his flowing robes oddly reminiscent of the Levite in that Past to which the age of London is mere immaturity.

The wanderers turned into Pall Mall, and, traversing it, reached the Strand, where the meeting of human currents forms a whirlpool. Threading their way with difficulty, he felt the restraining hand on his arm, as he had done two hundred times that day. The girl had stopped opposite a hollow-eyed old woman offering violets, from her seat on a box, to the thousands who cared as little for her flowers as for her.

Once more he produced the inevitable coin, and again received a blessing, as trembling, unlovely fingers clutched it. He was about to turn away, when something almost attractive in the wrinkled face held his attention. The woman had looked searchingly at the girl, then into his eyes, and, touched by sudden sympathy, there was a faded echo of comeliness in her features that came and went, like a glow caused by a breath of air on ashes that seemed dead.

'What is it, mother?' he asked, holding the girl's arm. 'Business bad?'

'Yes—yes,' answered the woman in a low, weak voice; 'but it's her I'm thinking of. Take care of her, laddie, won't you?'

The girl, unable to understand them, leaned over and smiled into the wrinkled face. With a little air of embarrassment Pippa picked half-a-dozen violets from her cluster, holding them out to the woman, who took them with strangely twitching features, just as an encircling current of the Strand caught them in its grip and carried them away.

Although they had rested at noon in a quiet hostelry in Oxford Street, near that part of the Park where the delightful statue of Peter Pan pleads for belief in fairies, it was obvious that the strain of countless impressions was beginning to bring fatigue to his charge. Accordingly the airman paused in the doorway of a theatre and drew her away from the traffic's turmoil.

'It is three-thirty,' he said, 'and there is a performance inside.'

Her eyes, which still held their tenderness for the woman of the flowers, sparkled happily.

'That is delightful, monsieur. Is it a play as I read in my books?'

'Alas, Pippa! there are no more plays—only revues.'

'But there is music?'

'There is an orchestra.'

'It will be droll, monsieur?'

'I doubt it, little one; but we shall see.'

Purchasing tickets from a lordly being in a cage, they entered the theatre, where a huge audience was rocking with laughter at the three hundred and sixteenth performance of *Oh Aunt!* They took their seats, just in time to hear the best of a scene between two comedians who, lest the subtlety of their wit be lost, were talking at the top of their lung-power, pulling chairs from underneath one another, colliding frequently, and every now and then, to emphasise some point, kicking each other.

Several minutes passed, and wonderingly the French girl gazed at the pair, while the melancholy of her escort's face reached an intensity that threatened tears.

'Monsieur.'

He inclined his face towards hers.

'Monsieur—they are'—— She did not complete the sentence, but her shoulders conveyed her meaning.

He smiled sadly. 'They are,' he said.

She sighed sympathetically. 'Poor gentlemen!' she murmured.

After that the comedians sang a duet, the words of which dealt with marital infidelity, that screamingly funny subject on which the stage of to-day builds its humorous efforts. Once the verse ended with an innuendo so crude that a gathering of navvies might have resented it.

There was a laugh and a gasp from the audience, then wild applause; the song could not go on for the riot of appreciation. One of the comedians (who had sung it only three hundred and fifteen times) tried to commence the next verse, but was suddenly overcome with laughter himself. The guffaws became a barrage; then, as the other singer turned abruptly about, his shoulders heaving convulsively, the din grew to drum-fire and was deafening. How richly humorous! It was really too much! People held their sides and gasped for breath.—'Have you seen *Oh Aunt?* My dear, it is *too* killing for words.'

Up in the gallery one man sat with an unsmiling face. He was a wounded Tommy who had been blown from a ditch to the top of a barn, and from the barn to another ditch. He had had his fill of slapstick comedy.

When the song was over there were shrieks of forced, girlish laughter, and nearly forty young women in various stages of deshabille rushed on the stage, exhibiting to a critical audience the charms and the defects of their forty individual forms. The producer had been both daring and sparing. He was a second-rate burlesque manager in New York, but London, that great haven for American mediocrity, recognised his genius and gave him a chance. He knew the value of a chorus, and how to get the best out of them—oh, he knew!

'Monsieur.'

The officer turned slowly and looked at the girl beside him. Her face was flushed and her eyes stared at the ground.

'Yes, little one?'

'Please—take me away.'

Without questioning her further, he reached for his cap, and amid the wondering glances of the people around, they left the theatre. He paused in the foyer and put on his gloves.

'I am sorry, Pippa,' he said gravely.

Her hand stole soothingly into his arm, and both of them, unknown to each other, experienced a feeling that he was the younger of the two. After all, every woman is a potential mother, and men are only boys grown serious; so she comforted him with the touch of her hand, and—perhaps it was the natural contraction in putting on the glove—his arm pressed hers tight to his side.

And though he was a man, he understood. It is not precept or preaching that teaches it. Modesty in a girl is instinctive; and the little lady from the mill-house had known no other teacher than instinct.

Outside the theatre an attendant was changing the performance number of *Oh Aunt!* from 316 to 317.

X.

Twenty minutes later, in the large tea-rooms of a fashionable hotel just off the Strand, there was a murmur of interest as a flying-officer, quizzically dejected of countenance, entered with a young lady, who glanced shyly about, and whose fingers held his, timidly but confidingly.

He secured a table, and ordered tea from a pleasant waitress. This accomplished, he said something to his companion, who was sitting bolt-upright, keeping a steady gaze on her hands crossed on her lap. Smiling a little, she slowly raised her face and looked into his. A young Canadian subaltern, seated at a table with a woman whose overpowdered, meaningless beauty was only too eloquent, stopped in some remark he was making. Something in the French girl's face had sent his mind, smitten with loneliness, speeding across the Atlantic to a home whence a mother and a sister had sent the finest thing they had across the seas.

Near them, two girls, fresh of face, tittered and posed, challenging the eyes of every man who entered, with a brazen immodesty strangely at variance with their appearance of decent breeding. At a farther table a young woman, with a beauty that was marred by too hard a mouth, sat with her mother and listened to that woman's urging that she should marry a wealthy Jew who had asked for her hand. Was it not her duty to herself and to her mother? Besides, even if that young fellow did come back uncrippled from the trenches—which was unlikely—he would have to begin all over again. Alone, a good-looking artist, discharged from the army with wounds, sat with an insouciant, mocking eye, searching for types and adventure. Around him women of all ages, some of them with men, smoked, while their chatter mixed discordantly with the orchestra playing some negroid ragtime piece, and with the sound of rattling tea-cups.

'Your Majesty,' said the miller's niece, relapsing into her former style of address, 'there is so much I cannot understand.'

'Such as what, youngster?'

'These ladies here. Some are so pretty and so nice. Others are pretty and'—— Again she shrugged her shoulders as only a French woman can. 'I am so young, it is true—but see that lady there.'

'With the young Canadian—yes?'

'Somehow, monsieur, she frightens me. I did not know that women ever looked that way—like Louis when he catches a mouse.'

'The simile is very apt, Pippa.'

'But then'—her brows puckered with a first endeavour to harness language to her psychology—'you can see that nice girl there, so fair and pink.'

'I prefer them dark,' said he seriously; 'but what of her?'

The expounder of philosophy breathed deeply, but stuck to her task.

'I think,' she said, 'that the fair girl is nice, but this one is . . .' (shrug) . . . 'Then why, monsieur, does the nice one try to look just like the other?—*Regardez-moi ça*—see her now.'

He poured out the tea, which had just arrived.

'Shall I tell you a story?' he asked.

She sighed happily. 'Tell me a true story,' she said with that insistence of the young on making all things believable.

He sipped his tea and frowned meditatively.

'Not long ago, my dear, there lived a stupid king.'

'Your father?'

'In any one but you, Pippa, that would be pert. No, he was not my father.'

'I wonder if Louis'—— she began, but he checked her with a portentous frown.

'Once,' he began again, 'there lived a stupid king named Convention.'

'What a silly name!'

'Pippa!' he admonished her with a warning finger.

She tried to look serious, but ended by laughing mischievously.

'There was a stupid king with a silly name?' she said encouragingly.

'This king,' he said, 'was very wise in some things, and often kind, but his courtiers were a poor lot—Hypocrisy, Snobbery, Good and Bad Form, and a lot of others. Now the king used to favour the men among his subjects.'

'You mean, he liked men?'

'Yes.'

'So do I,' she said in an outburst of frankness. 'They are so droll.'

He poured some fresh tea into the cups.

'This King Convention,' he said, after a thoughtful pause, 'said that men could do a lot of things that women could not, which made the women very angry. Now the king had a jester named Shaw.'

'What is a jester?'

'A man who makes jokes that people may laugh.'

'Why do they laugh at jokes?'

'Well, in England—especially on the stage—it is from the pleasure of meeting old friends. As a race, we are rather sentimental about our jests, and don't take kindly to new ones.'

She sipped some tea, holding the cup in both hands, but with considerable daintiness.

'Tell me an English joke,' she said.

He stroked his faded little moustache.

'The House of Lords,' he ventured, after some thought.

'*Hé!* Is that funny?'

'Very.'

'I do not laugh. Tell me another.'

He broke a corner off a piece of toast.

'One of the richest bits of humour in England,' he said, 'is the idea that children born into wealthy or titled families are superior clay to their fellows.'

Pippa thought tremendously.

'I think, monsieur, I know why you look so sad. It is because of what you have to laugh at in your country. . . . But please go on and tell me what happened to—how say you it?—the jester.'

'Ah yes. Well, G. B. Shaw'——

'What is this—G. B.?'

'Those are his names—Gor' Blime Shaw.'

Pippa sighed. It was very difficult to become interested in people of such strange nomenclature.

'What did he, then, this Gor Shaw?' she asked, feeling that the story must end sometime.

'Well, as a matter of fact, he was rather a poor jester, because his only joke was to stand on his head. At first every one laughed; but after a while they thought that it was his natural position, and paid no attention to him. It was really pretty hard on the poor chap, because he was too old to learn any new tricks, and he used to become dizzy from being upside-down so much. Finally he grew furious at the king for not laughing, and urged all the women who did not like Convention to murder him. When the war came along, they saw their chance. The men went away, and the real women of England were too busy helping them to bother about anything else. You see, Pippa, in our country we have the noisy, chattering, selfish women who do good by limelight and find their reward in the illustrated journals. But there are also those, the unrecognised and unthanked ones, who share others' griefs, but suffer alone. It is the unseen, unheard women of Britain who are really wonderful.'

The girl said nothing, but her face, so suggestive of colour in its elusive change of expression, softened to a tender mood that left her eyes very dark and sombre, and her lips curved slightly into a smile that was full of sympathy.

The young Canadian subaltern looked directly at her and compressed his lower lip with his teeth.

'What's the matter, dearie?' croaked the woman beside him; but he returned no answer.

The two tittering girls stopped their staccato giggling for a moment, then resumed with a steadfastness of purpose that somewhat robbed the effect of spontaneity. The young woman with the over-firm mouth took in the tableau of the airman and his little charge, and turned to her mother with some sarcastic comment that was strangely belied by the look of hunger in her eyes. The artist, still with his air of graceful insouciance, sat with half-closed eyelids and visualised Pippa as a subject for canvas. 'What a Psyché she would make!' he muttered. The orchestra was just going to play, when the leader, who had been idly gazing at the throng of guests, made a gesture of dissent.

'We shall not do "Oh that Opium Rag,"' he said. 'You see that girl there, with the dark

curls and the sweet little face? For her let us play Mendelssohn's "Spring Song."'

Quite unaware of their interested audience, the flying-man and his companion continued their excursion into the realm of fables, while untouched toast and half-emptied cups stood by in neglected array.

'That is practically all the story,' he said. 'When the war came on, they murdered poor old Convention.'

'Oh!'

'Slaughtered him,' he said gloomily; 'though all his bad courtiers escaped. For a long time it was feared that the king's son, Courtesy, and his niece, Charm (who were very much in love with each other), had also been done to death, but there are rumours that they have been seen in remote parts of England. So, Pippa, that is why these young women look and act alike. They are the murderers of Convention.'

But she was not listening to him. She was silently enjoying, for the first time, the fragrance of Mendelssohn's Melody of Spring, which found immediate response in her nature, so attuned to the delicate things of life. It had a somewhat contrary effect on the others, whose conversation, which had begun to lag, took on fresh impetus with the sound of the orchestra.

'Tell me,' she whispered, vastly puzzled, 'why do they talk so loud when there is music?'

He shook his head. 'I don't know,' he answered. 'It is said that music soothes the savage breast—it certainly loosens the civilised tongue.'

The charming setting to the happiness of Spring-time, written by a composer who really never grew up, came to an end, and in sheer delight the French girl clapped her hands twice. The leader acknowledged the compliment by bowing. She did not know that it was for her alone he had chosen it.

The airman examined his watch. 'Little one,' he said, 'I am afraid our day is nearly over. In half-an-hour we must catch a train back to "The Plough and Crown," where we shall have dinner and a little rest. At eight o'clock two friends of mine from the aerodrome here will bring the machine—you understand that taking young ladies from France to England has not yet been officially authorised by the Air Ministry. As soon as the stars are out we shall start for home.'

They rose to go.

She smiled shyly at the orchestra, and once more the leader bowed. With the daintiest of gestures she raised her hand and waved to him; then, feeling for her protector's arm, she started for the door, her eyes timidly glancing about her from beneath sheltering, downcast eyelashes. Without the least embarrassment, the tanned airman with the strangely light moustache and eyebrows walked beside her, experiencing an indefinable sense of possession that proved most agreeable.

The artist toyed with an unlit cigarette. 'With such a model,' he muttered, 'if I could only indicate that swift rhythm of expression—I should be great.'

The tittering girls kept up their chatter. They had long since learned that nothing stifles thought like meaningless conversation—and they were afraid their thoughts might be unpleasant.

The young woman with the over-firm mouth drew back as the airman and his companion passed her table, but her eyes clung to the French girl's face as though its winsomeness and purity held the answer to her troubles. Swift as imagination itself, her mind leaped to France, picturing a young fellow who, if he did come back unmaimed, would have to begin all over again.

'Mother,' she said, with hot resentment in her voice, 'I am entitled to my own life. I have seen too many tragedies in material marriages to dread one of love.'

'You are a fool,' said the other; and because she was the stronger of the two, she prevailed.

The woman who looked as Louis did when he caught a mouse turned on the Canadian boy, who had followed Pippa with a far-away, dreamy stare.

'What's the matter, dearie?' she queried, with the tedious endearment of her class.

He brought himself from the reverie that had strangely blended the French girl's face with the faces of two other women across the sea; then he looked into his companion's with its leering comeliness. With a quick, decisive movement he rose to his feet, and, feeling for his pocket-book, placed a pound-note on the table.

'Pay for what we've had,' he said, his jaw stiffening, but his voice shaking oddly.

'What! aren't I going to see you again?'

He was going to speak, but changed his mind, and, turning on his heel, strode from the place, his spurs jingling with each step . . . and there was something in his face that made people keep silent as he passed.

(*Continued on page 612.*)

TANTALLON.

HIGH o'er the cliffs that skirt the Northern Sea
Its hoary head the Douglas stronghold rears.
Sea-girt save on the west, its site appears
Of strength impregnable. Those walls must be
Full twelve feet thick. What mighty man was he
Who planned this wondrous pile, designed its strength,
Imagined first, constructed, saw at length
Its form rise splendid in its majesty,
Then passed? His name unknown, his work yet stands
To testify that labour of men's hands
May last a thousand years or more: yet see—
Those ivy-mantled battlements confess,
Those turrets decked with wallflowers sweet express,
God's work continues—man's is vanity.

W. ROBERTS.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

PEOPLE who play with figures pretend there is a certain suggestiveness, something akin to occultism or magic, in the figures of the year, as reckoned by the era in which at present we so nervously and doubtfully live. Such as recall in any detail the distant days of 1914, and the odd speculations in which many indulged at an excited but hopeful period, may remember that, with an accommodating ingenuity, some of their friends took the figures of the year, sorted them, multiplied, subtracted, divided, and then fortified them with an admixture of other dates that specially concerned William Hohenzollern and his party, and, lo! from this apparent confusion of arithmetic there suddenly emerged a wonderful and inspiriting sign that was as the fair promise of happy fortune. There were variations according to the reckoners; but in the main the token was that in that year, or in the year following, he who was Kaiser would fall, his empire would crumble, and free Britain would be the more free, and in her pride and glory would rejoice exceedingly. You will recall that the greater the complexity of these calculations, the more subtractions and divisions were performed, the more ominous was the sign when it loomed through the arithmetical mists. This seemed right and natural. Though a peace—and, as some consider, a not very perfect peace—was deferred until 1919, one has scarcely a doubt but that some, at least, of those who thus handled the figure magic, who dipped into the occult of a special calculus, may find that 1919 is the most agreeable or adaptable year to their signs, and that once again the hidden forces are justified of the portents they so subtly deliver. But now, in the matter of mere figures and their looks, does not 1919 appear to be of a more special significance, to hold within it more, than any year of recent occurrence? Look upon it, and turn its parts about. See the rhythm, the symmetry, of 1 9 repeated—the first of the numerals and the last. Is there not here a touch of that mystery that hangs upon the recurring decimal and the nth power, which, by their unendingness, their infinity, seem to have acquaintance with eternity? We know our old friend x, with his attendants, the faithful y and the occasional z, to be something of a pious fraud, a humbug, with his squares and his cubes, in his assumption of mysteries the most profound, for he is amenable to the simple rules, is solved in the manner of mere materialism, and indeed is as if prepared for us by our masters behind a screen. But it is different with such characters as this strange 1919, which provokes some of the wonder, the sense of a special sign from Time, that was experienced when stray and helpless mortals were delivered to the awesome 1899 (the first two figures made another 9!), with its grim suggestion of a great finality, and direct from this experience to the scarcely smaller shock of 1900, with the responsibility of a new beginning, of possible perils, of fateful discoveries, of disturbing evolutions, that might lie ahead. The most susceptible were conscious of a certain spiritual sensation that seemed somehow to have brought them to a new and more intimate touch with sublime and mighty forces. Time is the most mysterious and fateful of all the seeming unrealities. Let peoples try to meddle with its order or arrangement in any way, and they have a sense of attempted interference with tremendous forces. Was there no peculiar sensation at the dawn of a war summer in putting the hands of the clock on an hour? The heavens were not affected by this trick, but mankind had a certain unstated apprehension. War economies were well enough—but the planets, the orbits, the sun, eternity! However, the timid still live, and the sun still shines upon them. Sometimes one may comprehend the desperate daring of the French revolutionists, the sensation that was experienced of their grappling with the inner forces of life and forces beyond them, by a simple contemplation of the new calendar they prepared soon after setting up their republic in September 1792, abandoning the Christian way of reckoning with a great defiance. It is nothing but a custom, a simple piece of arbitrariness, but to us the years and the months we reckon by do indeed appear to have a peculiar connection with creation. How if it were now Fructidor or Vendémiaire? When those revolutionaries, mad in their reforming zeal, reconstructed their months and weeks, they seemed to be doing an even more desperate thing than cutting off the heads of Louis and his queen. Monarchs were merely mortal and

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subject to human weaknesses; but Time was different, and the men who abandoned the seven days week, extending it to ten days, and counting three such weeks to the month, had the appearance of challenging the highest powers. It was like an attempted interference with Time.

* * *

But in this matter of 1919 it is Time itself making signs and murmuring of immensities. Besides the repetition of its couplets, there is the omen that each couplet, with its components of first digit and last, sums up to the significant arithmetical ten, which is the factor of mighty formations of the decimal order. It is because of such contemplations that some whimsical persons, uneasy upon the circumstances of the time, and feeling within them those spiritual movements or disturbances inadequately named superstitions, sometimes with an effort at intensive reason and enlightenment turn attention to the skies, and vainly consider the immensities there. In this mood they might recall some of the indefinite and ineffectual musings upon this matter of M. Anatole France, whose sceptic spirit has experienced its deepest vibrations as he has looked from a window on starry nights. Every time we wonder at the immensity of the heavens, says he, we must wonder at the same time at our own littleness, since the grandeur of the universe depends on it. Not perhaps M. France, but suffering peoples would suggest that statesmen who regard themselves as instruments of the greater destinies should, before exercising ministerial office at Westminster, in Paris, Washington, Rome, or some other capital, be ordained to spend, let us say, a hundred nights in contemplative solitude on an open moor, or perhaps on a balcony near Greenwich, with impressive explanations by the observers there. One conceives that in no ideal state of society and government would men be permitted to exercise authority and influence without, by such a period of humiliation and wonderment, having been brought to an understanding of their own exceeding smallness, and of the need for sincerity in all effort if it shall avail. Here they could perceive what a peddling thing is a premier in relation to time and space, and if not too stupid they might shape their effort accordingly. 'Time and space,' says M. France, 'do not exist. Matter no longer exists. What we name as such is exactly what we do not know, the obstacle against which our senses break.' Drawn by such thoughts, beginning with speculations upon the mysteries of years, and the signs about them, as in 1919, men and women may drift out upon fearsome depths of wonder. Better edge away from them, and look upon some more material signs delivered by what may be called fate or coincidence to this year in which the greatest peace of a planet, as they say, has been made. Whether it is the design of the higher forces toying with simple mortals and their tiny affairs, or whether it is chance (if such there is), it is at least a curious, almost a sensational, thing that this year of peacemaking is marked so significantly with what we call centenaries—marked as no other year in our time. There are more centenaries of consequence, and, as we might say, the quality is higher, than usual. But these emblems of the past are not given merely for the decoration of the calendar of peace year; however one tries to evade the fancy, there seems in their very character another sign, a warning from Time. The morals are pointed and grim enough; one at least that must be indicated is a strangely ironical reproach against the people of these days. These are not the moments when we would have, as one might say, the ghost of Queen Victoria to pace before us, reminding us of stupidities in her age and later. But here people are now turning from war to peace, and in leisure spared from struggles with controls and with the coarser materialisms exerted by Governments, they may think upon the worth of the arts and the conquests of peace, and upon the fatal instinct which at times asserts itself in peoples, turning them to mutual slaughter. The 'Arts of Peace,' 'Peace hath her victories'—old tags for smug and often hypocritical quotation now!

* * *

If this is the greatest, most notable, and most significant of all peace years, and if the 'arts of peace' are thus unctuously to be patronised and exalted, and if it is to be the habit to look back along old times and see what those arts produced that may call for some remembrance now, one must be impressed by the grand procession of the centenaries that we behold this year. The centenary itself is a purely arbitrary mark in the tables of time, but it has justifications, and in this country affords the first opportunity for careful examination of human work—which may endure and which may not; what stands for real progress, the spiritual refinement of the human race, and what is simply neutral or relapse. Every philosopher sees that time, with its immensity, will blot out from all record and remembrance such a war as we have endured: it will be unknown to the living things upon the earth, while the good works of the mind and the soul, having had long influence upon the spiritual exertion of mankind, will still be not without effect. It cannot yet be seen by all, but the peace-workers in the higher spheres, labouring for human refinement, are of more account in time and space than mere statesmen and war-mongers. Strange then, perhaps, that here in this peace year such a gallery of these purifiers should be presented in centenaries. Ruskin leads the way; Lowell comes quickly in his company; then there is Da Vinci, recalling a great renaissance; in May appear Julia Ward

Howe and Whitman to impress by repetition the significance of the American note in the Lowell theme of February. In high summer there are Kingsley and Addison in purity and splendour; deep in the autumn George Eliot in her intensity. Here and there upon this centenarian subject odd variations are made. In Britain we have, as it may be said, a special and almost exclusive attachment to the pure centenary, the marking of the exact hundred years for celebration, though a certain freedom is exercised in the matter of dating either from birth or from death. Good reasons favour reckoning from the beginning. People discourse and moralise upon centenaries in France, but they have another time of remembrance to which they are attached, the cinquantenaire, the completion of fifty years after the passing of the subject. The great figures of the past are thus considered, criticised, estimated, and, it may be, admired, from the same standpoint of time. And it comes about in this year of peacemaking that while Britain has several of the most impressive centenaries to consider, the French have two of their cinquantenaires of special consequence—those of Lamartine and Berlioz, besides the centenary of Offenbach. In our own music there is the centenary of Brinley Richards (1819–85), the Welsh composer. In British art there are those of W. P. Frith, R.A. (1819–1909), who painted the famous 'Ramsgate Sands,' the 'Railway Station,' and other pictures of a special style; of John Boydell (1719–1804), the print-seller who became Lord Mayor of London, and whose 'Shakespeare Gallery,' to which Romney, Fuseli, West, Angelica Kauffmann, and Sir Joshua Reynolds contributed, was a remarkable production; of Nicholas Hilliard (1537–1619), the Elizabethan limner, a Devonian and the first great English painter of miniatures; and James Gandy (1619–89), who takes position as one of the first English portrait-painters. If we pass from such classes and take in pioneers and exponents of other forms of work and progress, fine figures for reflection are then presented. There are Sir Francis M'Clintock (1819–1907), Arctic explorer, and Sir Joseph Bazalgette (1819–90), an engineer who made that Thames Embankment which, in days that even still young Londoners may recall, was the most tranquil and majestic walk in town before the tram-cars came to ruin it, a peaceful promenade with a graceful curve beside the river, just beyond the clatter and din of the Strand. And very particularly, and of great significance in these times of straining finance, there was Sir Thomas Gresham (1519–79), the eminent financier, who started what were the first paper-mills of their kind in England, established the Royal Exchange, and from the depths of his financial experience and perception impressed upon the statesmen of his time, harassed by the exigencies of war, the principles that England should be self-containing, that there should be as little borrowing as possible from overseas, and that good credit for English trade should be firmly maintained. Sir Thomas was one of the great men of the City, a splendid human reality at a time when its romance, to judge by the story of Whittington, was brighter than it is to-day.

* * *

There are two other centenaries falling for celebration now which challenge most particular reflection. It was a hundred years on 19th August since the life of James Watt, inventor of the modern condensing steam-engine, was closed, and the occasion is being marked by a splendid further endowment by subscription of the engineering department of Glasgow University. It was not only an invention of the utmost consequence in itself, but it seemed to be the beginning of that new era of tremendous mechanical and scientific development which has pushed the world along so fast since then. And another centenary to make a pair with it, though it be of an event and not of a person, is that of the first crossing of the Atlantic by a steamship. The French have noted the occurrence of this centenary, but it is curious that one has seen scarcely a reference to it in our own country, although the recent first passage of this ocean by airmen gives such extraordinary point to it, making a quite astonishing coincidence. The ship was built by the firm of Crocker & Fickett, of Corlears Hook, New York, and was intended for a projected Baltic trade. The *Savannah*, as she was called, was a craft of three hundred and eighty-nine tons, and, steam-power being then, as it was conceived, no very dependable thing for long-distance navigation, she was built for both steam and sails. When the latter were being employed the two paddle-wheels that were worked by the single-cylinder steam-engine were unshipped and hauled on deck. This operation, it is stated, could be carried out in twenty minutes. Steam-driven ships were beginning to be used on American coastal work, but this passage of the Atlantic appeared then a gigantic and risky enterprise. However, leaving Savannah under command of Captain Rogers on (or about) 26th May 1819, the *Savannah* reached Liverpool on 20th June. For some parts of the passage she went along by steam; but Captain Rogers, faced with rough weather and then with shortage of fuel, hauled the paddle-wheels aboard, replacing them in due course when the craft neared the coast of Ireland. We are told that the captain of a British naval division in St George's Channel, seeing this curious thing coming up with her belchings of smoke, believed that she was a ship on fire, and sent two boats to her assistance. The error being discovered, he visited her himself; and subsequently there was a true and appropriate

festival in her honour at Liverpool. Afterwards the *Savannah* went on to the Baltic, and the Emperor Alexander of Russia, visiting her, made gifts to the captain. But trade then did not seem to flourish in those parts, and in the same year the ship returned to her America. Though her voyage had been a good success, her engine was taken from her when she reached home again, and she spent the rest of her ocean days as a sailing-ship on coastal work, being at last wrecked near Long Island in 1822.

* * *

In this account we have touched with slight detail upon the first and the most conspicuous of the non-human centenaries (as they might be called) falling in 1919. There is another kind upon which a note may be made before passing to some unordered reflections upon great figures of the past which by the flight of time are presented for consideration in this particular year. The other non-human centenaries referred to are those of books, famous and dear to readers of present times and past, and specially dear to many of us in the remembrance of our early reading, with its matchless freshness, joy, and wonderment. There is *The Bride of Lammermoor*. It was in 1819, in circumstances of severe physical pain, that Scott wrote this book, which marked a turn in his career, where he struck forth among new scenes, worked with fresh materials, and produced a novel which has been declared to sum up the finest qualities of his romances. Some of it was dictated to William Laidlaw, whose 'exclamations of surprise and delight did not promote despatch,' and who was consequently made to relinquish the office of amanuensis, being an anxiety and a worry, when John Ballantyne was accessible. Hogg said that he had seen Scott's shirt 'burned to an izel' by hot applications to his body, such were his hard physical necessities then, and people in the garden at Abbotsford heard him shriek in agony. Laidlaw appealed to him to cease his literary work, yet he insisted that that could only be when he was 'in the woollen.' Scott himself declared that had he not had the strength of many horses he could not have fought his way through such a trial. His piper reminded him of one of the traditional cures of the Highland country-side, a thing of elves and spells. Twelve burns flowing southwards were to be found, and from each stream a stone was to be taken, the master to sleep upon the twelve, when he would be made well again. But Scott assured him that for the true spell the stones should be wrapped in the petticoat of a widow who desired no new husband for her consolation. Perhaps any other petticoat would have served, but the piper's sentiment and the spirit of a spell must be considered, and the main thing was that cold hard stones should be a little prepared for bed companionship. But despite the spells, that great tragedy might never have come to its completion had Scott not been under the influence of laudanum most of the time, and in that state performed his work. It was necessary to him in the circumstances of his pain; it gave him, besides the soothing, a peculiar change, and we are asked to believe that when the story, printed by James Ballantyne, was delivered to the author in the summer of 1819 he remembered nothing of it, could not recall the characters. The book was a triumph, a masterpiece, but it brought Scott sorrows with his exultations. He mourned poor Lucy; he was bitterly self-condemning for having killed her; yet what option had he? 'Of all the murders I ever committed in that way,' he said, 'and few men have been guilty of more of them, there is none that went to my heart so much as that of the poor Bride of Lammermoor. But it could not be helped; it was all true.' . . . That was one hundred years ago.

THE AIRY PRINCE.

PART V.

XI.

IT lacked two hours of midnight when an aeroplane crossed the Channel.

With his hands automatically guiding the rudder and his eyes keeping incessant watch on his compass and the pulsating lights of landing-points, showing like lighthouses at sea, the Black Cat brought all his conscious mind to bear on the events of the day.

In the whim of the moment, when the rain was on the roof, he had suggested this adventure to the little girl of the lonely mill-house; and for one day London had been hers. He had carried out his plan. Her countless comments, some childish, some strangely mature, were evidence enough of her enjoyment. Then why, he questioned, was he experiencing a dull feeling of depression, as the shadows beneath showed that, once more, they were over France? To-morrow he would have the zest of battle; again he would lead his squadron in the greatest sport of the ages. . . . Then why this heaviness of spirit?

His mind relapsed into a musing mood that got him no further in his introspective analysis; and his eyes, which had always been a reliable pair, commenced playing odd tricks with him. Though in the day-time he was used to seeing the earth and the horizon, and thus establishing

his estimate of distance, he was relying that night almost entirely on his sense of equilibrium, glancing only occasionally at the instruments which would tell him if he were not flying level.

It was the compass that first surprised him.

He was studying its sensitive needle when he noted with some astonishment that the dial had taken on the addition of two dark and most expressive eyes, which proceeded to surround themselves with the delicate features of a girl's face, possessed of a brow that was spiritually white, and dark hair that melted into the blackness of the night.

He shook his head and sought a light on the ground, which, after the manner of 'Winking Willies,' was showing long and short flashes like Morse. To his amazement, the light became a smile, which gradually developed into a most alluring female face. If he had been in possession of his usual sense of the humorous, he would have recalled that Lewis Carroll's cat appeared to Alice in much the same way; but his mind and body were both in the clouds, a realm where cats and humour are uninvited guests.

He next tried a star, which underwent the same evolution. Even the moon was not proof against the phenomenon. Once he half-closed his eyes, but that was worse than ever. Everywhere he looked, there was the same face—smiling, pouting, coquetting, sympathising, commiserating.

He tried whistling, but it offered no relief.

Behind him, nearly asleep, Pippa sat with closed eyes. To her the solution was much more simple. All day she had had her Prince by her side, her arm in his, her fingers locked with his. Therefore she was happy; also, she was tired.

Not having any tiresome masculine mental gyrations to perform in discovering a truth that was so easily apparent, she accepted the situation with sentimental nonchalance, and falling asleep, dreamed that the statue of Peter Pan in the Park had changed to that of the Airy Prince (who, she thought, was ever so much more handsome), and that she was sitting on the grass admiring him, while rabbits played about his feet. She was awakened from this delightful dream by a sensation similar to that of falling off a ladder in one's sleep; but such is the penalty of those who travel at night by air.

And, applying the laws of logic to the case, when a young gentleman sees dark eyes and curved lips in a compass, and a young maiden dreams that the citizens of London have erected a monument to a young gentleman with a long face and glow-worm eyebrows, it is reasonable to suppose that they have fallen in love with each other.

But strange things happen in the month of April.

XII.

She had just fallen asleep for the second time, when the cessation of the engines woke her, and a few moments later they had descended in a field adjoining his aerodrome.

He jumped from the pilot's seat and lifted her out. 'Quick, Pippa,' he said. 'They 'll be here in a few minutes for the machine. I had to land here because that light was my only guide. Do you see that heavy tree over there by the road? Wait beside it until I return with a motor-cycle. Hurry, youngster; they 're coming.'

She did as he bade her, and took refuge in the shadow of a huge tree, just as men's voices told her the mechanics had come. The rolling of distant guns, like thunder echoing through cavernous depths, travelled on the wings of the wind, and left her heart fluttering from a sudden contraction of pain. For one day, in the restful meadows of England and in the fascination of the unmarred City of Adventure, she had forgotten France's agony. With the thought came a sudden bitterness.

Ten minutes later she heard him coming with a motor-cycle, to which a side-car was attached. She took her seat in the car, and he fastened the rubber cover over her knees. Then he opened the throttle, and they sped through the night towards her home.

It was just twenty minutes to twelve when they reached the mill. Hurrying across the foot-bridge which spanned the chute, she entered the cottage and lit the lamp.

'Louis!' she cried. 'Louis!'

That patient feline awoke from slumber and stretched in the most blasé manner; but his little mistress, gathering him in her arms, pressed her cheek against his head, asking a dozen questions at once, to which he deigned no reply other than blinking into space and licking his chops, as though the ways of women were beyond him, but 'twere best to let them have their own way.

The airman followed her in. . . . The prevaricating clock continued its dilatory march of time. Marshal Joffre was, if anything, more paternal than before, and the geranium-coloured table-cover lent its unsubtle glow to the scene.

'Good-bye, Pippa,' he said.

The girl stood motionless, and there was a quick stab in her heart. She had known that this moment would come, but had kept her thoughts from it . . . and now . . . he was going. . . . Once more she would have only her little world of make-believe. She released the cat from her arms and turned her eyes away.

'You have been very kind, monsieur,' she said.

He fingered his helmet absent-mindedly. 'Did you enjoy it?' he asked aimlessly.

'It was wonderful,' she said quietly, still looking into distance; 'I have seen so much. This morning I was just a little girl, but now'——

His fingers ceased turning the helmet, and he frowned at it intently. 'We do not grow old

with years, but by moments,' he said. 'For a long time one is a child; then there comes an instant of suffering, or of love—and one is no longer a child. That is all.'

She slowly sank into a chair by the table, and, folding her hands, appeared engrossed in the table-cover. 'Your Majesty,' she said, 'do you remember the poor lady with the violets?'

'Yes, Pippa.'

'What did she say to you?'

He smiled awkwardly. 'It—it is rather hard to explain, little one. She told me to—to take care of you.'

'Why did she say that?' she asked, without removing her eyes for a moment from the table.

'Well—perhaps you do not know this—but men are often very unkind to women.'

'I know, monsieur. Simon Barit, he often beats his wife.'

He sat down on a chair opposite her. 'There are many more ways of being cruel than that,' he said. 'Sometimes a kiss, or the gift of a flower, is worse than a blow. Often, Pippa, men play with women's hearts as—well, as Louis does with a spool.'

A shadow fell on her face. 'I think I understand, monsieur. That poor lady was afraid I should fall in love with you, but that you would not love me.'

'That is partly what she meant.'

Pippa rose and walked to the window. 'To-night I think,' she said, after a minute's silence, 'that women have the most sorrow in life.'

'They do, little one.'

'But also the most joy, monsieur.'

He rested his chin on his hand, but said nothing.

'All to-day,' resumed the girl, 'when men seemed happiest it was because they were with women. Also, when they looked most cruel—you perhaps know what I mean—there were women there too with the faces that frightened me. And all those lovely children playing in the Park—always they seemed so merry because their mothers were near them. But, also, you remember the poor soldier in the chair?—no legs and but one arm. His face was so sad until once the lady with him—a nurse, you said—spoke to him, and he looked at her and smiled. It was lovely, monsieur. I think I wept a little.'

He made no comment, but his left hand ran slow arpeggios on the table. From the window she could see the water of the chute, all silvery in the moonlight.

'So to-night, monsieur,' she went on, 'I am not the same as this morning. Then I thought that we who are women are the happiest; but now I think, in the real world, it is we who give pleasure or unhappiness. Perhaps, monsieur'—she turned around and faced him—'perhaps a woman finds joy only when she gives it to others.'

He looked at her, and his eyebrows were raised in wonder. When he had said we grow old by moments, was it more than just a well-turned phrase?

She returned to her chair by the table.

'When Louis and I are alone,' she murmured, 'I shall not dream the same as before. Then we had only young people, brave and handsome, but now I shall pretend that there are many old and sad ones, who perhaps will be glad if I am with them. And'——

'Pippa, my dear'—he looked into her eyes that met his without timidity, and there was a pleading note in his voice—'you may be lonely here, but you saw to-day how many discouraged, unhappy people there are—how much sickness and unkindness there is. Keep to your little world here with its Fairy Princes and the music of the wind. It is better, Pippa. . . . Perhaps it is even more real than the other.'

She smiled, patiently, and, for the second time that day, felt a motherly pity for his youthfulness.

'Your Majesty,' she said, 'in my book, *The Fairy Prince*, the girl sings a song about love, and she asks her mother, "*Est-ce plaisir, est-ce tourment?*" I know now that it is both. Ah! I think it is too wonderful to be a woman; for some day, perhaps yes, perhaps no, I shall have my own children and a husband and friends. And sometimes, when my husband, he is much discouraged if the mill makes no money, though he work so hard, or if my children are perhaps sick and cry—then it is I who smile and say, "*Mes enfants*"—for he, too, will be only a big child—"*mes enfants*, can you see the sunshine? Do you hear the birds? Can you smell these flowers?—So!" *Et alors*—perhaps they smile too. So I sing a pretty song and say to my husband, "*Courage, mon ami!* Have you not your little wife?" And after that we are all happy. . . . And now, that is why I think it is so wonderful to be a woman.'

The clock hiccoughed, and struck eight.

The airman looked at his watch. 'By Jove, it is midnight!' he said. 'Pippa, our day is over'——

Tears sprang to her eyes, and her hands groped for his. 'But no, monsieur,' she cried, 'you must not go. It will be so lonely.'

He leaned over and covered her little hands with his large, tanned ones. 'It will be lonely for me as well,' he said.

'But you will come back, your Majesty? Perhaps—next Easter?'

He gently stroked her hand. 'On my honour,' he said, 'I will come on the Tuesday at dawn. You will be there?'

He released her hands as she slowly rose and crossed once more to the window.

'At daybreak,' she said very quietly, gazing at the steely brilliance of the running water, 'I will watch from the hill. And if you do not

come, though I shall weep a little, I shall say, "He is fighting, and could not leave for little Pippa. Next year he will come."'

'And supposing, little one, he does not come the next year either?'

She leaned her arm against the window-pane and rested her cheek on it. 'I shall watch again at dawn, monsieur'—the words were spoken very slowly,—'and I shall say, "He is not coming. . . . He has gone to be with his brothers who went out into the sunlight, smiling so bravely"'——

Her words ended in a half-sob, and she pressed her face with both hands.

'But every Easter,' she said, her voice very soft and trembling, 'on the Tuesday, I will watch the dawn from the hill, and perhaps, monsieur, you will see me.'

He stood motionless for a moment, slowly reached for her leather coat and helmet, and placed them over his arm. 'Good-bye, Pippa,' he said, and he held out his hands.

Timidly, and with cheeks that went all white, then crimson, she came towards him and raised her face for him to kiss. For a moment he held her in his arms, which quivered oddly. . . . Then, stooping, he gently kissed her—not on the upturned, trembling lips, but on the cheek, just beside her mouth.

Without a word he released her from his arms, flung the door open, and went out into the night.

Motionless, with the burning memory of his hot lips upon her cheek, she stood until the sound of his footsteps was lost in the song of the chute. Slowly her hands dropped to her side and she sank into the chair by the table. The cat looked up from the task of licking his paws, and sprang upon her lap.

'Louis!' she cried, smothering him in an embrace that threatened to snuff out his nine lives prematurely, while tears from her eyes fell glistening on his fur. 'Louis!'

THE END.

THE EPISODE OF RAVENSHEUGH TOLL

By Sir JAMES BALFOUR PAUL, C.V.O., LL.D.

I.

IT was in the gloaming of a fine, calm autumn evening—to be more precise, on Sunday, October 6, 1760—that Peter Kerr, the keeper of Ravensheugh Toll-Bar (about two miles to the east of Musselburgh, just where the road to Haddington branches off from that along the coast), was leaning over his gate, enjoying the Sabbath calm, and at peace with the world in general. On a seat at the door of the toll-house sat his buxom wife, Helen Halliday, resting quietly, as it behoved her to do owing to the interesting condition of health in which she then was. Her sister Anne was staying with her, having been summoned from her Dumfriesshire home to be with Helen at her approaching confinement. Earlier in the day Peter and his sister-in-law had toiled up the hill to Inveresk Kirk to hear the handsome minister, Alexander Carlyle, who had just got his D.D. degree from King's College, Aberdeen, and who was to be married on the Monday of the following week. From within the toll-house proceeded sounds which to the attentive and practised listener proclaimed that some evening meal was in course of preparation by the little maid, Isobel Maclean, whom the couple could well afford to employ, as toll-keeping was a lucrative calling in those days.

The scene was idyllic; there was an air of perfect peace over it all. The clean stubble-fields round about showed that the crops had been gathered in; the trees were just beginning to assume their autumn tints; the rooks were slowly winging their way to roost in the Pinkie woods. Far to the east a faint glow illumined the sky, indicating that the coal fire on the Isle of May had just been lit. Inchkeith was at that period lightless. The only sound heard was the gentle lapping of the wavelets on the adjacent shore.

Suddenly from afar off, up the Haddington road, came the noise of jingling bits and clanking swords, with the tramp of horses' feet, while at intervals snatches of bacchanalian song rent the still air. Peter cocked an ear.

'That'll be thae draigons frae Haddintoun, I'm thinkin',' he called to his wife. 'I houp the maut's no abune the meal the nicht. They're a thirsty lot, thae sodjers, and I'm telt they were neither to haud nor to bind at the "George" in Haddintoun the week afore last when Sandy Purdie, honest man, wudna gie them ony mair drink. A randy lot!' he concluded, as he turned to look up the road, where he could just see the riders coming into sight. On they came, shouting, singing, and occasionally cursing. Before they pass the toll-bar, let us see who they were.

There were not many of them—only five officers altogether. They belonged to the 18th Light Dragoons (the number has been changed since), and very gay they looked in their red coats with white facings, white waistcoats and breeches, and the badge of the regiment—a death's head with the words 'Or Glory' below—on their tall grenadier hats. The regiment had been raised only the previous year, chiefly through the exertions of their present com-

mander, Lieutenant-Colonel Hale, who now rode at the head of the party. A Hertfordshire man himself, he had got his recruits mostly from his native county. He had seen a good deal of soldiering, as a young man had been in the 47th Foot, and was with Sir John Cope in the '45. Later he had distinguished himself in the war in America, and had had the honour of being the bearer to this country of the despatches announcing the victory at Quebec in 1759. His major, John Blaquiere, was the son of a London merchant of French extraction. He was now about thirty-eight years old, with many years still before him. Their companions call for no special remarks. Captain Sam Birch had not been at the feast with his brother-officers—he had picked them up on the road—though this does not imply that he had not been indulging in potations elsewhere. The two youngsters, the noisiest and most obstreperous of the party, were Lieutenant Joseph Hall or Hale, perhaps a younger brother of the colonel, and Cornet George Birch, a brother, maybe, of the captain.

As they approached the toll it was evident that the whole party were decidedly drunk. What really happened we do not know; at the trial, to which reference will in due time be made, the 'panels' pleaded guilty, so that no evidence was led. There is reason, however, to suppose that as the first of the party passed through the gate Peter demanded his toll dues, on the ground, doubtless, that though the officers were in uniform, they were not on duty. This was roughly refused, probably with many oaths and objurgations, which so set Peter's Border blood aflame that he incontinently closed his gate on those who had not yet got through. And then the row began. Peter got a cutting whip laid across his head, was ridden down by a horse which was shoved against him, and lay bleeding on the ground. His faithful spouse now rushed to his rescue with tongue and nails.

'Hoo daur ye, ye drunken limmers, use my gude-man sae? Ye 've felled him near deid, and I 'll hae ye a''——

But her sentence was never finished. Down came the butt-end of a whip upon her shoulders, and again and again were the blows repeated, till the poor woman shouted, 'Murder! Murder!' Her cries reached some cottages inhabited by workmen at a neighbouring pottery. Two of them, with their wives, ran up to see the fray, but prudence forbade their taking an active part in it at first. The toll gate having by this time been opened in some fashion, the roistering party proceeded on their way, and the cottagers hastened to give first aid to the unfortunate toll-keeper and his wife.

II.

But, alas! the battle was not yet ended. After they had gone on about a quarter of a mile, some fresh idea seemed to strike through the muzzy brains of the soldiers, and they stopped, swaying in their saddles.

Quoth the colonel to the major, 'Stap my vitals, Jack! now I come to think on 't, that lousy Scotsman at the bar called me a cheating rascal. I knocked him down for trying to swindle me—the boot 's on the other leg, I think. Let 's go back and baste him again. We cannot in honour retire after such an insult.'

The proposition was received with drunken clamour, and with cries of 'Revenge! Revenge!' the whole party galloped back to the toll-bar.

'Gude's sake!' cried Mrs Mason, one of the neighbours' wives who had come to the assistance of the Kerrs, 'there 's thae mischancy pock-puddin's o' officers rattlin' doun the road again, and they 're a' as fou as pipers. Intae the hoose wi' ye a'.'

She had hardly uttered the words when the enemy was upon them. Charles Turner and William Mason and their spouses made a bolt for safety and reached the toll-house, into which they rushed along with Isobel Maclean, the servant-girl. The bold dragoons halted, and dismounted as best they could. They first rushed at poor Peter, who, though dazed and shaken, had managed to regain his feet. They seized him and dragged him along westwards with many oaths and imprecations. He resisted stoutly, which exasperated them so much that, crying out, 'Knock him down! Damn him for a lousy Scot!' they drew their pistols from their holsters and battered the unfortunate toll-keeper on the head with the stocks of their weapons till he fell to the ground, covered with wounds and blood. Next turning their attention to his wife, without more ado they knocked her down also—an easy victory. They then commenced to pull their victims' bodies about, adding the vilest insult to physical injury.

Anne Halliday, Mrs Kerr's sister, who had till now remained somewhat in the background, seeing her sister so dragged about, and knowing the condition in which she was, rushed to her rescue. But what could one frail woman, however brave, do against such opponents? One blow from a pistol-stock disabled an arm at once, and it hung useless by her side. She could only mingle her cries of pain and terror with those of the other victims.

The dragoons now turned their attention to the toll-house. They knocked in the door, which had been bolted against them, and entered the house, demanding that the men there should be given up to them, though it does not appear that they had taken any part in the fray. Charles and William, honest men, stood by the fire, trying to make themselves as inconspicuous as possible; but their wives were more assertive, and boldly stood up in defence of their good-men.

The issue was at no time in doubt. The

attacking party consisted of five soldiers, reckless and armed; against them were two peaceful country louts, their wives, and the toll-house servant. But a lively 'scrap' ensued. The officers raged and stormed, and dealt indiscriminate blows with the butt-ends of their pistols, one of which was broken in the scuffle. The women tore and scratched to the best of their ability. If their husbands afforded them any aid, it was to no purpose. The floor was soon strewn with prostrate bodies, most of them with severe wounds and streaming with blood. Then Mrs Kerr, supported by her sister, tottered up to the door. The sight of her seemed to inflame the passion of the infuriated officers to a still higher degree. They caught hold of her, turned her round and round till she was ready to drop again, and ultimately pulled almost every stitch of clothing off her. Then, and not till then, it seemed to strike the least drunk of the party that it was time to go.

'Well, my brave bucks, we had better be off. If we stay here much longer, 'fore Gad! we shall have all the county down on us. We have taught these cattle a lesson they will remember, and they will not insult His Majesty's troops with impunity again.'

They then staggered to their horses, clambered on to their saddles as best they could, and were soon in full retreat towards Musselburgh, where their quarters were.

The condition of the victims was pitiable. Peter Kerr had his head laid open; his wife lay unconscious and motionless; Anne Halliday had a fractured arm; the party in the toll-house itself were all suffering more or less from contusions and wounds. They administered what aid they could to the toll-keeper and his wife, and Charles Turner, the least battered of the company, was despatched to Musselburgh for surgical assistance. When it did arrive, some two hours later, the doctor shook his head, expatiated on the gravity of the condition of the two most seriously maltreated of the patients, and finally said that he could not be answerable for the consequences unless additional surgical skill was procured with as little delay as possible.

By this time the news of the attack had spread. A friendly neighbour offered the use of his light cart to drive to Edinburgh for young Professor Monro, who had succeeded his father in the Chair of Anatomy the year before. Whether the professor got to Ravensheugh that night or next morning history relates not, but it was many weeks ere Peter and his wife were able to crawl about again, and to collect the toll dues at the gate.

III.

The next morning dawned on several splitting heads and hazy memories in the quarters of the 18th Light Dragoons in Musselburgh. The culprits were fully aware that something pretty dreadful had happened the night before. A broken pistol, of which only the barrel remained, testified to the occurrence of a serious fight. In the course of the forenoon, by dint of cautious inquiry through their servants, it was ascertained that rumour alleged that Mrs Kerr was dead, and that Peter was irretrievably injured. Visions of a court-martial, if not of an ordinary criminal trial, rose up before the gallant five, and the prospect looked so black that four of them took to flight at once, leaving the colonel alone to bear the consequences as best he could. Where they went or how long they stayed away we know not; but, as we shall see, the fugitives were back again before many weeks elapsed.

It was not long before the authorities took the matter up. On October 13 an advertisement appeared in the *Caledonian Mercury* and the *Edinburgh Courant* calling a meeting of the Road Trustees of Haddington (in whose jurisdiction the toll was) for the 17th of that month 'upon affairs of the greatest consequence to the country.' At the meeting, which was attended by fifteen members, under the presidency of Lord Coalstoun, it was stated that precognitions had already been taken from the assaulted persons, and the meeting, after considering fully the circumstances of the 'attrocious ryot' which had taken place, recommended their preses to communicate with Mr Thomas Miller, the Lord Advocate, desiring his lordship to raise a process against the officers, and to conjoin the names of the trustees in the indictment along with those of the private prosecutors. The meeting also undertook that the expenses of the prosecution should be paid out of the money belonging to the turnpike, and appointed a committee to carry out its decisions.

IV.

The next act in the drama opens in the High Court of Justiciary on January 26, 1761. The five officers are in the dock, guarded by two grizzled warriors of the Town Guard, with Lochaber axes in their hands and enormous cocked hats on their heads. The prisoners, or panels, as they were legally termed, look, it is but justice to say, thoroughly ashamed of themselves, and appear very different from the swaggering roisterers of the memorable October evening. The cry of 'Court!' brings the assembled audience—and it is a large and distinguished one—to its feet, and there enter, preceded by the mace, the judges who are to try the case. There are six of them, headed by the Justice-Clerk, Sir Charles Erskine of Tinwald.

The Justice-Clerk was a very old man, being at this time upwards of eighty years of age, but his intellect was as clear as ever. He was far

removed from the popular conception of an old-time Scottish judge. Grave, courteous, and suave in demeanour, he was what a modern girl would call 'an old dear,' and spoke with a grace and a purity of speech that contrasted with the broad Doric of some of his brethren. But the remainder of the judges did no discredit to the Scottish Bench, being without exception men of family and learning. There were Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, who was soon to succeed Erskine as Justice-Clerk; Alexander Fraser of Strichen, who sat on the Bench for nearly half-a-century; William Grant of Prestongrange, a fine specimen of the upright judge; Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, better known, perhaps, as the father of the biographer of Johnson than for anything else; and Andrew Pringle of Alemoor, whose strong and jovial countenance looks down on us to this day from the walls of the Parliament House.

The judges having taken their seats on the Bench, the trial was begun by the indictment being read over by the Clerk of the Court. It was, as usual in those days, rather a lengthy and involved document, but it had the merit of stating the principal facts of the case, which otherwise we should not have known. It narrated how crimes of assault were severely punishable, especially when committed on persons holding public offices, and at the door of their dwelling-house where they were stationed on duty; it was an additional aggravation when such crimes were committed by officers in the king's army, and not only so, 'but on a Sunday or Lord's Day, set apart by the laws of the land for the exercise of the duties of religion,' and under cloud of night. 'Yet true it is and of verity,' the indictment proceeded, that the prisoners committed this assault under the circumstances which have been already given in detail.

The reading of the document finished, the Lord Justice-Clerk, leaning over his desk and looking rather overwhelmed by his ermine robe, said in mellifluous accents, 'Prisoners at the Bar, you have heard the charge read over to you. What say you—are you guilty or not guilty?' No direct answer was given, but Lieutenant-Colonel Hale, fumbling for a moment in his pocket, drew forth a sheet of paper, which he handed to the Clerk.

The gist of the document was that the prisoners pleaded guilty, one and all, but explained, in mitigation of their proceedings, that they had all been drinking on the night on which the affair occurred; that they thought the toll-keeper had insulted them, and that they were sorry they had resented it in such a way; that they were willing to give any reasonable satisfaction to the gentlemen of the county (meaning the Road Trustees); and that they were ready to make any reparation to the prosecutors (the toll-keeper and his wife) and to the laws of their country that the Court should think proper.

All that was frank enough, and what might have been expected of persons in their position. The only drawback to it, from the point of view of a latter-day chronicler, is that it rendered unnecessary any evidence being led in the case, so we are deprived of that detail which would have come out had witnesses been examined.

In our day, under the circumstances of a plea of guilty having been tendered, nothing more would have required to be done, and sentence would have been immediately pronounced. But at that time it was requisite that a jury should be empanelled and should return a formal verdict in accordance with the plea. Accordingly a jury was called from those who had been summoned to be in attendance for the purpose. It consisted of ten county lairds, an Edinburgh merchant, and a wright, Sir Robert Myreton of Gogar being appointed Chancellor. They took their seats in the box, and, after a brief direction from the presiding judge, returned a verdict of 'Guilty' on the prisoners' own confession. There was a short conference among the judges, and the Justice-Clerk then announced that they would consider what sentence would be pronounced, and that the Court would adjourn for two days.

On Wednesday, January 28, then, the same assemblage convened to hear the result of the deliberations of the Bench. The Justice-Clerk, speaking in clear and measured tones, addressed the prisoners and expatiated on the enormity of the offence, especially when committed by persons in their position, and sentenced them to pay two hundred and six pounds fourteen shillings for the expenses of the trial and the costs of medical attendance on the sufferers, and also to pay the sum of two hundred pounds as damages to Peter Kerr and his wife. In addition to this, each panel was fined five pounds for the assault.

V.

But there was a sequel to the affair which was even more serious to the culprits than their trial, as it promised to affect their professional career. The old Duke of Argyll, who in Sir Robert Walpole's day had been the principal agent of the Government in Scottish affairs, as such ruling Scotland with much ability and prudence, brought the matter of the Ravensheugh riot under the notice of George III. It must have been among the last official acts of Argyll's life, as he died in April 1761. The effect was instantaneous. The young king was much incensed, and commanded the Secretary of War to write to Lord George Beauclerc, then commanding the forces in Scotland, to the effect that he was highly displeased at the conduct of the officers in question, but as they had already satisfied the law of the country by their submission to

the sentence of the Court of Justiciary, he did not think fit to bring them to a second trial by way of court-martial. Beauclerc was, however, directed to reprimand them, in the king's name, in the strongest terms, for their breach of military discipline as well as of civil duties, and to recommend them in future to regain, by a prudent and inoffensive demeanour, the good opinion and confidence of their fellow-citizens as the surest means of restoring themselves to the favour of His Majesty, who was always particularly offended when the public peace was disturbed and the laws insulted by those whom he had honoured with his commission for the protection of both.

No time was lost in carrying out this order. On March 19 those troops of the regiment which were quartered at Musselburgh were paraded, and Lord George Beauclerc and his staff having arrived, the five officers concerned were called to the front and addressed by the Commander-in-Chief very much in the terms of the communication above mentioned. He concluded with a recommendation to both officers and men of the regiment to continue to cultivate the good understanding and harmony with the gentlemen of the country which had happily hitherto subsisted between them and the military.

It was probably with chastened feelings that the officers heard these words of grave rebuke from the Commander-in-Chief, especially as they saw themselves surrounded by a jeering crowd of civilian spectators. When Lord George and his staff wheeled about their horses and returned to Edinburgh without partaking of the hospitality of the regiment, the offenders went back to their quarters in a rather downcast frame of mind.

VI.

But if they flattered themselves that now at last the affair was over and done with, they were considerably mistaken.

There was still another, and a very curious, sequel to the case, which had, as might be expected, created considerable interest and excitement in the county. There appeared shortly after the trial a squib, skit, pasquil, pamphlet, or whatever it may be called, of four quarto pages, setting forth what purported to be a true version of the affair from the officers' point of view. Like many of its tribe in that day, it is of rather ponderous and elephantine humour, but its extreme rarity may be an excuse for describing it somewhat in detail. It is entitled 'The surprising and heroic Atchievement at Ravensheugh Toll, to rescue from the Jaws of Oblivion or vague Tradition, and to hand down to Posterity, unsullied by the noxious Blasts of Envy or Malice, an Atchievement more perilous and more tremendous than the most renowned of the peerless Knight of La Mancha, is the disinterested Motive of ushering into the World the following impartial Narrative.'

It then proceeds to describe how the officers were returning 'to their Cantonment at Musleburgh,' and how the toll-bar had been seized upon that very day by a party of French, 'who, with the Policy and craft characteristic of their nation, disguised themselves in the Habits of Women, all except the Commandant, who assumed the Dress and Character of the Toll Keeper.' The narrative goes on to tell how toll duty had been asked from those in the rear of the party after some had been allowed to pass unchallenged. 'Enraged at this insolent Demand,' it continues, 'and beginning to suspect they were enemies, those brave Gentlemen, disdaining further Parley, attacked the subtle foe with Whip in Hand, applying that Instrument Butt and Lash with such happy success upon the Body of the supposed Toll-gatherer and him who passed for his Wife, that in a Twinkling they laid them bloody at their Feat. On the alarm created by this, more petticoated Frenchmen making their appearance, they judged it prudent to make an orderly retreat and rejoin the main Body. This they effected without loss, the Enemy not daring to pursue them.'

After describing a council of war which was held, the tale goes on: 'The Council unanimously resolved to attack the Enemy in their Intrenchments without loss of time. The two Field officers, after making an excellent Disposition of their Forces, endeavoured to rouse their Troops to martial deeds by all the Powers of Persuasion,—they beseeched, they exhorted, they enjoined, they commanded them to behave like Men, like Soldiers, like Britons. Then this little tho' intrepid Army marched in Battle Array, headed by their C.....l and M...r, which last acted as Brigadier for the time and was particularly zealous for the Service, riding through the Ranks, Sword in Hand, and, lest their martial Spirit should flag before they reached the Enemy, often repeating the Word *Revenge* with great vociferation and calling to them to advance with Briskness. They advanced, they charged the Foe, and after much Carnage and Bloodshed they gained a complete Victory, all their Enemies being grievously wounded and some of them left for dead on the spot. This great Battle was fought and won without a single Man being lost, or one Drop of Blood being spilt on our side: which was very extraordinary, as we were not greatly superior in Numbers to the Enemy.'

The ingenuous author then goes on to observe that 'though these Facts are strongly attested, yet a Report still prevails that those Frenchmen in Petticoats were really women, and that the one disguised in the Toll-Keeper's Garb was in Fact the Toll-gatherer appointed by the Trustees for the Turnpike Roads. The Improbability,

nay the utter Impossibility, of this Account will appear from the following reasons:—First, it is agreed, that none but Cowards, Dastards, and Poltroons would beat Women: now everybody knows how much the Reverse of that is the character of Soldiers, more especially that of officers, and still more that of Field Officers, therefore the Story must be in so far false. Again it is well known that the British Army is kept up for the protection of the Laws and the civil Authority, and for the Defence of our Lives, Liberties and Properties: ergo, no Gentlemen of the Army would be concerned in any the smallest Violation of the public Peace, far less in assaulting civil officers in the Execution of their Duty. These two reasons are sufficient to convince any considerate impartial Person that the common Report concerning this Affair is entirely a Fable.'

Having rubbed all this in with a somewhat heavy hand, the author, after a peroration with which we need not weary the reader, adds a postscript to the following effect: 'An invidious Report has arisen, that the Persons who prepared this Atchievement were not Officers but Women in Officers' Cloaths. The Public may be assured it is entirely groundless. There are always some People ready to detract from the Merit of Soldiers.'

VII.

Such was the episode of Ravensheugh Toll. It is a curious commentary on the manners and customs of the age. But it must be stated that such outrages were very exceptional; the two and three bottle men generally got mellow, rather than uproarious and quarrelsome. Drinking was, in many quarters of both ability and respectability, considered a virtue rather than a vice—an opinion echoed on the Bench itself by one of the most noted judges of the time, who, when trying a man for stabbing a friend after supper, would not listen to the plea that there was no malice in the matter, the prisoner being drunk. 'Good God, my laards,' exclaimed the judge with fervency, 'if he will do this when he is drunk, what will he not do when he is sober?'

No doubt the satirical pamphlet was chuckled over by the community at large, and did not tend to increase the popularity of the regiment at Musselburgh. It is to the credit of the authorities, however, that they took a serious view of the matter; and their action did good. What became of the younger members of the party we do not know, but Colonel Hale died Governor of Limerick in 1806. The major had an excellent career. He was in 1772 appointed principal secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Earl of Harcourt, whose secretary he had been when ambassador in Paris. Two years later he got the Order of the Bath, and he was created a baronet in 1774. He is described as 'a gourmet with social and convivial tastes,' and Horace Walpole calls him a 'frank, good-humoured, but weak and conceited man.' Other writers have not such a high opinion of him, but he must have been, on the whole, popular, and for his support of the Union he was raised to the Irish peerage in 1800.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A LARGE CINEMA-FILM FACTORY.

BY the time this note appears in print, what is believed to be the largest cinema-film factory in existence will have begun operations in New York. The unique feature of this establishment, in addition to its mere size, is the housing of all departments connected with the production of films under one roof. The building forms a complete city block, with a ground area of four acres. In the basement is a steam plant capable of generating five hundred horse-power for distribution in the form of electric current all over the building. On the first and second floors are housed the largest film-printing plant in the world, with a capacity, according to the *Scientific American*, of three million feet a week; an experimental department in which chemists and photographers can try new apparatus and improvements; and the administration offices, where some sixty-three branches dotted about the globe are controlled. Most of the upper floor is given over to the filming of plays, and so large is the space available that one hundred scenes can be in course of production at one and the same time. The roof is in a single span without supporting columns, so that the floor is unobstructed. Under it, in addition to the stage space, are twenty dark rooms, shops for wood-carvers and carpenters, a restaurant, and dressing-rooms for one thousand artistes, with bathrooms, gymnasium, library, and greenroom. There are twelve small theatres in which plays can be filmed, and thirty-five fireproof and waterproof vaults for the safe storage of prints and negatives. Air-freshening and heating apparatus is included in the equipment, which will supply fresh air of the same temperature all the year round. Naturally the building has been made as fire-resisting as possible, but to allow of the rapid exit of the five thousand persons employed, an inclined roadway leading to the street from each floor is provided, the width being sufficient to eliminate any risk of a jam during an alarm of fire.

ROLLING STEEL RAILWAY WHEELS.

As is well known to railway experts, and is realised to some extent by passengers, carriage and truck wheels form a most important part of the equipment of every train. As enormous numbers are required, it is only natural that efforts should have been made to turn them out by automatic machinery at the lowest possible cost. A great many wheels are now made of forged steel in one piece, and until recently these were produced from blanks stamped from huge slabs of steel by enormous punches and dies. This process has been lately superseded to some extent by colossal rotary shears which cut off the blanks from round bars. The bars, varying in diameter from eleven to twenty inches, according to the size of the wheels required, are rolled from steel ingots, and the blanks are sheared off when the bars are at a bright-yellow heat. The shears take the form of two steel discs, of which the peripheries have a spiral contour. These discs are mounted at such a distance apart that when their larger sides are turned towards each other they come together, while their smaller sides have just space enough between them for the thickest bar to be sheared. The bar is mounted on a roller which revolves it in a clockwise direction, while the disc-shears are driven the opposite way by a powerful electric motor. As the shears revolve they bite into the bar from opposite sides until, in about eight seconds, they meet in the middle and the blank is sheared off. The blanks are afterwards heated and rolled between revolving dies, which squeeze and shape them into wheels of the required diameter. The dies are forced together by a hydraulic plunger with a pressure of three million pounds, while the electric motor which rotates them is capable of developing two thousand horse-power. According to an article by Mr E. F. Cone in the *Scientific American*, the bearings for the dies which have to withstand this enormous pressure are believed to be the largest in the world. Only twenty seconds are occupied in the wheel-forming process, which completely finishes each wheel except for the cutting off of a fin round the periphery and the punching of a hole in the middle, these operations being effected by separate machines. The apparatus for producing wheels by this system is of colossal proportions, the shears being thirty-six feet long, and the shearing-machine having a width of eighteen feet and a height of nearly fourteen feet. The complete equipment is about one hundred and thirteen feet in length, and weighs three hundred and eighty tons.

A PILLION-SADDLE FOR MOTOR-CYCLES.

In spite of an agitation set in motion by the Watch Committee of a well-known district council to have pillion-riding on motor-cycles made illegal, this practice has come to stay, and is being catered for in the devices mentioned in this note, and in other similar appliances. When pillion-riding on motor-cycles first came into vogue the rear passenger was content to maintain a precarious and uncomfortable seat on the luggage-carrier. Recently pillion-saddles have been introduced, one ingenious example being described below. This appliance, known as the 'Tan-Sad' (short for tandem saddle), consists of a rectangular steel frame which can be attached to any motor-cycle luggage-carrier. Above this frame is a similar one, supported on three springs at each end. The actual seat consists of a bowed or dish-shaped piece of thin steel plate fitted across the upper frame and secured to it at each end. The resilience of the plate itself, together with that of the springs, ensures a minimum of vibration. A cushion is, however, also provided, which can be fixed on quickly by means of grips. Without further support the upper frame would cant over too much on the springs, but this is prevented by a U-shaped link pivoted to one end of the lower frame and to the middle of the upper frame. A further refinement of the saddle proper provides for the middle spring at each end being quickly taken out for light or medium weights. A number of accessories for various purposes are made to accompany this saddle, one of the most obviously serviceable being a pair of foot-rests for a rider sitting astride. For one riding sideways provision is made in the shape of a collapsible back-rest and a special form of foot-rest. Other devices include a tool-bag carrier, grips for a petrol-can, and a handle, all of which are attachable in a few seconds.

HUGE VACUUM CLEANER FOR EMPTYING DUST-BINS.

The present method of emptying dust-bins by filling galvanised containers and discharging their contents into dust-carts in the streets and roads of our towns can scarcely be deemed ideal, as the dust, which may contain disease-germs, is blown on to the clothes and into the faces of passers-by. Until recently, however, no attempts have been made to improve this dirty and dangerous system of collecting dust; but a plan is now being tried in New York that bids fair to eliminate the objectionable features. The new method works on the principle of the vacuum cleaner, the contents of the dust-bin being drawn up through a huge suction-nozzle and deposited in the dust-cart. Mounted on a five-ton chassis, the cart takes the form of a large box-van, the vacuum-producing apparatus consisting of a rotary exhaust-fan, driven by the motor which propels the vehicle. The van having been placed as near to the dust-bin as possible, a telescopic suction-pipe with a vacuum nozzle at the end of it is extended to the dust-bin, the exhaust-fan is started, and the refuse is

rapidly drawn up through the pipe and into the van. Some shovelling of the ashes to the lower end of the tube is necessary, but otherwise no manual labour is involved, and, of course, no dust can escape either at the dust-bin or in the street. Moreover, the operation is carried out much more quickly than by the old method.

A SAFE PETROL STORAGE-TANK.

As most of us know, petrol is much lighter than water, and will not mix with it. These features are taken advantage of in the Bywater petrol storage-tank, in which motor-spirit is stored above a layer of water. When empty of petrol, the tank, which is closed at the top, automatically fills up with water, the bottom of it being in communication with a water-cistern having the usual ball-cock on the supply-pipe. This cistern is mounted high up, and in the pipe leading to the bottom of the tank, at a point just above the tank-top, is a valve which can be set either to open a drain-pipe and cut off the connection to the cistern or *vice versâ*. From the top of the tank a stand-pipe rises to a point just above the cistern, where it is fitted with a spigot. The equipment is completed by a branch, provided with a stop-cock, from the stand-pipe, this branch turning up into a wide funnel which serves as a filler for the petrol and is provided with the usual fine gauze strainer. When the tank is to be filled, the valve is set to open the drain and cut off the water, while the stop-cock in the branch is opened. Petrol is then poured into the funnel and displaces the water, which runs out through the drain. Once the tank is filled, the stop-cock is shut off, and the valve is set to close the drain and turn on the water from the cistern. The tank is now ready for supply purposes, petrol being forced out through the stand-pipe and the spigot by the water from the cistern, which keeps running in at the bottom as the spirit is drawn off from the top. Two outstanding advantages accrue from this system, one being that the tank is full of liquid at all times and contains no vapour liable to escape and explode; the other that dirt in the petrol falls to the bottom of the tank, leaving clean petrol to be drawn off from the top. In the ordinary storage-tank the vent-pipe is always a source of danger, while the petrol, which is drawn off from the bottom of the tank, is apt to be mixed with sediment. Finally, the supply is always under pressure without pumping in the Bywater tank, and may be run to a car through metallic hose. It is interesting to note that the petrol-tanks in R34 were filled from huge storage-tanks in the ground, arranged on the Bywater system.

KILLING MICROBES BY PRESSURE.

Although the sterilisation of liquids by high pressures can hardly have a wide field of application in industry or medicine, the investigations in this direction lately carried out at the West Virginia University Experimental Station by Professor B. H. Hite and his associates, Professor N. J. Giddings and Professor Charles E. Weakley, junior, are of considerable interest. Very high pressures, ranging up to forty-five tons to the square inch, are used, and special cylinders of enormous strength are required to withstand the bursting-strains. This will be readily appreciated when it is remembered that the above-mentioned pressure is more than double that in the breech of a fifteen-inch gun just after the charge has been fired. The cylinder used in the experiments consisted of a block of steel with a hole through it measuring slightly over five-eighths of an inch in diameter. The bottom end of the hole was closed by a steel plug, while a steel plunger was inserted at the top. It would have been impossible to make such a plunger tight by any known form of packing if actually in contact with the liquid; the latter was, therefore, sealed up in a thin lead tube. Pressure was applied by an Olsen testing-machine, such as is ordinarily used for testing bars of steel and other metals. It was found that no micro-organisms can withstand a pressure of one hundred thousand pounds to the square inch, while 'most bacteria,' says the *Scientific American*, 'including those responsible for typhoid, tuberculosis, and diphtheria,' are killed in three minutes by a pressure of seventy-five thousand pounds. As might be expected, the time of exposure to the pressure has an important bearing upon the results obtained, longer exposures being required with lower pressures. Temperature also affects the destructive power of high pressures, this being enhanced by increasing the temperature. For sterilising the media employed in the culture of bacteria a pressure of one hundred thousand pounds to the square inch is applied at temperatures of from forty to forty-five degrees centigrade.

TELEPHONING BY SUNLIGHT.

One would scarcely suppose it possible to transmit the vibrations of the human voice by rays of light; yet this has been done experimentally at University College, London, in response to a request by the Admiralty Board of Invention and Research, and Dr A. O. Rankine recently read a paper before the Physical Society of London on the apparatus used and the results obtained. Telephoning by light is based upon the fact that the conductivity of an electric-battery cell of which one plate is selenium varies with the amount of light thrown upon it. No difficulty is experienced in projecting a beam of light over considerable distances; in fact, this has been done extensively in signalling by sunlight with mirrors known as heliographs. It only remains, therefore, to devise some system whereby the intensity of the beam of light to

be projected can be varied in accordance with the varying vibrations of the human voice when a person is speaking. This having been accomplished, the varying intensity of the light thrown upon the selenium cell may be caused to vary the amount of electricity passing to a telephone receiver, as is done when a telephone transmitter is spoken into. Sunlight was generally used in the experiments, but light from an arc lamp was also found to be effective. The light was focused by a lens on to a small concave mirror, but before passing to the lens it was split up into bands by a grid with spaces one-tenth of an inch wide between the bars. When telephoning by light, the operator speaks into a horn terminating in a vibrating diaphragm, but instead of the vibrations being transmitted to a needle, as in a phonograph, they are reproduced in the mirror, which gives off a number of vibrating bands of light. These bands are projected on to another mirror fitted with a grid similar to that already mentioned, whence they are reflected on to the selenium cell at the receiving station. If no one is speaking into the horn of the transmitter, and the mirror, therefore, is still, the bands of light reflected from it exactly fit between the bars of the grid on the second mirror, and the maximum amount of light is transmitted. When a person is speaking into the horn, the mirror is caused to vibrate, and the bands of light play across the spaces between the bars, the amount of light reflected to the receiving station thus varying with the intensity of the vibrations. 'A speaking-range of one and a half miles has been easily covered,' says *The Wireless World*, 'while the articulation at the receiver is remarkably good.'

A NEW HAND VACUUM CLEANER.

Most housewives are familiar with the advantages of the electric vacuum cleaner for absorbing the dust from carpets and other articles of furniture. Unfortunately many houses are still without a supply of electricity, and even in those that have a supply the cost of the apparatus places it beyond the reach of the householder of limited means. In these circumstances several hand vacuum cleaners have been invented, the latest patterns being used like a broom. Of these an interesting example, known as the 'British Queen,' has been recently placed on the market. The body of this appliance consists of two parts, an upper cylindrical portion, and a lower conical portion. The top of the former is fitted with a handle; for the bottom of the latter there are provided two suction-nozzles which may be used as circumstances dictate, one eight inches in length, and the other three inches. The cylindrical part of the body really forms the barrel of an air-pump, the piston of which is connected to the handle. The complete contrivance is about the same length as an ordinary carpet-broom, and it is held at the same angle and passed over the carpet in the same way as a broom, except that the nozzle is not lifted on the return-stroke. When this appliance is being worked the handle is held steadily against the waist of the operator by one hand, while the other pushes the cylindrical part of the body down and up, thus passing the nozzle to and fro over the carpet. The moving of the cylindrical part of the body down and up the handle or piston-rod has the same effect as pulling up the piston, a strong suction being created at the nozzle by the inrush of air. The pump is, of course, fitted with the usual valves, and just below the lower or suction valve at the bottom of the cylinder is a closed fibrous bag which acts as a filter. This cone-shaped filter-bag has inside of it a weak spiral spring. On every suction-stroke the filter-cone partially collapses and compresses the spring, the latter pushing it out again with a jerk at the end of each stroke, thus shaking off the dust from the outside of the bag, and causing it to fall into the lower conical portion of the apparatus. This is a most important improvement, and entirely does away with the choking of the dust-bags, which is apt to impair the efficiency of such appliances unless they are frequently cleaned. As already stated, the dust falls into the metal cone above the nozzle, from which a suction-pipe projects up the cone nearly to the filter. The dust, therefore, settles round this pipe, and in no way interferes with the working of the cleaner. When full the cone can be unscrewed and emptied—a much cleaner and quicker operation than emptying a dust-bag. It should be noted also that the screwed parts are of copper to avoid any tendency to rust. Finally, this vacuum cleaner weighs only three and three-quarter pounds, and is, therefore, held and worked with a minimum of effort.

COMBINED CARPET-SWEEPER AND VACUUM CLEANER.

Those who are accustomed to use vacuum cleaners know that there are sometimes found upon carpets certain forms of 'matter in the wrong place' which no amount of air-suction will take up, and it is necessary to have recourse to the carpet-sweeper. On the other hand, the carpet-sweeper will not remove dust below the surface, which can only be drawn out by a vacuum cleaner. What more natural, therefore, than that the two devices should be combined, so that sweeping and cleaning can be carried out as one operation. This combination may be seen in an appliance known as the 'Sweeper-Vac,' in which are embodied both a vacuum cleaner and a rotary carpet-sweeper. The vacuum portion of the apparatus consists of a rectangular box made of three-ply mahogany, which contains the bellows for creating the suction. At the front is a wide nozzle that can be quickly detached for emptying the dust-bag,

while a rubber-covered, fluted roller for working the bellows is provided at the back. Two pairs of bellows are installed in the box, and are operated by cranks at the ends of the roller-spindle. Suction is, therefore, created whether the cleaner is pushed forwards or pulled backwards. In between the roller and the nozzle is a carpet-sweeper of the usual rotary type. This part of the apparatus, however, is not fixed rigidly to the cleaner-box, but floats in guides, so that it accommodates itself to any unevenness of the floor or the carpet. The complete appliance is fitted with a hinged handle, and is used in the same manner as an ordinary carpet-sweeper. One important feature of the apparatus is that means are provided for quickly and easily detaching the sweeper from the cleaner, when the two devices can be used separately, the handle being made to fit either.

UTILISATION OF OLD TIN CANS.

Although the collection and utilisation of old tin cans has now been carried on for many years past, some interesting facts in connection with this industry which are not generally known were recently referred to in *Salvage*, the official journal of the Salvage Club. It should perhaps be explained that the so-called tin of which tin cans are made consists of thin iron plates coated with tin on each side. Plates made wholly of tin are never used; even if suitable for the purpose, they would be much too expensive. According to the above authority, large works for recovering the solder, tin, and iron from old tin cans were established by a German company at several places in this country long before the war, and one hundred and fifty thousand tons of steel plates derived from this source were exported to Germany annually for many years. No difficulty attaches to the process of recovering the solder, which is melted off in special furnaces. The tin is not so easily removed, and various methods have been tried, including the use of acids, chlorine, and caustic alkalis, the tin being afterwards recovered by an electric process similar in principle to electro-plating. After being cleaned, the iron plates are formed into blocks of about one hundredweight each by hydraulic pressure. At first the tin was removed from the plates before they were shipped from this country, but latterly only the solder was recovered here, the tin being removed in Germany by the chlorine process, yielding tetrachloride of tin, which was used in the manufacture of silk.

GAS RING ECONOMISER.

We regret that in the advertisement of the London Household Supply Co., Ltd., which appeared in the July part of *Chambers's Journal*, the illustration block of the Gas Ring Economiser was shown as including the oven. The picture should have shown the top only, the price of which is twelve shillings and sixpence. The price of the article as illustrated is thirty-five shillings.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

'BACKSHEESH, SA'B.'

From the Indian's earliest moments,
When the naked, nut-brown child
Hides behind its mother's garments
From monsters strange and wild,
Ere it lisps its cry of 'Khana,'
Which the tiny fingers grab,
Its baby lips are forming
'Backsheesh, sa'b.'

Midst the busy hum and bustle
Of the never-sleeping town,
Where the jungle-wallahs hustle
With the minions of the Crown,
As I cross Chowringhee, flying
From a lustful taxi-cab,
Comes a voice pursuing, crying,
'Backsheesh, sa'b.'

Midst the lonely mountain passes,
As I gaze with bated breath
At the snowcaps towering heavenward,
Like sentinels of death,
In the still and solemn silence
Comes the lisping baby blab
Of a naked child beside me—
'Backsheesh, sa'b.'

When I lie with temples burning,
Aching limbs, and throbbing brain,
And curse the fates that hold me
To the fever-laden plain,
As I toss and turn unheeding,
Every movement like a stab,
Through the window comes a pleading
'Backsheesh, sa'b.'

When at last my toils are over,
My years of exile run,
And I say farewell for ever
To the land of palm and sun,
As I leave these skies of azure
For others drear and drab,
From the shore will float the echo—
'Backsheesh, sa'b.'

W. J. Harris.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SEVENTH SERIES

WITHIN TOUCH.

A STORY OF CROMWELLIAN TIMES.

By G. Appleby Terrill.

CHAPTER I.

AS I lay in Pevensey Marsh that afternoon I was the happiest man in all England, as surely as for the past six months I had been the most wretched. My contentment was so great that when I reflected on it I came to believe that the joy of a coward who finds himself in safety after peril must surpass all other human joys. A shameful conclusion—but my dangers had proved intolerable, and now I was in safety, or within touch thereof.

I had not been always craven. My courage was good enough in the days when I rode with Langdale's Brigade, and for long after it had sufficed for my duty, which was to serve the King as best I might in the land from which they who slew his father had driven him; but at length the Lord Protector, by setting a price on my head, had sapped me.

From an ordinary 'Malignant' under suspicion, I became a fugitive worth a long chase, which was quickly up, and so close on my heels that though I was not actually beaten out of cover to run for it, I yet got little comfort from the friendly roofs or night shadows which hid me, since every sudden hoof-beat or tramp of jack-boots fell on my ears as a certain summons to prison-cell and execution. Soon England itself appeared to me but a vast prison wherein I might lurk for a little space, but out of which I could not escape. I dreaded even to sleep, for fear my life should pay for that sleep; and never did I go to my bed without wishing heartily that I could change it for a resting-place that my fevered mind loved to imagine—a patch of sand on some distant isle, round which a great surf towered so that no man might approach. That island, with its promise of untroubled sleep, was a vision of earthly paradise.

Beyond seas! To be beyond seas! To win across to Holland or to France! The yearning became a frenzy with me; I must ship over the Narrows, or soon I should be shrieking aloud in my terror. But, with my friends spied on and myself spied for, the means were hard to come by, and my limbs had taken to tremble and my lips to quiver when I spoke, so overstrained was I, ere a piece of good fortune brought Dirk Telkirk, the honest Dutchman, into the matter.

And now the horrid times were past. Here was I in the waste of Pevensey Marsh with not a living man in sight, nor like to be. Behind me was the ruined chapel of Northeye, Telkirk's landmark, and before me the shingly beach off which his hoy would heave-to when darkness fell. It might well chance that speck of sail yonder was the hoy herself, even now taking her bearings for her run in. In thirty hours, with this fair breeze, I should be in Rotterdam. But why stretch to thirty hours? In four I should be safe aboard. Now, at this moment, I was safe—well, within touch of safety.

The sweetness of that knowledge! Resting on my elbow in perfect enjoyment, and breathing deep in the newness of my relief, I smiled anon over the sea, and anon down at the crimson and yellow water-lily leaves that were spread on the black water of the dike by my side, and again at the cattle ranging about me. It was these same cattle which presently recalled something I had ceased to think upon in the happiness of my situation—how close I had come to the cruellest fate conceivable, capture when I had reached the very edge of the marsh, after creeping and tiptoeing undetected through fifty miles of England. And I shivered far more vehemently at the recollection of the peril than I had at the instant of it.

The curiosity of a young white bull drew him to the place where I had thrown down Leyburn; other of the creatures followed him, and soon there was a group sniffing shyly at the body. Leyburn had come there thus. He was a rebel man that knew my face well, and as I stepped into the rough road which was between me and the marsh (stepped carelessly, perchance, for the first time in my journey, since my troubles seemed ended), I came right against him, resting under a hedge, with his horse tied to a bush. As soon as he saw me he leapt up, crying my name in triumph, and drawing a pistol from his girdle. But I had a snaphaunce pistol lying loose and cocked in my pocket, and before he could lift his I shot desperately at him, and shot him

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dead. Then, lest he be found and a hue raised, I put him athwart his horse and brought them both into my retreat, unsaddling and unbridling the beast and sending him to feed among the cattle, that he should not savour of a rider did any chance to sight him.

Yes, I shivered hard; but quickly my calm returned. Providentially I had got through; the dangers were left behind me—left for good and all. The byways of London, the corners of watched manors, might haunt me in my dreams, but I should never go back to them. Go back! I would not turn inland now for a king's ransom, for a king's daughter.

The happiest man in England once more, I lolled, weary and mud-stained, on the sunny grass. I began to day-dream of Holland, and of the simple things which would give me marvellous pleasure—a care-free saunter through Rotterdam streets, a fair lodging which I might enter and leave in the sight of all men. And presently, the price of the lodging being in my mind, I put my hand to an inner pocket that held my money and my letters to the Dutch bankers. All were secure; but what—— Ah, it was the sealed paper which had fallen from Leyburn. There was a look of State about it, and, though sick indeed of State matters, I had pouched it to read at my leisure. Well, here was leisure. I drew it forth. 'To Deputy Major-General Burfield, at Sir H. Ferrers's House, in Hastings.'

Leyburn's fall from my bullet had broken two of the seals; I snapped the third, opened the letter, and read:

'His Highness the Lord Protector.

'By these Commandeth,

'That whereas you hold in custody Beatrix Mary Ruthven, or Rivven, sentenced to be put to death for High Treason, which sentence you were to see carried out on Thursday next coming, being the 15th day of this instant month, *You do now delay* the execution of the same sentence, and deliver the said Beatrix Mary Ruthven, or Rivven, to Captain Leyburn, by whose hands these reach you, that he may forthwith bring the said Beatrix to us in London to be further questioned; and you shall furnish Captain Leyburn with such escort of troopers as he may ask, for the safeguarding of the prisoner on the roads hither. OLIVER CROMWELL.

'Given under our hand this Tuesday the 13th of April, 1658.

'To Deputy Major-General Burfield.'

I put the letter down and looked at the sea again, but I was little disposed to smile now. So, in killing Leyburn, I had killed a woman also. To-day was the 14th; since the reprieve would not now reach Major-General Burfield, Beatrix Mary Ruthven, or Rivven, whoever she might be—and by the words 'high treason' she had wrought bravely in the King's cause—would die to-morrow. I sat up, regretting bitterly that I had discovered the letter. Here was my peace of mind, my hard-won happiness, gone. Because of this ill thing I must carry overseas with me the knowledge that in saving my own life I had sacrificed a captive woman's.

I locked my hands about one knee and tried to reason calmly. That is, I tried to satisfy my conscience. This letter, now, it was not a pardon; it would give Beatrix Mary Ruthven another week of life, perhaps, but no more. And yet it might give more. The Protector, maybe, would find her guilt less than supposed, or a touch of mercy might come to him, for, harsh villain though he was, his love for his daughters inclined him sometimes, so it was said, to pity a woman in distress.

I held my knee tighter. Grant it, then, that the letter shadowed a pardon, I was still free from reproach. I had waylaid it unwittingly, and could I, a fugitive hid in a marsh, see to its delivery? As that question took form I shrank from it, for the answer was, 'Yes—at a deadly risk.'

'No, no!' I breathed desperately, striving to crush that answer; and the bare thought that I might yield to it gave me a paroxysm of fear. No! nothing short of Cromwell's troopers should drag me back from my marsh, now that I had gained it. Leave it of my own free-will? Go again, with my courage all drained, into the dreadful background? I would not go a yard thither! Hazard my life afresh and more perilously than ever before? Miss the hoy to a certainty?—and I within touch of safety! I were mad if I did so.

I felt that I had won and was preserved, but the struggle had shaken me, and so weak and craven was my condition that now a kind of anger filled my heart, and I fell shamefully to raging against her who had been near to tempting me. Let her die, this Beatrix Mary Ruthven, this siren that might have destroyed me; yea, let her die, and me be quit of her! Then I remembered that she was no siren, but a woman who had known such fears as had broken me, and now knew worse, since her last night was at hand. Was ever man more base than I, who stormed on her instead of pitying her? She had no thought to lure me. She was not aware of my existence or my strait. What if she were? What would she urge me? Perchance, 'Give not your life for me.'

These imagined words unrested me. I frowned, biting my lip hard. I would not go for *them!* But presently worse followed, sprung, I suppose, from some music in her names. A scrap of faulty verse, which I had no consciousness of forming, was dancing suddenly in my brain, and it danced there without ceasing:

'If Beatrix Mary Rivven
Unto her death be given,
You shall not be forgiven.'

It was torture, and at last I groaned and clapped my hands to my face. The battle was begun again. For a space I bowed forward and back like a sore-smitten man, moaning, arguing, praying, now for my life, now for the will to hazard it.

This woman was the weaker, infinitely the more pathetic figure, of us twain. I could not take her life! I could not carry such a memory with me to the grave! To hesitate thus to give my life for hers were false to all honour. Yet what mattered dishonour? It could be lived down. I wanted my life, calm days and quiet musings in Holland. In three hours Telkirk would come for me. Three hours! If I were to have a chance of saving her and catching the hoy withal, I must act at once—decide at once. Decide? Madness! My legs were trembling. They would refuse to carry me if I turned from the marsh. Leyburn's horse? I cursed it. I should swoon in the saddle. But I must decide!

And forthwith I decided, and, though my heart beat as if it would wreck itself, I got to my feet at once, picked up the saddle and the bridle, and walked to the horse, a good Spanish chestnut, which had wandered near to me.

Whilst I was fixing the gear on him I determined, and quickly this time, which of two plans I should follow. On the face of it, the simplest and least perilous course would be to ride towards Hastings until I met with some person of trustworthy appearance, whom I should beg to take the letter to Major-General Burfield. But against this was the fact that, to ensure its speedy performance, I must tell him of its life-and-death urgency; whereupon his suspicions would be aroused at my entrusting it to him, and, as like as not, ere my back were well turned, he would show it to some passing soldiery, who, scenting something strange, would come scouring after me.

Also, I had now found more manhood in me than I thought to, and felt a distaste for leaving Beatrix Mary Ruthven a prisoner still confronted with death, when, with a little more risk, I might do the business very handsomely and bring her aboard the hoy.

I settled the item. I would play Captain Leyburn, and trust he was not known in these parts, as I believed it probable.

Time was what I lacked. They might keep me an hour or two hours in Hastings. As fast as I was able, I took off from Leyburn and put upon myself his jack-boots, belt and sword, and spider headpiece, thus assuming a military guise; and I did not neglect to find his pass and transfer it to my own pocket. But in the act of mounting I paused and came down again. I had forgotten the broken seals of the letter. With my penknife I cut away the edges (luckily clear of writing) on which they were. Then I refolded the letter and tied it with a piece of ribbon taken from one of those I carried to the Dutch bankers, so that it might well pass as having been given to me unsealed. In ten minutes I was at a canter along the road whereon I had met Leyburn.

It must have been the weariness of Leyburn's own limbs which caused him to rest, for the horse was quite fresh, evidently from a post-house not many miles back, and though I eased him at the high ground behind the hamlet of Bexile, and once when in doubt of my way, he took me very fast into Hastings. The vigorous ride, with all concealment cast aside, and the knowledge of having some other aim than my own preservation, did me good. I began to play Captain Leyburn with spirit.

'Sir H. Ferrers's house?' I cried two or three times when I was in the chief street, and clattering up to a door which was shown me, I gave a loud, careless order, even before I was dismounted, to a soldier, who had come from the adjoining stable-yard, to hold the chestnut.

'Put me a pillion saddle on this horse, corporal.'

The hall door was open, and two troopers and a man-servant were eyeing me from the threshold.

'Take my name to Major-General Burfield,' I said to the footman as I walked up the steps; 'Captain Leyburn, from his Highness.'

He waited to bid me into the hall and to be seated, and went. So the major-general was at home, I thought; fortune was kind to me. But I was to be disappointed.

A young man with a quill pen in his hand descended the stairs and gave me a slight bow. 'Major-General Burfield is out at present, sir. I am his secretary. Can I be of service to you?'

'I fear not, sir,' I said, standing up, 'unless you can deliver to me a prisoner.'

'I fear not, sir,' he answered, smiling.

'I would you were able,' I said in a friendly tone of jest, 'for I must instantly take the road again. I am from the Lord Protector, who enjoined me to make the greatest speed. How soon will the major-general return?'

'He should not be away above an hour.'

'An hour!' I exclaimed blankly. I put my hand on the young man's sleeve. 'You would oblige me much, sir, if you could tell me where to find him, or send him word of my being here.' Then, fearing that my manner had been too anxious, I added with a rueful laugh, 'As it is, I shall be forced to ride through most of the night to repair lost time.'

'Ill luck that,' he answered, 'both for you and the prisoner. Is it the maid, by chance?'

I nodded.

His face lighted up. 'I like thee for that news,' he said heartily. 'I confess to have thought overmuch of to-morrow—not that I should have been *there*. Yes, I will set them searching for the major-general, and come you to the library and drink a cup of wine, for I must go back to my writing.'

I had fasted all day, and so enjoyed the sack and fruit-cake he set before me, but the victual did nothing to allay my impatience, and presently I was fidgeting in a way that must sorely have distracted the young man from his penmanship. I moved about and looked at the pictures on the walls, returning several times to one which, strangely enough, was a scene in Holland—a church and a quiet market-place. How thoroughly I wished I were one of the figures therein, going peacefully to worship!

This delay at the outset was affecting my new-found courage, which threatened to desert me. Again and again I foresaw two incidents—detection, or success, but the hoy sailing without me. A full hour had gone by, and the secretary was on the point of sending out fresh messengers, when the library door was opened, and there entered a short, thin man, with a pale, disagreeable face and a white moustache, wearing a buff military coat and broad hat.

'The major-general,' whispered the secretary swiftly to me, and he got up, saying, 'Captain Leyburn, sir, ridden post from his Highness.'

The major-general nodded gruffly, sat down and leaned back in the secretary's chair, pushed his hat from his brow, and held out his hand. I gave him the letter.

He twitched off the ribbon in a manner which betokened no taste for my handiwork. 'Sealing-wax scarce at Westminster?' he asked, spreading open the paper and not looking up.

'It was writ and given me in haste, sir,' I answered steadily, seizing the chance to lay stress on my hurry.

He read. 'Very well,' he said at the end, but plainly disapproving. Then he raised his eyes to me testily. 'But where is the haste? I have been twice sought out and told that you were here and not a moment to spare.'

'Does not his Highness explain it in the letter, sir?' I asked, as if surprised. 'He bade me most straitly use the greatest speed, and I was delayed at the last post.'

He shook his head. 'What troopers do you want?'

I was prepared for this question. 'By your leave, sir,' I answered, 'I want none. I requisitioned two at Lewes, who are waiting for me beyond the town here.'

He picked up a pen and commenced to write. 'So you want the prisoner forthwith? But it will be dark soon. Do you ride through the night?'

'Through a great part of it, sir.'

He folded a paper, sealed it with emphasis, and gave it to the secretary. Then he waved me to sit down, for I had stood since his entrance.

'I have ordered her to be fetched from the jail,' he said as the secretary left us, and then he began to converse with a certain grumpy courtesy.

I would fain have asked how long the prisoner would be, but I deemed it wiser to curb my desire, and, in fact, to make no mention of her, and we talked of the common news of the day, and I was hard beset to conceal that I knew less of it than he.

The light was fading, and he had put a taper to the candles on the table, and I was preparing to give up all hope of the hoy, when a medley of footsteps told us that those we expected were come.

(*Continued on page 644.*)

A CHAPTER FROM A JOURNALIST'S DIARY.

By Sir Henry Lucy.

THE PASSING OF GLADSTONE.

May 20, 1898.

In Mr Gladstone's long and noble life there has been nothing finer than his passing away. It might all have been so different—a great career marred by months or years of fretful senility. To speak of infinitely lesser men, we know how much better it had been for the fame of Lord Brougham and Earl Russell if they had died some years earlier than the stroke befell. Up to the last, like some noble oak that goes down in the night before its prime is past, Gladstone was at his best, only in physical strength falling short of the majesty of his normal height. The patience with which he bore extreme suffering was fresh testimony to the nobility of his character. To him it was a new experience to suffer pain, to have a habitual condition of bounding health hampered by physical infirmity. That made the visitation harder to bear, more heroic the patience with which it was suffered. In his paroxysms of pain his prevailing thought was of those watching by his bedside, above all for the faithful companion of his toilsome, often stormy, career.

'Don't say anything to Mrs Gladstone,' was his whispered entreaty to the doctors and the nurses when he was smitten with exceeding anguish.

Save for the local affection that undermined his strength, there was, apparently, no reason why he should not have lived on for another ten years. His marvellous powers of recuperation were proved in this last struggle with death. More than once during the week it has seemed that the end was within touch of the enfeebled hands lying on the coverlet, if indeed the end had not come. After a while he rallied.

Next to the deathbed scene within the room at Hawarden Castle, there is nothing more beautifully pathetic than the multitude outside watching and waiting for news. The throng included the peoples of the civilised world. It is no exaggeration to say that within the last century no man has done more for his fellowmen than has the statesman now lying in everlasting rest. It is fitting that mankind should stand with hushed voice and tear-dimmed eyes round his deathbed. Through a long period of his public life Gladstone was the object of the bitterest personal animosity. At home he has had his windows broken. At his club threat was made to throw him out of the window. In the House of Commons he has stood with silent dignity, watching a mob of English gentlemen howling at him behind the closed glass doors of the division lobby. When he lay dying all animus passed away.

FRED BURNABY.

August 3.

Major Stuart Wortley, who is going out to Khartum with Kitchener, tells me something I was proud to hear of the ever-lamented friend whose acquaintance, prelude to a long and affectionate intimacy, I, oddly enough, made in a balloon. The major says that but for Fred Burnaby the column attacked at Abu Klea would have been overwhelmed and destroyed, even as was the ill-fated army of Hicks Pasha. Burnaby rode with the column without being in any position of command. He was on his way to join Headquarters. Soon after the start his military instinct and keen eye discerned fatal weakness in the formation of the troop. By his advice this was altered, with the consequence that when the attack of the Mahdi's horde became imminent, the British and Egyptian troops fell into formation of the square, and were able, after a prolonged and desperate struggle, to beat off their assailants.

It was out of an opening in the corner of the square that Burnaby rode to the help of the wounded private, 'sitting his horse as quietly,' Stuart Wortley says, 'as if he were riding on parade.'

AMERICAN AMBASSADORS.

September 8.

Colonel John Hay has just had time to make himself at home in London when comes the American President with the, for us, abhorred summons of withdrawal to nominally a higher, actually a less well-paid, post. It is noteworthy, when we come to recall recent appointments, that the United States should have such an apparently illimitable and only slightly varied collection of delightful personages to send to represent her at the Court of St James's. We all remember Lowell, whom it seemed impossible to replace. Yet after him came Mr Phelps, a man of quite distinct character and associations, not one whit less successful in the personal aspects of his mission. Perhaps it may be admitted that Mr Lincoln, who succeeded, did not do anything to add to his father's renown as a companion and a conversationalist. Mr Bayard was attractive in many ways, including his personal looks.

Handicapped by deafness, Bayard sometimes succeeded in carrying the infirmity off only too well. There is a story related, perhaps invented, about him at a country-house which is at least characteristic of his manner. At the dinner-table some one told a tale that vastly amused the company, none more, to all appearances, than the American Minister, whose handsome face beamed with laughter.

'Capital!' he said. 'That reminds me of a story perhaps not so good, certainly'—this with a gracious bend of his head to the raconteur—'not so well told, but perhaps you will allow me to repeat it.'

Forthwith he started, and, to the consternation of the company, he began to recite the very story they had just applauded. Seated at the other end of the table, he had not caught the drift of the first man's narrative. Happily it was a polite, well-bred audience, and it was not till his Excellency had finished that the laughter that choked them was allowed to burst forth. Bayard probably thought he had never before told that particular story to so appreciative an audience.

Colonel Hay has the national gift for telling a good story, and indulges in the accomplishment without the drawback that unhappily attends the efforts of his predecessor. He is also equal to the fame of his nationality as an after-dinner speaker. As a conversationalist in the ordinary give and take of a bright dinner-party he is delightful. For his years—well, he is only sixty—he is a marvellously young-looking man, alert, with the bloom of thirty on his cheeks and ready laughter in his eyes.

'I am more sorry to leave England than you can imagine,' he wrote to me on the eve of his departure. 'There were so many interesting things to do, so many charming people I wanted to see more of. I would like to leave an astral body here, cavorting about in agreeable irresponsibility, while the earthly frame went definitely home to work. I have not seen enough of you. But for what I have seen I am thankful, and should be sorry to think we should not meet again. . . I am always faithfully yours, JOHN HAY.'

SPOONERISMS.

September 30.

Young Cambridge is just now hugely delighted with the latest story about a well-known don. This gentleman has a curious habit of, by a slip of the tongue, involuntarily making up a sort of portmanteau or kaleidoscopic word. It

is accomplished by means of mixing up syllables of words succeeding each other in a sentence. His best-known, and perhaps most perfect, success happened in church. Entering one Sunday morning a little late, he found a stranger in his pew.

'I beg your pardon, sir,' he said, breathlessly leaning over the interloper, 'but you are occupewing my pie.'

'Occupying my pew' was, of course, what in a calmer moment he would have said.

His latest is almost, if not quite, as good. There was talk in the company where he found himself as to what tradesmen were most fully employed by the college.

'Do you still get your groceries from Bloxland?' one of the men asked the don.

'No,' he said artlessly. 'I did for many years, but now I steal at the doors.'

It was only after a moment of shocked silence the company realised that what the reverend gentleman meant was that he dealt at the stores.

'You have,' he recently said to an idle youth, 'tasted two whole worms, and you had better go down.' 'Wasted two whole terms' was what he had at heart to say. Preaching one Sunday, he made a touching allusion to 'the Shoving Leopard.' Through what remained of the sermon the college was intent on wondering what this might mean. It is easy enough when you have the cue. "Loving Shepherd" was the phrase written in the manuscript of the sermon. Two other examples of this rare talent are drawn from the social circle. Seated at luncheon one day, and invited to make his choice from the pastry displayed, the don, after looking round, said, 'Thank you; I will take some of that stink puff.' Fortunately he was pointing to coloured blanc-mange, which he meant to describe as 'pink stuff.'

A worse thing happened in a drawing-room full of ladies. The don, standing full of content by the early winter fire, said, spreading out his hands with gesture of benediction, 'There is something exceedingly pleasant in the bloody rays of a cheerful fire.' This certainly sounded shocking. It being Cambridge company, the ladies rapidly translated the startling phrase into 'ruddy blaze.'

There is too much reason to fear that Satan finds idle hands at Cambridge work to do in inventing some of these ingenious transformations. They nevertheless have a foundation in a quaint, ingrained habit.

KITCHENER.

October 15.

Lord Edward Cecil, just home from the Nile, is full of praises of the Sirdar. He served on his staff as aide-de-camp, rode in his suite when he entered Omdurman, and accompanied him on the expedition to Fashoda. He describes the personal labour and endurance of Kitchener through the campaign as something marvellous. Kitchener overlooked everything, seemed to be ubiquitous, and was simply tireless. On the night before the battle of Omdurman he got only three hours' sleep, taking it wrapped in his cloak on the desert sand, having previously dined and supped on bread and water. He was the first man to enter Omdurman, riding forward regardless of the sniping going on from every corner and many huts. Remonstrated with by his staff for needlessly incurring this danger, he answered, 'Well, well! they are very bad shots.' What the Sirdar is prouder of even than his complete victory is the fact that he has achieved it at an expenditure less by three hundred thousand pounds than the War Office estimate. That is the result of careful planning, and of patient personal supervision of details. The campaign will cost a trifle over a million sterling, which the Sirdar's staff complacently compare with the eight millions spent on Lord Wolseley's earlier endeavour.

Lord Edward's description of the discovery of Major Marchand at Fashoda is particularly interesting. He confirms all that has been said of the hopeless condition of the French force. Marchand was encamped on a swampy bank, lacking food and clothes. He seems to have made a most favourable impression upon the Sirdar and his staff. Lord Edward describes him as a man of charming manners, with a cool intrepidity that made light of his perilous position.

The only difficulty met with was the action of one of Marchand's officers, who, in spite of long privation, had succeeded in preserving constitutional plumpness. 'The fat Frenchman,' as Lord Edward describes him, was so overcome with joy at the sight of the deliverers that, in the effusion of gratitude, he insisted upon embracing the Sirdar, with intent to kiss him on both cheeks in French fashion. Beaten off in that quarter, he turned upon Lord Edward, who, with the greatest difficulty, evaded his attentions. It is evident from the testimony of this eye-witness that if the Sirdar had delayed by forty-eight hours his appearance on the scene there would have been no Fashoda question. The dervishes, slowly closing in on the hapless and helpless little force under the command of Major Marchand, would have crushed them out of existence.

THE DUCHESS OF TECK.

October 23.

The widespread lamentation when news of the sudden death of the Duchess of Teck was flashed upon London testifies far more than usual in analogous circumstances to the goodness of the woman rather than to the fallen estate of the royal princess. Few members of the Royal Family were more popular than the smiling, buxom, motherly-looking lady whose unheroic

life had been rounded off with a touch of something like tragedy. The duchess had her part in the royal procession on the last Jubilee Day. But her great occasion was on the marriage of her daughter to the heir to the Crown of England. On the former occasion she sat amongst ordinary princes and princesses in the cortège. On the wedding-day she rode in a glass coach facing the Queen, and with a heartiness that amused Her Majesty only less than it delighted the crowd, she took to herself and beamingly acknowledged the thunderous acclaim that greeted and followed the royal coach. It was a bright summer day of the kind not too often seen in London. Nowhere in the wedding procession, or among the multitude looking on, did the sun find brighter reflection than on the irradiated countenance of the happy mother of the bride.

Whilst the duchess was on terms of camaraderie with the man and the woman in the street, she was most loved by those who lived nearest to her. During her life the pathway to and from White Lodge, Richmond, was not always of primrose dalliance. For a while, as is well known, the household found it convenient to retire to more economical quarters on the Continent till a temporary storm of vulgar impecuniosity blew over. Of late years time and circumstance mellowed under the sun of York. The duchess lived happily in her park-girt home, chiefly occupying herself in doing good. I have chanced to see her in many circumstances amid public and private surroundings. Never was she more estimable or more admirable than when bustling round among the bales of miscellaneous tributes gathered in by her on behalf of the London Needlework Guild. This is an institution wisely designed and admirably administered for the distribution of articles of clothing among the class in straitened circumstances who prefer to suffer the pangs of poverty rather than to clamour for charity. The Duchess of Teck was the life and soul of the Guild, giving up to it through the year as much personal attention and actual work as, devoted to wage-earning, would have comfortably maintained her.

Members and associates of the Guild undertook either to prepare annually or to purchase for presentation two articles of useful clothing, which, being forwarded to a centre of administration, were carefully distributed among deserving cases personally known to agents of the Guild. I remember the amused astonishment with which, before leaving White Lodge on my first visit, I found myself enrolled as an associate of the Needlework Guild, pledged to send a yearly tribute. I am ashamed to say that this year the engagement slipped my memory. Nothing, in whatever minute detail, escaped the notice of the president of the Guild. Last week I received the following notification: 'Will you kindly send your work and that of your associates to Her Royal Highness, Princess Mary, Duchess of Teck, White Lodge, Richmond Park, Surrey, not later than 27th October?'

Before day broke on the morning of the 27th, Princess Mary, Duchess of Teck, had gone to her long home.

GLADSTONE'S WILL.

November 19.

According to the terms of his will, the personal presents received by Mr Gladstone were distributed among his family. With the possible exception of Prince Bismarck, there was no man upon whom the public showered more tokens of personal affection and admiration. He rarely visited any centre of manufacture without the workpeople combining to give him some specimen of their craft. Not only from home quarters, but from the remotest parts of the world, came tokens of popular esteem. Naturally, his passion for woodcutting brought him the tribute of innumerable axes. The first thing that struck a visitor to Hawarden whilst Gladstone was still in residence was the axes that stood in the hall. On the occasion of the golden wedding miniature axes wrought in gold largely figured. Of earlier date is a pencil-case in silver, which used to be on Gladstone's desk, reserved for his labours in literature. Shaped as an axe, it served as a pencil-case, on the blade being engraved the legend, 'For axeing questions.'

On his golden wedding Edward, Prince of Wales, always a faithful friend whether in sunshine or in storm, sent him a double inkstand in solid gold. The Shah was another contributor to this personal treasure-trove. Other things one remembers seeing lying about the tables were an album handsomely bound, containing the names of more or less obscure Italian students, grateful for Gladstone's labours on behalf of Italy, and a large silver cylinder containing tapestry, the gift of natives of India, to whom his name and his personality were something sacred.

FORECAST OF KAISER WILLIAM'S DESTINY.

November 21.

In spite of his vanity and self-confidence, which habitually reach the pitch of patronising the Deity, the German Emperor is said to be a slave to superstitious fears. There is one tradition about the House of Hohenzollern which particularly disturbs the Imperial mind. It is that three emperors of the House would reign in a single year; that the third would have six sons, and would encompass not only the destruction of his dynasty, but the ruin of the Empire. What on the face of it is the most audacious prediction—three emperors in succession within the limits of twelve months—has already been fulfilled. The present emperor, William II., came to the throne in the year both his grandfather and his father died. The second part of the prediction has also come true

—in 1890 the Kaiser's sixth son was born. For the rest, apart from prophecy, the Kaiser is just the man to bring about the fulfilment of the third prediction.* If his meddlesomeness abroad does not result in foreign war, his tyranny at home is well calculated to arm the Socialism against which he wars. Anyhow, the dark saying is extremely curious, especially since it has just claims to remote antiquity.

TWO PARLIAMENTARY BUSTS.

November 30.

A movement, set on foot in parliamentary circles, to raise funds in order to place a bust of Gladstone in his old college at Eton, threatens to prove a fiasco. The proposal was that members of either House who had been at Eton should subscribe a guinea in order to commission a sculptor to do the bust. As not more than one hundred and fifty pounds was required for this purpose, and as there are in the two Houses of Parliament between four and five hundred old Etonians, it seems, to begin with, that the only trouble the committee would have would be an embarrassment of riches. The duty of secretary and treasurer was gracefully undertaken by Mr Ian Malcolm, a young Conservative member. After more than two months' hard labour, Mr Malcolm tells me he has not succeeded in raising more than eighty pounds, little more than one-half the necessary funds.

The hopelessness of the situation as viewed by him is indicated by the fact that he has retired from pursuit of the coy guineas, and the running has now been taken up by some of the masters at Eton. It was a happy thought to perpetuate in the schoolhouse the memory of Eton's most famous and most brilliant boy. It is not easy to account for the failure, which can scarcely be due to any lingering feeling of political animosity. Possibly it is all due to agricultural depression and the decay of rent.

A parallel movement to do honour to another famous Parliament man has been more successful. Contemporaneously with the floating of the subscription to place a bust of Mr Gladstone in Eton College, there was started a scheme for adding a bust of Lord Randolph Churchill to the possessions of the House of Commons. The area of subscription was limited to men who, whether in the House of Commons to-day or not, had at some time the privilege of sitting in the same Parliament with him. The invitation was responded to with encouraging spirit and unanimity. Amongst the subscribers are Mr Asquith, Mr Arthur Balfour, Sir William Harcourt, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, and Sir John Gorst. Even Lord Cross, whom Lord Randolph in his impatient way couldn't abear, has come forward with his forgiving guinea. Mr Storey, who has just finished a life-size statue of Lord Randolph designed for Blenheim, will do the bust, for which a position has been assigned in the passage leading out of the central lobby. Lord Randolph will have for close companion a bust of W. H. Smith, upon whom he, of his infinite scorn, once conferred an alleged partnership in the drapery firm of Marshall & Snelgrove.

THE CITY OF DREADFUL SILENCE.

By FREDERICK TILSLEY, Author of *Cheerio.*

I.

'A THIN, damp mist is descending upon the gaunt ruin that is Ypres. Apart from an occasional military policeman, steel helmeted like ourselves, the place seems deserted, for those whose fate it is to garrison the Dead City live in strange, hidden places. A light flickering amongst the indescribable wreckage, a dark figure appearing for a moment in some ruined doorway and then disappearing like a shadow, mingling so quickly and completely with a multitude of other shadows that one is inclined to doubt one's eyesight, are the only clues to their whereabouts. The crash and boom of a British battery, speaking at regular intervals of fifteen minutes somewhere in front and to the right of the town, are the only sounds that break the silence. One naturally associates Ypres with guns and shells and noise, but on a quiet day the thing that strikes the new-comer most is the silence, for it is the dreadful, *waiting* silence of suspense. I suppose there is nothing so impressive and oppressive as the silence of a dead city. There is so much to die in a city, and Ypres is death's monument.' . . .

From which it will be seen that Private Newsome had literary ambitions.

With a sigh of satisfaction he permitted his box-respirator, which he had been using as a rest for his notebook, to slip back to his side. The book he closed with a certain affection. It contained many notes similar to the above, first impressions of Arras, Béthune, Péronne, Bapaume, all jotted down on the spot in neat shorthand. Private Newsome was tall and thin; he had the eyes of a dreamer and the mouth of a humorist.

'The City of Dreadful Silence,' he murmured, glancing about him. 'Ypres will always be that to me: The City of Dreadful Silence.' With the notebook still in his hand, he waved to his companion, who had gone on a little in front, and was now standing before the wrecked Water Tower, eyeing it contemplatively. Bennett was a short, thick-set youth, with keen, gray eyes, a short, thick nose, and a good chin. He turned

* He has done so.

his head slowly as Newsome came hurrying through the treacly mud.

'What a mess! What a devil of a mess!' he said with intense disgust.

Private Newsome gesticulated with his notebook.

'Most wonderful place in the world,' he declared enthusiastically. 'And to think I might never have seen it! The very thought puts the wind up me. I sha'n't forget this day, if I live to be a hundred.'

The other smiled. It was a smile made up of equal parts of good-natured contempt and affection. The two had very little in common, a fact which probably accounted for the firmness of their friendship—they had nothing much to quarrel about.

'You seem to like this mess,' said Bennett grimly. 'I admit that it is tremendously impressive, an artist's dream; but where you see the birthplace of a hundred ballads I see the burial-ground of a city's prosperity. Where you see picturesque ruin I see splendid buildings wantonly and brutally destroyed. You are keenly appreciative of this ghastly, waiting silence. I long for all the pleasant and unpleasant sounds of a busy town. You see only Ypres-as-it-is. I can't help thinking of Ypres-as-it-was.'

'Um-m, yes,' murmured Newsome, who was using his pencil again. He had heard his friend's remarks, but had not caught their meaning. 'I dare say you are right,' he added warmly.

'I have noticed another thing about Ypres. No man seems able to speak in his normal voice. That, like his facial expression, is subdued. There is something more than a mere lowering of the voice. When I first noticed the change I spoke a trifle louder. This made my friend jump, but my tone did not sound normal to me. I think Bennett notices this peculiarity without being able to place it.' . . .

'I'd give something to hear a barrel-organ now,' said Bennett suddenly, and there was deep longing in his voice.

Newsome uttered a horror-stricken gasp, and nearly dropped his notebook.

'Yes, a barrel-organ,' repeated Bennett firmly; 'played by a greasy but friendly foreigner, with ear-rings, and a castle or two in his own country.'

'A clown at a funeral.'

'Monkey and all,' snapped Bennett, almost angrily. 'This place gets on my nerves. From the point of view of poetry and pictures and all that sort of thing, Ypres is the artistic goods; but I'm practical myself, and when I think of the past of this rubbish-heap I feel more fed up with the war than ever.'

'Ypres's past is trivial when compared with the tremendous possibilities of its future. If this "rubbish-heap," as you call it, is used with care and imagination in the years to come, it may be the means of preventing the world from ever again being plunged to the neck in blood. Ypres is the best argument against "blood and iron" culture this side Hades. They ought to preserve the place exactly as it is. Governments on the verge of war ought to be forced to make the actual declaration here. There would be no war then. All the Von Thingummys in Germany wouldn't make war seem glorious with Ypres as a background to their pompous drivelling.'

'If, instead of rebuilding'——

'To rebuild Ypres would be a crime,' interrupted Newsome.

'I expected you to say that,' said the other, 'and I'm not sure that I don't agree with you. But if you are going to use the place as an example, why leave it to future generations? Why not start immediately and dump a few of the more objectionable types of pacifists here? Take, for instance, the microbe who insists that we started the war, and dexterously placed the blame on the shoulders of the poor Germans.'

Newsome grinned thoughtfully.

'And suppose those elderly warriors who insist with such persistent cheerfulness that there must be wars after this one—"they are so good for a country, you know"—were forced to leave their comfortable offices and edit their gummy rags from Ypres, I wonder if they would wield their deadly fountain-pens with such a fine vigour.'

II.

As they passed the prison a silence fell between the two friends. Newsome broke it as a gun-team trotted past with a subdued clatter.

'Those who ride through the streets of Ypres ride on the very edge of Eternity, with Death for saddle-mate,' he said, with a consciously graceful wave of the hand. 'Did you notice the look on their faces?'

'Yes; even the horses seem to have caught it,' answered Bennett quietly.

There was a deafening crash as the British battery spoke again. Bennett shuddered involuntarily.

'What a beastly hole!' he said. 'Let's go and see the Cloth Hall, as arranged, and then get out of it. I don't think I'm a more than average coward, and I've been in some pretty rough places, but I can't get used to Ypres, somehow. One seems to be waiting for something tremendous and evil to happen, and expecting it every next moment. A shell or two would be almost a relief.'

'We'll come again, if possible, and try to get here earlier next time.'

'We shall probably be here on business next time, worse luck.'

'I hope so,' said Newsome. 'We might as well fight here as anywhere else, and I'd like to examine the place at my leisure.'

'I'd rather go to the pictures,' answered Bennett, with a short laugh.

'Pictures!' exclaimed Newsome contemptuously. 'You make me tired. Here in the

centre of this wonderful city you have the nerve to talk about pictures! With the real thing staring you in the face, you long to be seated in front of a blotchy screen, watching a long-haired second lieutenant, dressed all wrong, leading a gang of bandy-legged supers to victory, and marrying the colonel's gum-chewing daughter as a reward! Pah!'

'Right first time,' answered Bennett calmly. 'That's just what I do want.'

Newsome mastered his indignation with an effort.

'It's quite evident,' he said quietly, 'that Ypres affects people in different ways. Look at me, for instance. I realise now, for the first time, what a very small part I am playing in this great struggle. I thought I realised it before, but I didn't. Whether I lived through the war, or whether I was killed, seemed to me at one time to be a matter of some importance; but it isn't. What right have I to worry about my little life, or boast about my sacrifice, when whole cities are being wiped out? I now know exactly, for the first time, my own importance in the scheme of things. The knowledge isn't very flattering, but it helps one to face the possibilities of a violent death with an easier mind. Yes, Ypres has helped me to a certain peace of mind.'

'That must be a very comfortable feeling to take over the top with one,' said Bennett. 'I wish I could cultivate it.'

'There are times when a man's patriotism gets thin in the middle and frayed at the edges—when he is as wet as the rest of Flanders, as hungry as the heroine of one of your picture-dramas, and as fed up as you. Here in Ypres he realises that the State has the right to demand even more of him if he could give it.'

'What worms we are!' murmured Bennett with sarcasm.

'Ypres has made me realise the insignificance of my part in the greatest struggle in history, but it has also made me feel prouder of that part than ever I did before, and I don't mind admitting that I regarded myself as a pretty considerable young man the first time I donned khaki.'

'So did I,' answered Bennett. 'But now my tastes have changed, and my ambitions are all in the direction of blue suits, low shoes, straw hats, and earthenware crockery. Ypres has made me long for home, half-holidays, girls without fringe, and—er—picture-theatres, as I never longed before. I do *not* want to die. I want to live to a senile old age, and be a nuisance to everybody.'

'I, too, want to live—we all do—but even if we were killed to-night, look how we *have* lived! This war is easily the biggest thing that ever happened, and we have had our little part in it. It's only when you get next to death that you begin really to live. A boy of nineteen who is killed out here has, in some ways, seen a lot more life than his grandfather. That's why the old men envy us. Pile the agony on as you will, you won't kill the old man's longing to be out here. He may not say anything, out of consideration for you—he may even manage to convince himself that he is glad to be out of it, but his face betrays him.'

'I dare say there's a lot in what you say, but this way of living, or whatever you call it, gets a bit too hot for me at times, and then my youthful slumbers are disturbed by hammock-haunted dreams, and I wish I had been born a jelly-fish or something like that. Jelly-fish don't live at the double.'

'Jelly-fish don't live at all. Neither did you before the war—nor I, for that matter. Take a sample week of your pre-war days—any week will do—they were all the same. You went to business at exactly the same time each morning, and finished at exactly the same time each evening'——

'I was late occasionally, and sometimes we worked overtime.'

'Yes, at exactly the same season every year. When you returned from business you changed into a sports-coat and flannel trousers, and went playing tennis, or cricket, or golf, or something of that sort, and secretly despised yourself and your tame sports because you had been reading Jack London. If it rained you would curse the miserable English climate for half-an-hour or so, and take some girl or other to a theatre or a music-hall. Saturday afternoon—more tennis, or cricket, or golf. In the evening the same theatre or music-hall, and possibly the same girl. If that's'——

'Don't,' interrupted Bennett; 'I can't bear any more. I do believe you've been reading that old diary of mine—either that, or I talk in my sleep.'

'And,' continued Newsome, 'you were not satisfied. You sat in picture-theatres and wondered why on earth you weren't a gold-miner, or a bushranger, or a sailor, instead of a commonplace young Briton who had never been farther from home than the Isle of Man. Oh yes, you did! Don't tell me! And in your meaner moments you were even inclined to blame your parents for it. And the girl who was with you felt the same about it too. She sat by your side and wondered why you couldn't be a cow-boy with a hat three yards wide and astrakhan trousers. But now, when you go on leave and drop into your favourite picture-theatre, the wealthy munition-worker in the next row of seats will eye *you* enviously, and come to the conclusion that his spats and fashionable trench-coat—they all wear trench-coats, I believe—have lost their smart appearance. The girl who is with him will keep looking at you covertly with wistful eyes, until she catches the triumphant glance of the girl who is with you, *and then*'——

'There is the Cloth Hall, if I'm not very much

mistaken,' said Bennett suddenly. 'We'll just have a look round, and then clear out of Ypres. The mist is thickening, and it will be quite dark soon. Motor-wagons are none too plentiful about here just at present. We don't want to have to walk all the way back to Poperinghe in the dark.'

They stood for a moment looking at the most famous ruin in Ypres, and then Newsome led the way across the road. There was just enough light left for him to make the following notes:

'We are in the Cloth Hall—if it is possible to be *in* a place which possesses but the meagrest relics of roof and wall. Bennett is searching for souvenirs, bits of marble, &c., but has not found anything yet. The Cloth Hall is like the rest of the buildings here, shattered almost beyond recognition. A few battered pillars with bits of roof and wall are still standing, but that is all. In the quietness of this place I find that Ypres is not dead. The tortured soul of the place is alive and crying for vengeance. Each brick and stone seems to have had a shell to itself; every roof and wall has long since been shattered; but *Ypres is not dead.* As the mist grows more dense, and the coming night deepens the shadows, one is conscious of a persistent undercurrent of sound. The silence becomes clamorous with a spirit of vivid anger and pain; Ypres is not dead, but dying. I think Ypres will die the day peace is declared, and then it will be a very dead city indeed.' . . .

III.

A month later Private Newsome went on leave. He was very fortunate in the matter of trains and rest-camps and a boat, and he arrived home early in the evening. In spite of the U-boats, there was quite a palatable meal waiting for him. He rather liked the war-bread, and the tea tasted like tea. He gave his mother and sisters a carefully camouflaged account of his adventures at the front, and heard in return thrilling stories of margarine and meat queues. He was given in whispers the true and authentic account of the quarter of a pound of real butter which his youngest sister had obtained by glaringly false pretences. That young lady had shown a masterly cunning and deceit of which he had never dreamed her capable. After he had mastered certain instructions with regard to the Food Controller, he sent them into raptures by producing Flemish lace which might—or might not—have been the real thing.

When all the other souvenirs had been inspected, and there seemed nothing else to discuss for the moment, his eldest sister asked him what use he intended to make of the evening, which was still young. Perhaps he was tired after his long journey, and would prefer to remain at home. Or possibly—here her eyes sparkled, and she smiled mischievously—there was some one, some—er—friend, whom he would like to see without needless delay. This was an old joke of hers, and at one time it used to irritate him. Now he leaned back in his chair, smiled indulgently, and considered the question in silence. His glance shifted from his sister's face to his mother's, and then to the various well-remembered articles of furniture, pictures, and photographs about him.

At that same moment the sky over Ypres was alive with searchlights, and a company of British infantry, marching with respirators at the 'alert,' was passing the Cloth Hall. On the faces of the men was stamped the indefinable Ypres look. Bombs began to thud in the distance, and suddenly the sky was flooded with a red glow against the fiery background, the skeleton of 'The City of Dreadful Silence' stood out gaunt, and black, and ominous. . . . But Private Newsome was at home, surrounded by the old, familiar faces and things. The clock was ticking on the mantelpiece, and the cat was curled up on the hearthrug at his feet. Newsome stretched luxuriously and yawned. He was at home. . . .

'I'll tell you what,' he said. 'Let's go to the pictures.' . . .

BIRD-LIFE IN THE CANADIAN BUSH AND SOMETHING OF HUNTING

By Herbert T. Grant.

A STRIKING feature of the Canadian bush is its lack of bird-life, and it is one all the more noticeable to those fresh from the medley of song and the lively comings and goings of birds which afford so much pleasure in these islands. One can travel for days through the vast extent of forest ranging from the Great Lakes and the St Lawrence to Hudson Bay without sight or sound of any of the feathered tribe. This enormous stretch of bush, unbroken (save for lakes and beaver meadows), where the pioneer's axe has not yet encroached, accounts, I take it, for the bird scarcity throughout the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

Even in the settled parts of eastern Canada, however, which would provide feeding-grounds for many times the number of birds that Britain houses, birds are few and far between. Insect-life there is in abundance in the bush, but those pests, mosquitoes, black flies, and the like, usually haunt the windless shelters in their myriads, immune from the birds, ever lovers of free air and sunshine. One of the chief arguments put forward for the protection of our home birds is that they are the most effective antagonists of undesirable insect-life, but wise nature has provided other means to preserve a proper balance in Canada. In the bush insect preys upon

insect rather than bird upon insect, and to the half-crazed pioneer or traveller the gorgeous, darting dragon-fly is a doubly welcome sight, as it skims across the water in relentless pursuit of that bane of existence, the mosquito. In less obvious ways, too, are the insects kept in check. The mosquito puts in an appearance with the first touch of spring, when the rivers are swelling freely north and south, and every twig and leaf and clump of moss is saturated with moisture; and, granted a season with a normal rainfall, it succumbs gradually as the bush dries up before the summer sun. In wet seasons, however, mosquitoes persist, crop succeeding crop after each rainy spell. There are also 'die-hards' of the species, and the luckless prospector, stripping the rocks in search of veins of quartz or calcite late in the autumn, will find them humming about his ears. A scrutiny of the mosquito in the dry weather will reveal the presence of a tiny parasite clinging to its body, which saps the life out of the insect, so that it becomes brittle to the touch.

Dismissing, then, the insect question, let us turn to another source of bird nourishment. In the bush proper there are no games of hide-and-seek with vengeful farmers and alarming scarecrows for possession of the crops, and by the same token no worm for the early bird to catch. This is neither so extraordinary nor so inexplicable as it reads, earthworms here flourishing only in ground that has been cultivated.

The only birds seen in any number are game-birds. First and foremost amongst these is the wild-duck. In some parts with an abundance of lakes it is found in enormous flocks. It takes precedence also on account of its value as a supplement to the monotonous diet which of necessity pertains to the average bushman's lot. Large bags can be got without difficulty where the duck are plentiful; but when they are migrating, the hunting of stragglers in twos and threes, if exciting, is, alas! a decidedly unprofitable sport. No matter how stealthily the canoe-man handles his paddle, it is almost impossible to creep round the point to the backwater in the river or the bay in the lake where they are feeding, to get within gunshot of them. They are off like a flash on the least suspicion, and a canoe provides anything but a satisfactory foundation for snapshooting at a limited target travelling at some seventy miles an hour directly overhead. Wild-duck are splendid eating, and when the luck is with the hunter he is well repaid for many a fruitless expedition. These, with the partridge and its first cousin the ptarmigan, are the only game-birds. Ptarmigan are rarely found so far south as the part I have in view.

The partridge is such an extraordinary bird that it deserves no little mention. The bush partridge, in the first place, is not a partridge at all, but is really a ruffed grouse. It is a welcome addition to the stew-pot, in spite of its flesh being more remarkable for its insipidity than for its gaminess. From the sportsman's point of view the partridge is an absolute joke. No hunter worthy of the name goes out to shoot partridges with a twelve-bore, no matter how urgent the necessity of replenishing his larder may be. A ·22-calibre rifle is the usual weapon; though, in default of this, with the exercise of some caution, a stick will prove serviceable, while to an American base-ball player armed with a stone they are, as the reporters of his prowess on the 'diamond' would phrase it, 'duck-soup.' As with every other kind of game, be it 'fish, flesh, or fowl,' the hunter must know where to look for them. I have discovered by experience that cedar-clumps are the most likely places, particularly in winter, the low-growing, feathery fronds on the cedar-boughs providing excellent shelter from the falling snow and a degree of warmth not procurable elsewhere. For sheer stupidity (or it may be trustfulness) the partridge has no equal up to a certain point. One can approach, without much stealth, to within a few yards of a log on which six or eight of them may be perched, and proceed to pot them off one by one like the celluloid balls at a shooting-gallery. So long as one can continue to put bullets through their heads—in which event they will drop off the log stone-dead—the others will seldom be seriously disturbed. They realise that all is not quite right with their world, and they twist their heads and shuffle their feet; but, as a rule, only the violent flutterings of one of their number which a badly aimed bullet has got through the body will put them to flight. Even then they will fly only a short distance, and can be readily followed; and frequently they content themselves with running along the ground till they find a new perch. When wounded, however, the partridge displays great cunning. I have fired at and hit one, and, having marked the limit of the wounded bird's struggles, have gone on, intent on getting its scared companion. On my returning with my booty my first victim had vanished. If there happens to be a windfall near, a wounded partridge will invariably make for that, and in such case it is practically impossible to retrieve it. In the fall, too, when the dying moss carpeting the low rocky ridges (so marked a feature of the bush of eastern Canada) is rich in tints of yellow, russet, crimson, and gold, I once searched for a badly injured bird, which, unable to move farther, had merged its speckled plumage in the general decay, and, in spite of being all eyes, I discovered it only by accidentally treading on it. Although the partridge is common everywhere in the bush, it is never found in large numbers at a time. About a dozen or so is the most I have seen in a covey, and even this total is infrequent.

An issue of this *Journal* some time ago contained an article on the migration of birds. It

dealt largely with the old belief that swallows hibernate in ponds, and explained away this theory by stating that in all probability examples quoted as proof of this idea had been the victims of a sudden frost, and, falling into the ponds, had been frozen over, but found before life was extinct. It may be of interest to mention that I have found bush partridges on an April morning frozen in a small creek. I know that they were not there late on the previous afternoon, and that then the water in the creek was flowing freely, so that they must have succumbed under these very circumstances during the night.

Of the birds whose usefulness lies along lines more natural than apparent there is also a very limited number—so limited, in fact, that all of them may be remarked on without going to any great length. None of them are songsters, and only one, the woodpecker, adds a bright touch to the neutral colouring of their summer surroundings. As he hangs on the trunk of a decaying tree he looks like some stumpy buccaneer, bedecked in a crimson head-dress, clinging precariously to the mast of his ship. By far the most popular of all the bush birds is the whisky-jack. Smoke-gray in colour, he is a friendly little bird, about the size of a thrush, and he is the only one whose presence is constant, year in, year out. He regularly invites himself to the *al fresco* meals of the bush, and if one lays aside for a minute a piece of bread or biscuit, as likely as not, when one turns to it again, it is in the possession of friend whisky-jack, who will be seen perched on a branch near hand, pecking it with infinite relish. The culprit goes unscathed, for by one of the unwritten laws of the bush whisky-jacks are sacred. They are supposed to house the spirits of departed lumber-jacks, and their cry is mournful enough to warrant this superstition. The robin and the tsic-a-dee appear before the snow has left the ground. The Canadian robin is a large and stolid-looking specimen, lacking altogether the charm of our own cheerful little visitor. The tsic-a-dee is small and restless, and its incessant cry, 'Tsic-a-dee, tsic-a-dee, tsic-a-dee-dee-dee-dee-dee,' gives it its name. Another nonentity is the blackbird. Neither in voice nor in sprightliness does it resemble the blackbird which plays havoc among our berry-bushes, and how it ever came to be known by that name—considering that it is blue in colour—is a mystery. Noblest of all bush birds is the heron, and it is a fine sight to see it winging its way across the tree-tops or rioting in the abundance of frogs in stagnant pools or in muskeg. The loon is another aquatic bird, similar to the wild-duck in appearance. On a windless stretch of river loon have great difficulty in rising, and thrash along the surface in the manner of a hydroplane.

With so little bird-life it is not to be wondered at that birds of prey are rare. Now and again, however, a hawk is visible, ranging high above the forest, and eagles are not unknown.

THE 'COAST' WAY.

By Frank H. Shaw.

'IT is a bit amusing,' said the second officer of the *Maverick*, 'to hear all this talk of industrial unrest. Forty-hours weeks and increased pay are desirable things, and I don't say for one minute that I am out of sympathy with Labour, but sometimes, when I read of this agitation and that, I remember my own average life.

'Being on the West African run isn't all vintage champagne and snooker-pool—which I take to be the modern equivalents of beer and skittles. We take rank as a liner in this packet; and we *are* a liner. We carry passengers and mails, and we try to run to a regular timing. In between whiles we do other things. I'll try to give you an idea of a voyage—just an ordinary voyage. I'll leave out the war-days, when we were targets for odd torpedoes and were reckoned as combatants long before we were granted guns to defend ourselves with. There aren't really very many mines left floating about now, though one's apt to imagine any floating thing sighted to be a mine, especially in the half-light at sunrise or dusk. That's over and done with, and may the Lord of the deeper seas be praised!

'But as it is, life is varied enough. Our outward trip is the pleasant part of an entire voyage. For a few days, after we've made our calls at various ports from Glasgow to Madeira, we're free to rest and recreate ourselves, when we're not standing watch, or seeking for privileged passengers' special baggage, or helping the passengers to enjoy themselves and keeping them from grumbling. Most of our passengers are West Coast men, with hobnailed livers, and they grumble fairly easily; but we know them inside and out, and can generally get up something to keep their minds occupied. It breaks into our watches below, but that's all a part of the game. No, there's nothing much wrong with the outward trip, except that it is too soon over.

'It is on the Coast that the fun begins. There's the heart-breaking, damp heat in the first place; it isn't like the air of an Alpine sanatorium exactly. I've known days—dozens at a stretch—when a man has had to sweat for a clear half-hour before he could summon up energy enough to wind his watch! But one gets used to that; we Britishers are an adaptable

race. Coming from the North in winter-time to torrid heat such as one gets down the Coast isn't nearly so trying as you might think. But once we make our first port, the real fun commences.

'It isn't a proper port, our first stopping-place. It is simply a trading-station up a creek, a typical West Coast creek, with fast-running water the colour of beer, with a smell of crushed marigolds and rotting vegetable matter always polluting the air, with malaria everlastingly hanging about—we reckon to have four or five men down with fever every time we call at Challa-Challa—and mud, mud, and yet more mud. You should get a really good whiff of those mud-flats in dry weather if you want to think the Thames is a pellucid stream for the benefit of pleasure-makers. Your eyes ache with looking at the sun-washed greenery ashore—the greenery that practically overhangs the decks as we push our way up-stream, after bumping over the bar. It's not a sane, healthful green, that; it's vicious in its vividness, and tells of the fluxes, fevers, and what not that are always lurking about its roots. The air reeks of unhealthiness, and the managers of the big factories are always changing—white men can't stick it for long at a stretch. You can see the aridness of the land, spite of the vegetation, in the sun-bleached silvery whiteness of the plank buildings that make up the settlement.

'Once we've tied up to the bank—it's a bit of an art getting your moorings just-so, because we've never any guarantee that the river won't come down in flood any minute and pitch us high and dry on some shifting bank—we begin work. No, as an officer, I don't need to handle the cargo; but many a time I wish I was just a labourer, because labourers don't have to think out a hundred details all at once, tally the stuff correctly to a hair, with four gangs working all at one time in a hold; keep the Krooboys up to their collars, and prevent them pilfering; watch that the cargo to be left behind in the holds isn't broken down so as to render it unsafe when we move out to sea again, in case we run straight into a heavy seaway; arbitrate in a couple of dozen or so quarrels between the niggers themselves, between foremen and labourers, between foremen and foremen; listen to a man's story of his wife's jealous disposition, and another man's description of his umpteenth child's symptoms after eating too much sugar-cane; and so on.

'I'm not grousing, remember; I'm just trying to give you an idea of what we people go through for our money and our keep. And we don't go on strike! We're supposed to belong to a caste that cannot resort to the strike as a weapon; and when we ask decently for increased salaries, our owners express themselves as being hurt. But I've no grouse against the pay; and though frozen turkey gets a bit monotonous after a month, there's always enough to eat, when you're in the mood for eating.

'It gets very hot down there in the holds. The dust flies thickly, and the clatter of the winches, the hiss of steam, the shouts of the Krooboys, the crash of falling cases, and that sort of thing would wear our nerves thin if we allowed ourselves to possess any. Temperature runs somewhere about 120° in the shade, and it isn't a breatheable heat. Sometimes I feel as though my lungs were scorched like a bit of volcanic ash. Krooboys working hard in that temperature aren't over and above pleasant to the senses; and sometimes the heat tries their tempers and they get insolent, and you have to punish them. Then they kick, and throw things, and drop chains on your head, and generally league themselves together to annoy you. Once last trip I caught a nigger breaking open a case of boots. I had him out as quick as you like, and then he went for me with his cargo-hook. I hit him on the shins with a chunk of dunnage wood—no use going for their heads, you know—and the whole holdful of men struck work at once and went on deck; said they wouldn't work another hand's turn. And we running to a given timing! That wouldn't do, of course. We turned the deck-hands to to handle the cargo, after trying persuasions; and I had to sweat twice as hard as any nigger down below, slinging cases and breaking 'em out from their stowage. Never felt so thirsty in my life; but—I've seen too many decent fellows go to the devil through whisky-pegs to seek consolation there, thanks.

'No; the trouble that corresponds to what we used to call "mat-fever" in Burmah—going native—doesn't appeal to me one little bit. And whisky leads that way. I tell you, a fellow's got to keep the tightest kind of hold on his moral helm on that coast, when his conscience and every blessed thing that he learnt at his mother's knee seem to be pouring out in cascades through the pores of his skin. And whisky makes your hands shaky, and you lose your grip of the wheel-spokes if you don't look out.

'But you manage to get the cargo ashore somehow. You get your chop as best you can—and the white enamel of the messroom is so covered with buzzing flies that you can't see a square inch of it. They drop into your soup; you tread on them on the deck. And there are cockroaches, too, and—other things. Jumpy things and those that crawl. The local traders come aboard to chop with us and to get home news. They tell us—by way of cheering us up—that So-and-So died of malaria a week ago, and that Someone Else isn't expected to recover; and they encourage us to hand out cocktails and cheap champagne and Madeira cigars. Good fellows they are, in the main; but they think that we, being sailors, have all the good things of life, and oughtn't to grudge them a smell of them when we make our calls. But the heat

and Africa itself seem to have dried up their sense of humour along with their blood, and they are generally ghoulish in their talk, or else Rabelaisian.' The second officer drummed with his heels against the drawers beneath his bunk.

'You hear some almighty funny yarns down there—about white men forsaking the straight and narrow road. Some of them seem too wildly impossible to be true, but—I've seen with my own eyes. If I had the gift I'd write a book about Africa that would startle a few arm-chair critics.

'But when you hear the same kind of yarn in every river, with only local variations, you get a bit tired of it after a few years, and you discuss anything by way of a change. Then, when the messroom gets too hot to be endurable, you go out on deck and swelter beneath the awning, and look at the river and the jungle, and, if you're lucky, at the hills beyond, and the marigold scent fills your brain like opium-smoke; and you wish to God some good fairy would come along and maroon you on a clean, healthy iceberg beyond the Arctic Circle. Your tobacco gets tasteless, and your digestion goes all wrong in spots; your liver swells up towards the back of your neck, and yellow specks dance in front of your eyes. But you have to turn to again at the appointed time, and you have to work. Once the cargo's out, we start getting fresh cargo in—palm-oil, as likely as not—at Challa-Challa it's sure to be—and we officers have to see that it's properly brought aboard and tallied and stowed. Each officer's responsible for his own hold. The noise gets pretty hefty about this time. The bank is probably something like seventy or eighty yards away from the ship's side, with deep water around. You have to heave the oil-casks from ashore, through the water and up the side; and if you stave a single one you might as well throw up the sponge, because palm-oil is valuable stuff.

'We work Lodge this fashion. You reeve the end of a new coil of four-inch stuff through the derrick-gin, in place of the ordinary cargo-wire, and you have a length of stray line hitched to the hooks. The Kroos drag the hooks ashore and clamp 'em to a cask's chine, and you go ahead with the winch—that leaks all over the shop and suffocates you with steam—and the Kroos yell and dance in the water at the edge of the river. The big fat casks come storming across, smash against the side, and you think every stave is coming apart; they climb up and rush aboard; and having seen one safely over the hatch, you have to nip below like a bromley-kite and see to its stowing. That's a heart-breaking job if you like. Oil-casks don't handle like trifles, and the Krooboy is thick in the head in more ways than one; it's generally easier to do the job yourself than try to explain how it should be done. Then you go up on deck again, and if you're lucky enough to dodge a dose of sunstroke or heat-apoplexy, you carry on as before, without intervals.

'And the night comes down, bringing no sense of coolth—only a more breathless heat, indeed; and the thousands of stinks waken to life; and in the little lulls you hear the alligators splashing and snapping; and the women in the huts ashore start singing Methody hymns; and you pick up a distant droning sound that is hardly a sound, and you know the "bush telegraph" (that will tell the natives of the interior the precise colour of hair of the latest recruit to Africa) is at work, and will go on all night. Our work goes on day and night; because when it's too dark to work by natural light we rig up electric mushrooms—in old-time ships we use naphtha flares—and the smashing and the clatter and the shouting go on just the same as before. Talk about your six-hours day! And if we didn't do it there'd be thousands who would jump at the chance. But it's pretty to see the reflections on the water, all the same. And when you get used to the crooning wail of the singing ashore, it works a sort of fascination on you; it fits in, somehow, because it's the real voice of Africa, and it speaks of wonderment and enchantment and the hidden things of life.

'Perhaps we get finished at midnight. Then, if the skipper knows the place well, he makes for open water one-time,* so that he'll be at his next port by daylight, in order to start work without leaving the owners' capital lying idle. They don't know the sort of service they get, bless you! They take it for granted. We're their paid servants; but we are a bit more than that. We're sailormen who take a sort of sneaking pride in tackling a job thoroughly, and turning it up neatly at the end. If we just gave our pound of flesh, some shipowners would open their eyes pretty wide.

'Being second of the ship, if we do put to sea, I keep the middle watch, engines going slow and the leadsmen busy. There aren't any shore lights to guide us, of course, so we just keep the ship outside seven fathom and inside twelve, and when the water shoals or deepens, we waken up and alter helm a bit; and we keep a lookout for small stuff in the way of country boats or coasting-steamers as best we can. But it's a lot better to be at sea than up those stinking rivers for a middle watch, let me tell you. Ever tried to sleep in a stuffy cabin, with never a breath of pure air to cheer you? Your electric fan drones away like Jimmy-oh, but it brings no freshness with it; just circulates the old stale air over and over again. And the mosquitoes come out in hundreds of millions, and the fleas and other vermin get busy, and you toss from side to side with your brain growing as big as a filled balloon in your head, and the tiny noises that you wouldn't notice at other times get magnified out of all proportion, and

* Coast parlance for 'at once.'

you sweat like a pig at every pore; and you remember every symptom of malaria, and feel sure you've got 'em all. Oh, it's some Purgatory, I can assure you.

'But it is better in open water, though only a bit better. And then, at daylight, you cross another bar, and the old horrid marigold and sun-heated mud smell hits you in the face; and almost before you're aware it is day the sun has the weight of a steam-hammer, stunning you.

'It is probably a river like the other one, and the day's programme starts all over again. It's like being in a room with a gramophone that has only one record and that's playing all the time! Sometimes, by way of a change, you take the shore-gang in hand, and rouse the Krooboys about ashore, instead of aboard; and you get palm-oil to the eyes, and the flies stick to you and drive you half-mad. And the trader invites you to lunch, and presses square-face gin and beans cooked in oil on you, and tells you that you're no end of a lucky chap not to be tied down to one spot all your life, as he is.

'Oh, I could go on for a week without a rest, just as our life on the Coast goes on: working sixteen hours a day when we're not working twenty, doing the same thing over and over again, day in, day out; sick to the heart's core of the sight of your shipmates, your nerves on edge from the time you open your eyes until you close them again; with the mate finding fault with you because the skipper's found fault with him—and you've no appeal except to pass it on to some subordinate of your own. And then you get to your final port, and think you're going to have a bit of an easy; but the boilers start to leak, or something like that, and there's no electric light, only smoke, stenchful oil-lamps, and no fans—no conveniences of any sort; or you find the homeward ship of your own line has had an engine-room breakdown, and you've to take her cargo and make a quick turn-round; and there you are, at it again.

'To say nothing of deck-passengers—yes, and saloon-passengers, who will insist on banging away at the saloon piano till all's blue, though that piano butts clean up against your bulkhead and the rattle of it makes you grind your teeth and curse the man who first invented such an abomination! The deck-passengers generally start a riot just as you're going off into your beauty-sleep, and you're lucky if you haven't to turn out with a hatch-batten to act as arbitrator. I've seen a dozen family feuds start, reach a climax, and be settled during one night at sea.

'And then, when you've endured all this for a month or two, you go off home. You are in a hurry, and the engineers push the old tub along for all she's worth; and with your blood thinned like water, you run almost in a day from that heat into Atlantic cold. It bites through to the marrow—worse than whaling off Spitsbergen. And you hit a Biscay snorter—a real one, from the north-east, say, with a smirr of snow and sleet in it. And the big graybacks come pouring aboard as if they were professional mountebanks out to give you your money's worth; and the ship's decks are clean swept, and the messroom is washed out; the alleyways are knee-deep in water; and you've to fight all you know to humour the ship and keep her afloat, because a packet that's built to navigate West Coast rivers isn't apt to make the best kind of sea-boat in heavy weather.

'But you know what a Biscay snorter is like, so there's no need to pile on the agony. You get through it somehow, and get into narrow waters, where the watches are doubled up, and you keep a strict watch and watch—four hours on, four hours off, no matter whether it snows or blows, or fogs or clears—until you see the old Rock Light ahead, and know that it's over for one more trip—only to start again in another week's time or so; and so *ad infinitum*.'

The second officer reached for the tobacco-jar and stuffed his pipe thoughtfully.

'It's a funny thing, though,' he added. 'I tried a change; went over to the —— Line—the "kid-glove" line. Across the western ocean in six days, with the bridge stiff with officers; ten days in New York, and nothing much to do; six days back—a feather-pillow existence. But I couldn't stick it; I just couldn't. Funny how Africa calls! One voyage filled me to the brim. I changed over as soon as I could. After all, a man shouldn't quarrel with his bread-and-butter, and—I like it really. The work's got to be done, so why shouldn't I do it? But sometimes, when I hear about these chaps I helped to feed when otherwise they'd have starved, well'——

THE WESTERN MEN.

THE men of the North are stern and shrewd;
The Eastern men are strong;
The Midland men toil hard and late
To roll the world along;
The Southland men are kind and slow
As their placid vales and streams;
But, oh! it's the men of the West Country
Who are the Dreamers of Dreams.

They read the runes of the changing year
On the heath and fern-clad hills;
They learn the lore of the Other Things
In the pools of the peat-brown rills.
Their eyes are turned to the sunset glow,
And through its golden bars
They see the land of the 'What-may-be,'
And the glint of its guiding stars.

The west wind sings in their trancèd ears
The song of the Far Beyond;
The sea's breath lures their souls to sail
On the tracks no man hath conned;
So they seek adventure, not knowing why
They follow those shifting gleams,
For that is the weird of the Western men,
Who are the Dreamers of Dreams.

G. E. MERRICK.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

KASSA-WA-WA, THE SONGSTER.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

KASSA-WA-WA sat on the crest of the rugged ridge, and poured forth her soul to the glory of the sunset. 'Wa-Wa-Wa-a-a-A!' she sang, and, though not exactly melodious, the wavering cadences seemed to express the solitude and the wind-swept grandeur of the foothills.

Each morning and evening since her cubhood days Kassa-Wa-Wa had sung thus, and regularly once a week had found herself in some kind of trouble as a result. Yet she just *had* to sing, as her forefathers had sung before her away back into the dim ages of the past. Other things the coyotes of Lost River had learnt readily enough, but not to cut out that song; and even Kassa, the latest product of her kind, versed in the knowledge of poisoned baits and in the setting of steel traps—even Kassa, who knew to look over the skyline before she appeared in silhouette (a habit acquired through ten generations of persecution), had to resort to her Arab-like devotions at the twilight hours. It was as though a thief who spent his days skulking from justice in the shadowy defiles built for himself a house upon a hill-top, and there returned each night to light the lamps at every window.

This spring evening there came an answering howl, and Kassa pricked her ears and listened. At any ordinary time her song would now have taken on a fierce defiance—'This is my range! You keep away!'—but now, as the answering howl drew nearer, Kassa remained in silhouette and watched.

But the coyote that answered the call was not the first to appear. The big she-wolf, whose mate had fallen by Logan's traps, saw the little coyote on the skyline, and stealthily crept upwind to take Kassa by surprise—as she had done a dozen times before. Kassa, indeed, dwelt in mortal terror of this wolf, who was always lurking and waiting, pouncing out upon the little coyote at the most unexpected moments, and ever ready to tear her limb from limb.

The faintest suggestion of a sound warned Kassa in time, and she slunk behind a boulder, peering over it, only her big ears visible; whereupon the she-wolf charged with a snarl and a chopping of jaws.

Then began one of those tedious wars of exhaustion in which Kassa was an artist. She did not run away, she did not even appear to hurry, yet each mad charge of the wolf, each ugly chop, found the little coyote just out of reach. She was more nimble than the wolf, and here, among the boulders, she could keep on dodging and sliding through the narrow chinks till her aggressor tired of the game.

But this evening the she-wolf did not tire. There were two reasons for this, the first being that early in the contest a snake-like snap from Kassa had laid open her muzzle, and the second that ere long her cubs would be born—a fact which seemed to call forth the last grain of spite in her unusually spiteful disposition. Systematically she drove Kassa to the far end of the rugged ridge, beyond which lay open going, while in vain Kassa dodged and feinted, trying to regain the better cover. Always the wolf cut her off and drove her back; so Kassa, rather than wait till the last, made a dart for the tundra, hoping she would obtain a start over the remaining patch of rough ground.

The she-wolf's growls took on a note of triumph as she bounded in pursuit; 'pitter-pat, pitter-pat,' went Kassa's paws on the sand, sending up little spumes and cyclones, though they seemed hardly to touch earth. Kassa made for each clump of dwarf cactus, side-stepping at the last moment, and hoping her pursuer would fail to notice the wicked, half-buried thorns; but the wolf came on in great mile-eating bounds, and Kassa's heart sank in terror.

Oh, how far away the cañon seemed! Every nerve and muscle she strained for greater speed, but upon her was that paralysing sense of a pursuer swifter than herself. In the very ace of time she threw herself flat, and the wolf's jaws slashed the air within an inch of her neck.

Like a flash Kassa turned, fleeing for dear life back towards the rocky ridge. 'Pitter-pat' went her paws, 'thump-thump' came the she-wolf behind her, and then—oh, horror!—there flashed from a cactus-clump ahead a second wolf, cutting her off from the friendly rocks.

Husky and formidable he looked to Kassa's terrified eyes, barring the direct path with forelegs widely braced, yet as Kassa swerved to dodge him he held his ground, glowering with fangs exposed at the pursuing wolf.

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One whiff was enough for Kassa. She knew in the twinkling of an eye that this big, husky brute was a jackal like herself, and so, side by side for the first time, they faced the common foe.

The she-wolf pulled up short in a cloud of dust, regarding them red-eyed and sullenly. Then, with rumbling growls, she recalled an appointment away down the cañon, and the jackals, with waving tails, brought up the rear, yapping their mockery.

Kassa looked at her deliverer with shining eyes; then she bit him. It was not a serious hurt, for his coat was long and thick, bearing the black gloss of the greater altitudes, where the air is rarefied and the nights are bitter cold. He had come from the Buttes away in the west—come in the very nick of time; and now he stood stock-still, wagging his tail from side to side, and waiting, evidently, for Kassa to bite him again.

II.

When Kassa stole off towards the ridge, Butte followed. She sat at length on the skyline, looking absently into space, and pretended she had forgotten him, though his yawns were loud enough to carry fifty yards. He came fawning up to her, and at length dared to lick her nose, at which she fairly wailed with disgust. Finally she got up and trotted off, while Butte followed with an unwarranted air of triumph.

He followed till they reached the ridge overlooking Logan's cabin, with its streak of foreign smoke rising straight skywards—doubtless some kind of trap! At this they howled in unison, which surely was a step in the right direction, for the song seemed somehow to bring them closer together; and when at last Kassa rose and trotted away, her nips had lost their keen edge, and her yaps of disapproval were less impatient.

Oh that fateful howling! It told Wolver Logan that there were still jackal bounties to be drawn along this range; otherwise he would have packed out with the first springtime floods, and Kassa and Butte would have lost the most terrible, though not the most terrifying, of their foes. As a matter of fact, Kassa had derived a good deal of amusement that winter at Logan's expense. She was a wise little jackal for one of last year's cubs, for she sprang from wise parents, and time and again she had watched Logan make his sets, only her two pointed ears visible above the ridge, and when he was gone she had sallied forth and scattered dirt upon them, leaving the sign which other jackals read and knew to mean 'beware.' But Logan knew his business, and sadly had he reduced the number of wolves and jackals along his range.

That golden evening the trapper, had he used his glasses, might have seen two coyotes seated side by side under a boulder overlooking his cabin—a coy little vixen and a big, prim, husky male—so close together that they seemed to be propping each other up. They watched with the keenest interest while Logan tidied his hut preparatory to his long jaunt to the city to buy fresh stores, and somehow the jackals knew that he was shortly packing out. At dawn they were back at the same place, watching Logan load his pack-horse with a huge pile of pelts; then, as he rode slowly off, leaving the cabin shuttered and barred, they escorted him respectfully to the prairie-edge, where they howled a doleful farewell.

That evening there was no suspicious smoke rising from the cabin chimney-pipe, and, glancing round for Butte to follow, Kassa stole up to investigate. Butte was wary and shy, but when he reached Logan's garbage-heap his confidence returned. He puzzled long and painfully over the anatomy of an empty milk-tin, while Kassa was exploring the mysteries of an ancient larigan. They scattered the garbage far and wide, strewed it to the very threshold, whereupon Kassa began sniffing under the door. The first sniff brought a delightful suggestion of seasoning bacon, also a dash of molasses. Kassa began to gnaw, and very soon splinters of wood littered the threshold. She gnawed and tore till her jaws were tired; then Butte took her place, and in less than an hour they had engineered an entrance—difficult, but nevertheless sufficient.

Kassa wormed in, while Butte mounted guard without. The bacon was suspended from the roof, and Kassa's first leap brought down a rickety shelf loaded with tins of paint, musquash 'charm,' a bottle of whisky, a box of nails, and all manner of oddments. The whole lot lay in an unsavoury concoction on the floor. When she had analysed each and every article, Kassa's confidence returned. She leapt again at the bacon, obtained a good hold, and hung on. Then she swung, jerking, worrying, till one suspending loop gave way and the side hung perilously by one corner. Another mighty snatch brought it down, and Kassa struggled to the door with her prize.

Try as they would, Butte tugging and worrying without, Kassa manœuvring within, that obstinate side of bacon refused to exit by the way Kassa had entered—probably because it was at least a foot too wide, so that in the end the two jackals were compelled to feast on the spot, which they did whole-heartedly.

Thoroughly satisfied and confident now, they fell to exploring. The flour-bag was upset, and though its contents interested them little from an epicurean point of view, it occurred to Kassa that this was good stuff to roll in, so she rolled. Butte also rolled, and that explains why a tipsy half-breed, crossing the range that night, saw two white jackals trotting together across the ridge, and got the fright of his life.

Next evening Kassa and Butte returned to finish the bacon, but the first whiff, on their nearing the door, told them that another visitor had been there. In truth, a prowling, old, dry valley skunk had strolled into the cabin that

very afternoon, and finding himself surrounded by such a harvest of plenty, had decided to settle. Kassa and Butte snarled threateningly at him through the jagged hole, at which the old skunk settled all doubt as to the question of ownership by letting off his musk-gun.

Whoever might have wanted the hut hitherto would certainly have no use for it hereafter. The skunk had stamped his brand of ownership, which silenced all argument and left him in undisputed possession. Kassa and Butte hurried away, rolling in the sand and sneezing to get the horrible stench out of their nostrils.

III.

When Logan came back and found the brown-and-white freebooter in possession, he swore an awful oath, then shot the skunk with his pistol. Thereafter he held a bonfire of all that the hut contained, and finally pulling the cabin to bits, he rebuilt it solemnly, log by log, most of the logs reversed. It never occurred to him that the jackals might have had a hand in the pie. His suspicions ran no farther than milord the skunk, which can scarcely be wondered at, considering to what extent the scent of skunk pervaded his clothing, defiled his body, and saturated his very soul! For weeks after Logan breathed skunk, ate skunk, dreamt skunk—in fact, was enveloped in a material and spiritual atmosphere of skunk.

But he had come back with a new idea for a coyote set, and was anxious to carry it into effect. Thus, a night or two later, Kassa and Butte were greeted by a glorious aroma of dead goat wafting down the breeze, and followed it to its origin. There lay the goat in a sheltered hollow, but as they circled round, sifting every breeze, Kassa uttered a warning growl, for the scent of steel was also wafted to her nostrils. On their drawing still a little nearer, the smells of man and of trap were unmistakable; in fact, Logan had even forgotten to brush out his tracks with the old wolf-tail he carried for that purpose.

The whole thing was the most obvious trap the most blundering novice could have contrived, and Kassa and Butte sat near by in the offing howling their mockery. Had they known, they could have stepped right in and fed, for there was no trap anywhere near, and the warning scent of steel came only from a few old horse-shoes and other oddments Logan had strewed round the carcass.

The next night and the next the two coyotes returned to howl their derision, till at length Logan, at a well-chosen moment, reappeared upon the scene, bringing with him this time five Whitehouse wolf-traps with chains and drags attached. These he set not near the carcass, but on the crests of neighbouring mounds where, the signs told him, the coyotes sat and howled.

That night Kassa and Butte reappeared as usual. They were no longer suspicious of the place, as they knew where the traps were; but scarcely were they within sight of that tempting bait when there was a thud, and Butte was caught.

There was no mistake about it. He was firmly held by one forepaw, and his frantic efforts to escape merely resulted in the appearance from the sand of that great three-pronged anchor to which the trap was chained.

Kassa, horrified and distressed, circled timidly round, and soon located a second trap, which she sprang by scratching earth upon it. She then went to her husband's aid, worrying the trap, the drag, the chain, even biting *him* in her frenzied anxiety. But her efforts were cut short by a thunderous growl almost at her side, and, peering up, she saw, to her horror, the big gray timber wolf!

There the brute stood, head lowered, eyes flaming, and even as Kassa stared the she-wolf came stalking towards her as a cat stalks a mouse.

Butte uttered a desperate snarl and strove madly to free himself; while his little wife, trembling with terror, crouched at his side in deadly preparedness. She might easily have slipped away had she chosen, yet, like the faithful little wife she was, she remained at her mate's side, ready to die with him; for scarcely could it be otherwise.

Well the wolf knew that Butte was trapped, and there was but one thing that restrained her—the scent of steel. But for this she would have rushed in and finished first Kassa, then Butte; as it was, she contented herself with uttering thunderous growls, prowling round stiff-legged, and at times scratching dirt with all fours.

And as she trotted round the two jackals were ever facing her with shining, fearful eyes. Afraid they surely were, yet as surely they meant to fight to a finish. Butte's imprisoned leg was numbed, and he felt little during that dreadful twisting process. He did not even know that the skin about that imprisoned paw, twisted and broken, had become but a loose sheath, ready to strip away if the necessary pull were exerted in the right direction.

The wolf became bolder as the night passed on, and steadily now her circles narrowed. Once she was within reach of Kassa, and delivered a terrible sidelong chop, which the little coyote dodged with a movement too quick to follow.

Again the she-wolf snapped, driving Kassa back, then with a roar mastered her fear of the trap and fell upon Butte. There was a sinister vision of scuffling bodies in a cloud of dust, and Kassa threw herself in. Chop—slash—chop went her jaws!

There was a shudder and a pause, and the three animals shot apart, glaring into each other's eyes, and between them, with jaws erect, stood the empty trap! Butte had twisted himself free—or, rather, he had twisted till the hold of the jaws was weakened, when the full force of the big wolf's charge, the fury of her full weight

thrown upon him, had given that final wrench which he alone could never have mustered.

Yes, little as she had willed it, the she-wolf had freed her intended victim, and realising that full well, she now remembered business elsewhere, and slunk away.

IV.

Butte's injury, though bad enough, was not a permanent disablement. It merely meant that he would become thin, and that for a month or so he would hop on three legs, after which he would quickly resume his normal condition.

But the blood-feud between the jackals and the she-wolf was now complete in its bitterness, for at the back of the jackals' minds was a vague sense that the wolf was in some way associated with Butte's whole encounter with the trap. They were unable to disconnect the two incidents —first, the springing of the trap, and, second, the appearance of the wolf; and the memory of that night was a bad dream in their minds —a dream in which the wolf alone assumed definite shape and being.

Whether the thing that Kassa did was a carefully laid plot, or whether it was merely chance that favoured her, I cannot say, though chance plays a smaller part in the destinies of the wild folk than our lack of generosity usually allows us to concede. Not half-a-mile from the dead goat was a shallow creek, and hung by its head in the undergrowth, about four feet from the water's edge, was a wild-duck. Kassa had many times eyed that duck, but deciding it looked unnatural, she had tried to forget it. She would have defiled it had it been within her reach, so that no other jackal would eat; but now, going one night alone to the place, she sat on the windward side of the duck and howled. The she-wolf heard and came along, knowing that Kassa was alone; but when she arrived Kassa was gone, and there remained only the thing in the trees, imparting seductive aromas to the breeze.

The wolf approached cautiously. This, then, was what the jackals were after! She would see they did not get it. There was no scent of steel, so she leapt, falling back into the shallow water. Tock! The steel jaws of a No. 4 Whitehouse closed upon one of her hindlegs. With a roar she spun round to snap at the awful jaws which rose from the surface, when—tock!—a second pair of jaws closed on her forepaws, pinning her down in a helpless attitude.

Kassa and Butte came down and howled their triumph; then away they went into that shady cañon which was sacred to the wolf.

There is one vengeance in the wild more terrible than all others, for not only is it the most vicious, but, over and above the actual injury done, it conveys mockery and contempt.

In a shallow den deep down in the cañon Kassa and Butte located their enemy's cubs, and had the she-wolf returned that morning she would have found her nest scattered to the four winds, and there, at the den entrance, stark and mangled, she would have found her darlings lying defiled and bespattered with dirt in the twinkling sunlight.

WITHIN TOUCH.

CHAPTER II.

THE secretary showed himself first, and held the door wide. Then there appeared on the threshold only a cornet and a trooper, and for an instant I feared that they had brought no one, and, more, that my trickery was discovered and they were come to seize me. I sank my hand into my pocket, where the snaphaunce lay. But the trooper stood aside and disclosed another form.

I saw a white face, that did not reach to the cornet's shoulder, and a cloak—a cloak hanging so straitly that it could cover but a slight body.

So far, only a sense of duty, or, perhaps it were better said, a fear of being haunted, had carried me along; but the sight of Beatrix Mary Ruthven, or Rivven, in the being, in the midst of her burly enemies and under the shadow of death, took my pity instantly, and I was glad that I had come for her, whatever the cost.

The cornet saluted the major-general from where he stood, and then placed his hand beneath the prisoner's arm. She advanced, moving weakly and as if near to a swoon, and he led her, with some kindness in his manner, to a chair, wherein she sat, and, after drooping her head at first, looked up, her eyes very wide open, at the major-general. The secretary had rightly called her 'maid.' I thought her not above eighteen, and her face very beautiful, with its delicate short nose and perfect mouth and chin, and the lovely clean curve which ran from chin to ear. Pallor and a red flush around the eyes from weeping could little detract from a face so featured.

'Under favour, sir,' said the cornet to the major-general, 'I do not think she can travel to-night.'

'Eh? Wherefore not?' He leaned across the table towards the girl. 'Young mistress, you are in better case than your high crimes deserve. Not so near death but what you may save yourself, I believe, an you speak fair to the Lord Protector. So take that advice to heart, and now rouse you up, for you are to go to London to-night.'

'I am thankful—so thankful,' she said slowly,

'and would fain do your wish, but I—the good tidings have dismayed me.' She breathed hard and sank her head on her hand, and I saw that she was trembling much.

The major-general glanced at me. 'You were best make up your mind to sup with me, Captain Leyburn,' he said. 'As she is, she cannot sit pillion, and, of course, that is your plan?'

'Yes,' I answered; 'and, by your leave, sir, ride she must and soon. I once neglected a command of his Highness, and have no mind to again. If Mistress Ruthven hath no strength to hold my belt, she can be belted to me.'

I spoke firmly, as one who had no intention to be crossed; but hope was dying within me. I saw myself beaten after all by this ill chance. If the major-general deemed the prisoner unfit for riding, he could, as my senior officer, take it upon himself to retain her, and answer to Cromwell for doing so. But, fortunately in the circumstances, he was not a man of merciful nature.

'Belt her to you?' he said. 'Yes, it could be done.' He eyed me with pleasure. 'You are like me, sir; you yield not readily to obstacles.'

'No, sir,' I said with relief, and I was little surprised that on looking towards the prisoner I found her gazing over her finger-tips at me in shrinking apprehension. My words had been very harsh, and my face, with its lack of shaving, and with, I suspected, many an earth-stain, though the common mark of one riding post, might well discomfort her.

I walked up to her chair, intent to reassure her somewhat by a question as to how she did; howbeit, the major-general mistook my action for impatience.

'Now, mistress,' he said, 'Captain Leyburn awaits you. Stand up.'

As if his words had shot her, she fell across an arm of the chair.

'Um! she will beat you, sir,' he said, rising impatiently.

'Not if I may have the tending of her,' I answered, raising her a little and holding her so that her head leaned right forward. 'Pour some water into that dish,' I added to the secretary.

I raised her head to cast some of the water in her face, and then let it fall forward again, soaking my palm continually and pressing it to her brow; and when I thought her senses returning I set her back, and taking a cup of water from the secretary, who stood by to assist me, won her into drinking some.

'You are better?' I asked.

She replied, 'Yes,' but faintly, with closing eyes.

I set her forward again, wetting my hand and holding her brow as before, and gazed down upon her brown hair, and felt the pitiful throb of her temple against my fingers. In troth, I was hard put to to know how I could get her away. I determined on a risk.

'Some wine or spirits,' I said to the secretary.

He went first to the bottle I had drunk from, and finding it empty, hurried out of the room, as I had expected. The major-general and the cornet were talking on the far side of the table.

I bent my lips to her ear. 'Come, come,' I said softly, as if to chide her. 'Come,' I whispered; then, lower still and rapidly, 'For your life's sake and mine, come now. I am a King's man, trying to save you.'

I felt her start in my hands, and soon could tell by the great drawing of her breath and the straining of her little form that she was striving with all her will to recover herself; and, knowing what encouragement can do, I said to her ever and anon, 'You are better; I see that you are better.'

And gradually she became so, and when the secretary returned was able with her own hand to lift a beaker of strong waters to her lips, whereof, at my urging, she drank a fair quantity.

'A tender leech!' said the major-general, who for some minutes past had been studying me with, I feared, a hint of suspicion in his thoughts.

'What would you?' I answered, laughing. 'His Highness will not be tender of me for delay. And, with your permission, sir, she does well enough to be put on horse. The fresh air in her face'——

I broke off, for I could perceive his doubt growing. Then I recalled Leyburn's pass, which contained no such description of the bearer as would betray me. That might lend a little more weight and get me through yet.

'If you will be pleased to endorse my pass, sir, with sanction to carry the prisoner'—— And I held it out carelessly.

He took it and glanced over it, and his face became more assured; and then, to my great relief, he sat down and wrote across it.

'Get you gone, then, Captain Leyburn,' he said, giving it back to me; 'and my humble services to his Highness.'

The maid, whose pretty, narrow hands had been busied with pulling the hood of her cloak over her hair, stood up at his words. She wisely showed no trace of eagerness, but, fixing her eyes on me, waited as if in miserable indifference. Yet a faint colouring of excitement had stolen to her cheeks.

I saluted the major-general and turned to the door without more ado; and, the secretary leading the way, she and the cornet and I went down and out to my horse, which the corporal held ready, having obediently girt on a pillion.

Into this the cornet lifted her, so soon as I was mounted, and I felt her fingers in my belt.

'You are strong enough to hold on?' I asked.

'Yes,' said she behind me.

Then 'Good-night and good thanks to you, sirs,' I said, and, giving the corporal a silver piece, started atrot down the street, ready to shout for joy at my success, but to despair for

another reason. By now it was almost fully dark.

As yet I had scarce learnt the sound of my companion's voice, so mute had she been from her first coming into the library. But ere we had gone many yards she spoke quickly across my shoulder.

'Sir, sir, what you whispered was true? You are saving me? You are a true man?'

'True enough man, mistress,' I answered, 'as the rebels yonder would have proved on my body had they guessed my name; and at present you are safe from them.' I eased the chestnut down to a walk. 'We will talk here and quickly,' I said; 'for, once out of the town, we must gallop hard, and shall have no breath for speech.'

I told her in few words of my hunted condition and the manner of my coming to her aid. 'And now, Mistress Ruthven,' I ended by saying, 'I still may catch the hoy, and you were far best out of England—nay, you cannot think to remain. Will you trust to me and to Telkirk, an old, honourable man, and cross with us to Holland, whence you can write to your family?'

Instead of answering my question at once, she slipped one of her hands from my belt and laid it on my arm, and leaned forward so that her breath was on my cheek.

'Thank you, thank you, for my life,' she said, 'which henceforth, under God, I owe to you. You had barely saved your own, yet you straightway perilled it again for me. I know not how to tell you my gratitude—and I think you the bravest, noblest man that is in England.'

The edge of her hood, with a tress of hair lying across it, as I could feel, touched my neck. It sent a thrill through me, and my heart gave a great beat. I found myself drawing a long breath and realising what gladness a certain maid may instantly bring upon a man. But I could not let her words pass.

'You must not name me brave,' I said, 'unless you would shame me. Call me rather the "Great Coward of Pevensey Marsh," for that is my fitting style. I clung to my marsh, and long declared I would not leave go though you died of my cravenness. Knew you ever such a cur?'

Her fingers tightened about my sleeve. 'Brave, brave!' she murmured. 'How you durst have come forth I know not! Could I have done so? Could I turn back a step now, think you?' (She shivered against me.) 'Not for a king's ransom!'

The very words, those last, that had run in my head not long ago. Indeed, we were a shattered pair! And yet not so; my courage was with me again, and waxing the stronger for knowing of her fear.

'Not for a king's ransom,' she repeated. 'Not to save a life! But I have not answered you. Yes, I will go to Holland with you, and be deeper in your debt for taking me. I have no near kin in England now, since they killed my uncle when they made me prisoner; but my aunt Ruthven is at the French Court, and will receive me.—And tell me not of your worthy Hollander,' she added, almost with reproach. 'I were base, I think, did I not gladly trust myself to you.'

Her confidence in me, though mayhap I expected no less, was pleasant to hear. I twitched our Spaniard into a rapid trot, and her free hand went back to my belt.

'So, now for the hoy,' I said. I spoke gaily, both from a desire to cheer her spirit and from the effect which her presence had on me. But I doubted much that we should find the hoy. At this very minute Telkirk might be putting off in his boat for me. When he discovered that I was not on the beach, he would not wait, but deem me waylaid on my road thither, since I had been given ample time to reach the trysting-place. Howbeit, I noticed, as we came to the outskirts of the town, that night was not so completely fallen as I had thought, but that the darkening was in part from a sea-mist; and, as this circumstance, together with the dying down of the breeze, would make the hoy slower in approaching shore, my hopes revived somewhat.

By galloping the chestnut to his uttermost we might yet win to sea. But this same galloping, now that the time was come for it, was no nice prospect, with the pits and other snares of the road, dangerous enough in broad daylight, now scarcely to be seen if one stared straight down at them. But there was no other course.

'Hold tight, Mistress Ruthven,' I said. 'If we fall, you were best spring out sideways.' And then I gathered the reins shorter and spurred.

(*Continued on page 660.*)

THE NEW TEACHING AT CAMBRIDGE.

THE PERSE SCHOOL.

I.

SHORTLY before the war, the writer travelled from Cambridge to London in company with a well-known American educationist, the brother-in-law of an ex-President of the United States, and this gentleman explained that he had been to Cambridge specially to see and hear Dr Rouse teach Latin and Greek to the boys of the Perse Grammar School, and had been greatly impressed by his visit. A month or two later a friend of the writer, who was removing from London to Cambridge, was congratulated by a London headmaster upon the fact that he would

now be able to send his sons to the Perse School 'to be taught by the great Dr Rouse.' Who is Dr Rouse, and what is the special educational work he is doing at Cambridge that attracts scholars from all over the world, and calls forth the admiration of other headmasters in his own country?

It is now eighteen years since Dr W. H. D. Rouse went to Cambridge as headmaster of the Perse Grammar School, founded in the last year of Shakespeare's life by a bequest of Dr Stephen Perse, and rendered famous by Bishop Jeremy Taylor, 'the Shakespeare of divines,' who was one of its earliest scholars. Dr Rouse had had fifteen years' experience as master in various English public schools, including Rugby, and he was profoundly dissatisfied with the methods of teaching which he found in vogue, particularly in connection with the classics. He went to the Perse School with the firm conviction that the whole existing system would have to be radically altered if any real success was to be attained. It may be said that he carried out the daring experiments for which he has since become famous in educational circles with a boldness worthy of the high cause he had at heart, and the courage and the earnestness shown have been crowned with triumphant success. The Right Honourable H. A. L. Fisher, President of the Board of Education, who recently made a special journey to the school to see the boys at work, stated at the tercentenary celebrations that, with one exception, the Perse was the only school in the country that was receiving the Board of Education grant for valuable experimental work in education.

In passing, it may be mentioned as curious, and at the same time eminently fitting, that this modern pioneer in the teaching of Greek and Latin should have chosen Cambridge as the field for his efforts; for two other pioneers in this sphere have had connections with the university town. One of these, Sir Thomas Elyot, who is best known as author of *The Boke named the Governour*, the first work on education to be printed in the English language, was Member of Parliament for Cambridge and sheriff for Cambridgeshire in Henry VIII.'s reign. The principles he enunciated were a remarkable forecast of Dr Rouse's methods. The child was 'to use the Latin tongue as a familiar language,' and he was not to be detained too long in the tedious grammar. 'Let not the child's fervent desire of learning become extinct by the time he cometh to the most sweet and pleasant reading of old authors.' The child, Elyot went on to explain, was to be treated as an individual, and his originality encouraged and drawn out.

The other Cambridge pioneer was Roger Ascham, tutor and secretary to Queen Elizabeth, whose book on classical education, *The Scholemaster*, was published in 1570, two years after his death, and nearly forty years after Elyot's *Governour*. He was fellow and Greek reader at St John's College, Cambridge, and worked with much success to extend the knowledge of Greek at his university, and to improve the method of teaching Latin. Like Elyot, he strove to make Latin a living language, and described his book as 'a plaine and perfite way of teachyng children to understand, write, and speake in the Latin tong.' His plea was one for 'alluring the child to learning by gentleness rather than by force,' and though his actual routine of teaching was different from Dr Rouse's, there is no doubt that in spirit it was akin.

II.

It is extremely difficult in one short article to give any adequate idea of Dr Rouse's system, or to show fully how remarkably it differs both in method and in result from the system that has been enthroned for a couple of centuries or more. Not only are the classics involved, but modern languages also, and the whole range of English literature. Of what other school in England could boys of eleven and twelve be found who sit down in their spare hours at home to read Shakespeare for pleasure—not the plays they are studying in class, but other plays to which they have been attracted by their appreciation of the author? This Perse boys do —a fact within the writer's own knowledge.

It was on account of his teaching of the classics, however, that Dr Rouse first attracted attention to the Perse School. That method of teaching modern languages known generally as the 'direct method,' because in it there is a direct connection between experience and expression, between the idea and the spoken word, has been tested for something like a quarter of a century, and has proved, without doubt, the best method ever devised. It is the plan followed in the teaching of French and German and other modern tongues at the Perse.

But in transferring the direct method, sometimes called the oral or natural method, to the teaching of Greek and Latin, Dr Rouse has struck an entirely new note. 'Can these dry bones live?' might well have been asked after two centuries of the current practice, for the pedagogue had seen to it that Latin and Greek were indeed 'dead languages.' Dr Rouse, however, has given life to the dead; he has made the ancient tongues live once more; he has restored their rhythm and their music, and made the schoolboy appreciate and enjoy them. As he himself says, 'The Romans used Latin, and the Greeks used Greek, to express their daily thought one to another; Cæsar commanded his soldiers in Latin, and Xenophon in Greek; whilst Gaius and Gaia used Latin in the bosom of the family, and all the little Athenian children spoke Greek at their play.' Of course they did, but we had never quite thought of it in that way.

Perhaps the striking contrast between the old

method of teaching and the new can best be shown by taking concrete instances. The writer has a very lively recollection of his introduction to the Latin language in an old London grammar-school of the traditional type. He was seven years of age at the time, and was set to learn by heart what he was told was 'the first declension.' In painful, parrot fashion he repeated *mensa*, a table; *mensae*, of a table; *mensae*, to or for a table; and so on, through six cases, singular and plural. He had not the remotest idea what it all meant, nor did he know or care whether the table in question was a piece of furniture or a set of figures. The natural result was that he took an antipathy to the classics, which he has never been able wholly to overcome.

Now, take a Latin lesson at the Perse School. The class is ready and the master sitting at his desk. '*Surgo*,' says the master, and rises in his place, and the boys at once associate the act of rising with the sound and expression, *surgo* (I rise). The master then beckons to a boy to rise, and says to him, '*Surgis*' (thou risest), and to the rest of the class, pointing to the boy, '*Surgit*' (he rises). Perhaps two boys are next motioned to rise, and the master says to the rest of the class, '*Surgunt*' (they rise). The boys now sit down, and the master, indicating by signs that all the class, including himself, should rise, says, '*Surgimus*' (we rise). Again they sit down, and several boys are motioned to rise, the master saying, '*Surgitis*' (you rise). In this way the whole class has, in a few minutes, learnt the present tense, indicative mood, singular and plural, of the third conjugation verb *surgo*, and not a word of English has been spoken: Latin only has been used, and the boys have learnt in such a way that the lesson will never be effaced. Not only so, but their interest has been keenly aroused and they have had a good deal of amusement.

The lesson is continued. '*Ambulo*' (I walk), says the master, taking a few steps forward; '*revenio*' (I come back); '*sedeo*' (I sit down); and all the changes are rung until of these also the boys have learnt the present indicative. They now know this tense of all the four conjugations of verbs. By the old method the boy drummed away for weeks at the first conjugation only, knowing nothing of the other three, and thus came to have an idea that all other verbs must be irregular. The same thing happens with the five declensions of nouns, which are learnt simultaneously instead of in succession. In all cases the words when learnt are written by the boys on the blackboard.

But the early lessons do not consist of sentences of one word only. Each boy has a Latin name, this wherever possible being his own name Latinised or translated, as *Ricardus*, *Carolus*, *Sartor*, *Lupus*, and so on; and in this way the vocative case is introduced naturally and easily. '*O Carole, surge*' (Charles, rise), says the master, here introducing the imperative. '*Quid facis?*' (What art thou doing?), he asks, and his tone and expression indicate his meaning. So the lesson goes on, to the intense interest of the boys, who almost immediately experience the joy of being able to speak and understand the strange new language.

Successive lessons centre round the schoolroom and furniture and the ordinary actions of daily life, and in a very short time each boy has at his command a fairly good vocabulary which he is able to use fluently and intelligently. To hear a class of boys at the Perse School thus carrying on a lively conversation or discussion in the Latin tongue is indeed a remarkable object-lesson in the value of the new teaching. Think what all this has done. In the first place, it has interested the boy in his Latin lessons, usually the dullest of the school curriculum. It has made Latin as living a language as English or French, and has shown him how to use it fluently and effectively. It has amused him, and has saved valuable time by cutting out altogether the parrot work of committing long lists of words to memory, and by abolishing the labour of translating English *words* into Latin, and *vice versâ*. The idea, that is the action or the object, has been connected up directly with the Latin expression without the intervention of English. Above all, the boy has been taught to some extent to think in Latin. As new words and expressions arise, they are not explained by being translated into English, but are paraphrased by means of Latin words already known. If later on, as in an examination, the boy has to translate from English into Latin, or for the matter of that into any other foreign language, his translation will be strictly idiomatic, because he will be thinking not of the words before him, but of their sense.

Now, all this is obviously the natural method. It is the way we learn our mother-tongue as children. We get to know and use the names of familiar objects by hearing people repeat them many times and seeing them point to them. Words are really sounds, not collections of letters. The printed word represents the sound, and not *vice versâ*, for the spoken language existed long before writing was invented, and there are many races to-day which have a well-developed spoken language, but no system of writing. Written and printed words are lifeless; they must be translated into sounds, either audibly or mentally, before they live; and so by teaching a foreign language first of all as a spoken tongue, we are undoubtedly following the true natural method. And Dr Rouse, by applying this idea to Latin and Greek, has certainly given those ancient languages a happy and glorious resurrection.

III.

From conversation, the boys soon go on to reading and composition. The reading-books used are interesting stories which the boys will

love for their own sakes, long stories for preference, to avoid the tedium of constant repetition; and later they come to the classical masterpieces. In Greek, Homer is a great favourite. They do not translate, but read in the original, which, by this method of teaching, they understand; and cultured visitors and educational experts who hear the Perse boys read Latin and Greek, with the appropriate rhythm and modulation, speak of the new æsthetic pleasure which they experience when listening. Like Ezra, the boys 'read distinctly and give the sense, and cause the hearers to understand.'

When it comes to composition, a story is told in Latin by the master, and the boys have to write it out in the same tongue from memory, paraphrasing it as they like. At a later stage a story is given in *résumé*, and has to be filled in by the boys; and at a later stage still a theme only is given, around which the boys write a story. Of course, this is a very bare outline of the method, and those who wish for fuller details should read the two pamphlets issued by the Board of Education, *The Teaching of Latin at the Perse School, Cambridge*, and *The Teaching of Greek at the Perse School, Cambridge*.

One of the foolish criticisms sometimes levelled at this method is that by it the boys do not learn grammar. As a matter of fact, they learn far more grammar than by the old method, but they learn it in the right order, for, as Herbert Spencer has pointed out, 'grammar was made after language, so ought it to be taught after language.' The Perse boys really learn their grammar with their language, and learn it logically, knowing and understanding the reason for everything.

Another foolish criticism is that to use Latin and Greek for describing daily life degrades the languages that should be associated only with noble literature. 'The answer to this is simple,' says Dr Rouse; 'knowledge of a language must come before taste.'

Greek is taught in the same way as Latin, except that the first few lessons are given to teaching the new script.

In modern languages the Perse School is equally successful, and Frenchmen who hear the boys carry on their discussions entirely in French are astonished at the correctness of the pronunciation. Mr Louis de Glehn, the modern language master at the Perse, has brought the direct method to perfection, and he lays great stress upon the importance of teaching boys in such a way that they shall understand directly what they hear and read, and express directly what is in their minds.

The singing of songs in the foreign languages, and the writing and acting of plays, form an important and delightful part of the teaching of languages, both ancient and modern, at the Perse School. The boys write their own plays, and surprising results have been attained. Many of these are published in the series of Perse Playbooks. One of the remarkable things about the Perse methods is that boys who would be incapable of learning any foreign language at all by the old plan are able to become quite proficient by the new.

The whole thing is really a revolt against the German influence that has so long dominated the educational as well as the military world. Some boys may be terrorised into learning the declensions and the conjugations and translating foolish sentences, but all must of necessity detest the work, and certainly cannot be expected to see that it has even a remote connection with their own life.

IV.

Dr Rouse has found by experiment that the average boy can easily take four languages and learn them thoroughly during his school course. The best age, he holds, to begin the first language, which is French, is ten years. It is more difficult for the child if this is left till eleven or twelve, and extremely so if thirteen is reached before a start is made. On the other hand, if he begins at seven, eight, or nine, nothing is gained, for at fourteen he will know no more than the boy who started at ten. The earlier years are therefore given up to a thorough grounding in English, and at ten the boy begins to learn French by the direct method. The true pronunciation of foreign languages can be attained only if the child starts young, while his ear is susceptible and his vocal organs are pliable. Directly the boys begin to ask questions it is known that their interest is aroused. As already explained, writing only follows the oral lessons, and here the sanity of Dr Rouse's ideas is shown, for he strongly condemns the current system of underlining errors in a written exercise, which simply serves to emphasise them and impress them upon the child's mind. In the early stages it is always easy to correct a spoken error, whereas writing stereotypes the mistakes on the mind, the eye as well as the ear being involved.

The other languages follow at intervals of two years—Latin at twelve, when the child has learnt to express himself in French, Greek at fourteen, and German at sixteen; and it is interesting to know that the greater maturity of the mind, as time goes on, enables the boy to learn the later languages so much more readily that at nineteen he will have practically the same knowledge of all. When the fourth language is begun, the first is dropped except for reading, to keep it fresh. The lessons last from half-an-hour to three-quarters of an hour, care being taken that they should cease before the child shows symptoms of weariness; and there is generally one lesson a day in each language. It is found that double time does not give double results, and with three or four daily lessons in a language less might be learnt

than with one lesson. By this system of teaching the crib is ruled right out of court, for it is useless, and in this sense the Perse methods may be said to have a good moral effect as well as an intellectual advantage.

The teaching of English is carried out on equally sane and natural lines. The boys are given a real love for literature. They act Shakespeare and other classical dramas; and Dr Rouse's idea is that eventually handwork, carpentry, embroidery, and so on, should be linked up with literature and other intellectual studies. Thus, when it was decided to act a certain play, the boys would make the furniture for the stage in their own carpenter's shop, would design, cut out, and make their costumes, embroider these themselves, and so on. It is a great idea, and has already been partially carried out. One of the English masters at the Perse School, Mr Caldwell Cook, has shown in his book, *The Play Way*, what a vast deal can be done in evoking the enthusiasm of boys for all that is highest and best in English literature. He has displayed an absolute genius for true education, by drawing out from the pupils what twenty or thirty years ago would have seemed impossible. The Perse boys write ballads and plays; and they give lectures on all kinds of subjects to their own forms. In this they are subjected to the intelligent criticism of their fellow-scholars, and the absence of self-consciousness is remarkable. Here are some of the subjects, taken at random, on which boys have given ten or fifteen minute lectures with great success: 'Saturn and His Rings,' 'Motor-Buses,' 'How to do Your Hair,' 'Greek Architecture,' 'Flying a Kite,' 'Great Eastern Engines,' 'Aeroplanes,' 'Japan,' 'Turbines,' 'Police Traps,' 'Meccano,' 'Foreign Stamps,' 'Preparations of the Germans.'

The natural assumption is that this kind of thing would make the boys horribly conceited and develop a most offensive form of priggishness. But it does nothing of the kind. They retain all their natural boyishness, taking the lectures as a matter of course; and so far from boasting, they rarely mention the matter to their friends and relations. Take an instance known to the writer, of two brothers who in different years lectured more or less regularly in their forms. One, a youth of fourteen, who was interested in architecture, gave a series of lectures on this subject. A representative from a London daily paper was present one day, and it was known that an article would be published describing the lectures. But the boy never even mentioned this to his people at home, and they were left to discover the article in the paper, and recognised the boy from the description and the photograph.

The other brother, thirteen years of age, had been lecturing some months, on and off, on Great Eastern engines and kindred topics, and was selected with several others to go to lecture at the Ladies' Training College for Secondary Teachers in Cambridge. He never mentioned the matter at home, till his family heard of it quite incidentally from outside. It is clear, therefore, that the whole plan carried out at the Perse is simply a natural development of the boy mind. If it were unnatural it would at once produce the priggishness that is conspicuous by its absence. The co-operation of the boy is secured in his own education, and the keynote of the system is that he is trusted by his masters.

'Is the child happy?' That is the great question that Dr Rouse asks himself, for if not, presuming the health is right, then there must be something wrong with the system of education; and in this his views are confirmed by another educationist, Professor Pillans, who says: 'Where young people are taught as they ought to be, they are quite as happy in school as at play, seldom less delighted, nay, often more, with the well-directed exercise of their mental energies than with that of their muscular powers.' There can be no doubt that Herbert Spencer was right when he pointed out that the intellectual action which the child likes is a healthy one for it, and conversely.

How long will it be before Dr Rouse's methods are adopted in the large public schools? 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?' England has a very great horror of any such heterodox proceeding. She loves to walk in the old paths. The political upheaval of the past five years, however, has, to some extent, awakened her; and we may yet live to see the governing body of Eton or Rugby or Harrow, when the headmastership falls vacant, calling in Dr Rouse to reorganise the whole system of education and make the great public schools of England a beacon light to the world rather than a byword.

'THE VERY CHRISTIAN SEÑOR.'

By G. Trevor Roller.

PART I.

I.

CAN you imagine a hot, dusty corral, with a white post and rail fence round it, seven feet high; inside, twenty head of whirling, bad-tempered cows, three mounted men, two dismounted, and one bonfire? It was half-past eleven on a hot Mexican day, and a hurry-up order had come to have the cows branded by noon and clear the corral for another bunch of

cattle. A steaming packing-house to windward of the corral wafted various smells ranging from cooking sausage and boiling lard to the dried, decomposed smell of the fertiliser, which made you cough and splutter.

No wonder the cows were bad-tempered, and no wonder the men used language, both Spanish and English, that was anything but refined! For, of the five, four were Mexicans, and the fifth an Englishman, boss of all the live-stock that came to the packing-house.

They were pressed, and these cows, not for killing, but for the pastures — wherefore the branding — were wild as hares, and about as quick movers. And Brennan (the Englishman), dropping the bossing, had jumped on a cattle-pony, and was helping with the roping and the throwing.

His rope would curl out through the dusty shimmering air and settle neatly over a cow's horns, his pony would slither down on its hocks, and the captive cow would pull up with a stagger and a jerk. She would face her captor, rope taut, with a perplexed what-shall-I-do-now expression. A *vaquero* (cowboy) would sidle up, and another rope would uncurl like a snake and land with open loop underneath her. She would ease the strain on her head by a pace or two forward, and, quick as a flash, as her two hindfeet arrived in the loop, it was jerked, catching them just below the hocks. Then started a tug of war between the two mounted men. 'Stretching,' it's called. The *vaquero* with the leg-rope pulls till the hind-limbs are stretched out and the cow falls on her side with a flop and a grunt. He keeps up the strain, as also does the head-rope man. This keeps her still while the brander runs from the bonfire with a hot brand and clamps it on. He hands the brand to his assistant, who rushes back and pops it in the fire; it must be kept hot. It's the half-heated iron that has to be held on for thirty seconds at a time that is cruel, makes the cattle squeal, and marks a bad brand.

He then takes the rope off the horns, standing well in front. The *vaquero* on the leg-rope holds his taut till the brander is well clear and back to the fire—for many a beast will rise and go for the brander if care is not taken. Once the rope is slackened behind, up gets the cow, kicks loose the running-loop, and grumbling at the indignity, presses back into the bunch. The third horseman by this time has another 'head-roped;' and so it goes on.

Brennan, in his few spare seconds, had been watching his brander—a new hand that morning, pressed into branding because he was so short-handed. The boy was doing well, and working harder than Brennan had ever seen a Mexican work. José Cantano was his name—no references—simply said he had worked with cattle all his life. But he was something to look at, tall and lithe, moving with that apparently slow grace of the Indian which is so deceptive, being really most remarkably quick, like the movement of a cat. His large, brown, wistful eyes looked at you in a tired sort of way, and would suddenly twinkle if a kind word was said. 'Yes,' thought Brennan, 'I'll bet he can ride too. And he's a Yacki Indian, or I'm a Dutchman.' Now, the Yackis hail from the north-west of Mexico, and are supposed to be a wild, untamed crowd. Possibly they may be as a whole, but get one apart from his cattle-raiding companions, and he is 'some man' to have working for you.

As Brennan watched he noticed the agility with which the new-comer would place on the brand, strongly and firmly, the quick tug he gave to the running-noose over the horns ere speeding back to the fire. Certainly this man was a 'find,' an old hand at the job, and worth keeping.

His two helpers had a cow down, and José was running up with the brand. Brennan swung his pony round to look for an unbranded cow to rope, when out of the bunch trotted a long-legged, parti-coloured brute, with a nasty, roving eye. Now, there is one thing in cattle-work you must always remember: that as long as they are in a bunch they are more or less docile, but once a beast gets detached from a herd it may turn into the devil incarnate. So Brennan watched the detached cow. She had ambled with head up to a corner of the corral. Brennan got his rope ready, deciding on her for the next victim. But she turned and showed the fresh brand on her flank, and then—head still up—she started to trot towards José, who at that moment was kneeling in front of a struggling cow, trying to loosen the rope, with his back directly to the oncoming would-be murderess.

There was only a second to think, and Brennan thought. 'No chance with the rope. Go for her.' And he went, both spurs in, with a yell. His pony jumped right at the cow, which, caught amidships, fell with all the wind out of her, five feet from José's back. The pony stumbled and staggered over her, and being a cow pony, with a leg or two to spare, arrived on the other side, hocks well under, and turned, ready for round the second. José, having realised the close shave, tugged the rope loose, eyes all the time on the smother of dust that represented the cow, the pony, and Brennan, then sidled to the fence and so round to the fire, and the work went on.

It had merely been an episode. Nobody made comments. A man and a pony had probably saved another man's life by acting practically quicker than thought, but in cattle-land many things happen quickly and no fuss is made about them. 'If you can't get a move on, then better quit.'

The cows were soon branded and turned out into the pasture.

Brennan went away to his matchboard bungalow, and with the help of a bath got rid of the

dust. He was just regaling himself with a long, cool whisky-and-soda when José arrived on his veranda.

José was hot; the dust on his face had turned to caked mud; his shirt was wringing wet, and very, very dirty. Branding and hopping round a bonfire is not all jam.

'Señor,' he said, 'you have saved me from an injury, perhaps from death. I wish to thank you.'

Brennan smiled, and patted him on the shoulder.

'Nonsense!' he replied. 'I did the only obvious thing. It's an old stunt, and the first thing I thought of doing.'

'Then, señor,' said José, looking Brennan straight in the eyes, 'your thoughts must be as quick as those of a frightened deer, and your action was most Christian in saving me.'

His slim, dusty hand went out; Brennan shook it, drew him—still holding his hand—into his little sitting-room, and sat him down. Then for the first time in his life José had a 'Scotch' and soda. He didn't like it, but he was thirsty, and it was iced. He swallowed it, and expressed a wish that he might continue to work for the señor; the señor said, 'Most certainly;' and José packed off to stake out a claim in the peon quarters, while Brennan settled down to his office-work.

II.

Next day hard work and far afield was the order. Brennan, as they drove and cut cattle in the broiling sun, watched José, now mounted on a bad-tempered, cow-hocked cattle pony, swing right and left, turning a refractory steer here, darting to head a break in the bunch there; sitting like a centaur and getting good work out of the bad-tempered one, a thing that none of Brennan's *vaqueros* had ever been able to do before. 'I was right about his riding,' thought Brennan.

On the way home he picked José out, and asked him many questions.

'Where did you learn your cow-punching?'

'In the northern country, señor.'

'Did you start very young?'

José smiled a slow smile. 'All my life, señor, I have ridden behind herds. Even before I could walk I would ride on my mother's back behind the cattle in the big drives, day after day, across the deserts, praying to the saints the while for water. Then we would reach the foothills, and the alkali would give place to grass, the cactus to the sage brush. Here we would rest a while, and my mother would teach me all the songs the cattle love best—the songs that soothe them when they are storm-herding, the song that urges them when they are weary. Ah! many things like that my mother taught me, señor.'

'And your mother,' asked Brennan—'is she alive?' As he asked the question he glanced at José, who turned in his saddle and looked at him with a face unutterably sad.

'Alas!' he said, 'she still lives, but for her life can only mean a living death. She is blind, señor, and so deaf she cannot even hear her son's strong voice—she who would listen to and hear his very sleeping whispers when he was a baby. The smallpox took this all from her. It came when—after she nursed me.'

'You had it, but you are not marked,' said Brennan.

'Nō, señor; my mother nursed me too well,' he said quietly. 'And now she does not know me. Surely the blessed saints should see that life is no longer for her.'

'So you have come south to find a fortune, so that she may be comfortable?' asked Brennan cheerfully.

'Yes, señor.'

'Then work hard and you will find it.'

'*Gracias*, señor,' said José gravely.

They swung on along the dusty road for home, entered the big compound, and started to unsaddle, when from out of the shade of the stable veranda came two policemen and a sergeant.

Brennan looked at them without surprise, but with annoyance. It was no unusual thing for one of his *vaqueros* to be arrested. Arrests are common enough in Mexico—some little debt in the town, some brawl in a drinking *tienda*. It was annoying, because it meant he would be short-handed to-morrow.

The sergeant came up to him. 'Have you one José Cantano here? I wish to arrest him,' he said.

'What for?' asked Brennan.

'I am not at liberty to say, señor; but it is for an affair that happened far from here,' said the sergeant.

'Well, he is over there, with his back to you, watering his horse,' said Brennan.

The police turned, and spreading out, approached the all-unconscious *vaquero*. They produced ponderous revolvers and advanced cautiously.

'It appears,' thought Brennan, 'that Mr José has a reputation, and that it has followed him south.'

The sergeant, in the centre, halted. José stood by his horse, still with his back to the proceedings. The saddle and the blanket lay on the ground. The bridle was off. José held the end of the *riata*, or halter, in his left hand; his right hand was on his pony's withers.

'José Cantano, I arrest you,' said the sergeant in a fierce and awe-inspiring voice. He evidently did not like the job.

José glanced over his right shoulder and straight down the barrel of a revolver. Quick as a flash his right foot flew up and caught the sergeant's hand. The pistol rose in the air

and exploded. Next second he was on the startled pony's back and heading straight for the second policeman, who fired wildly, then fell over himself in avoiding the whirlwind of dust, pony, and José. Policeman number three took a shot. Brennan heard a yelp behind him, saw a man clap his hand to his thigh, and sit abruptly in the dust. José was now making straight for the compound gates, when from the timekeeper's lodge rushed a fourth policeman and—slammed the gates.

José wheeled the pony in its own length and galloped for the far end. The compound was high, with wire atop. José was cornered; he must surrender, unless he put up a fight, for he was armed. In a flash Brennan made up his mind that this must not occur. He mounted his pony, and, with a word to the sergeant, cantered over to José.

José swung his pony round, and his hand dropped to his holster.

'You'll gain nothing by shooting me,' said Brennan, smiling. José's hand was placed in a less aggressive position. 'Now, what's all this about?' Brennan went on.

'They tried to arrest me, señor,' said the aggrieved José.

'That was quite apparent,' agreed Brennan; 'but why? What for?'

'Because, señor, I made a mistake. I set out to kill a man, and I failed—I only half-killed him.'

'Well, that's better. Things won't go so badly with you, seeing you did not kill him.'

'Had I succeeded, señor,' sighed José regretfully, 'all would have been well. He was a man much hated; those that saw would not have told; I should have been shielded. But no, señor, he is alive, and is at the bottom of all this trouble.'

'Well, you're cornered now, José. It's a bullet for certain if you don't surrender; and if you do, and go quietly, I'll see the authorities and do all I can. There are ways and means; you know that. I may be able to bail you out. I will do so if, when I hear your story, I think you deserve it.'

'When you hear my story, señor, you will want to bail me out, because you are very Christian,' said José.

'Then come on with me, and be polite to the police. Every bit helps; and you have, to say the least of it, somewhat ruffled them.'

José dismounted, undid his belt, and handed his revolver to Brennan. 'Keep it for me, please, señor,' he said.

Brennan strapped it round his own waist, and led his prisoner back to the sergeant, who was murmuring something about a 'tiger' and a 'he-cat' and 'one without shame.' Brennan sized things up. He bowed politely to the police.

'Señors,' he said, 'you have had a hot and dusty walk here. There has been a misunderstanding between you and this man which has led to violent exertion. You have a hot and dusty walk back. Please do me the honour to partake of some light refreshment before you set out.' Then, in English, to a youngster who had come out of one of the offices, he went on: 'Bobby, take the minions of the law and gin them up. Don't make 'em drunk, but send 'em out smiling, you know!'

'Right-o!' grinned the youth called Bobby, and led the way. The sergeant demurred. The policemen licked their lips. Brennan opened an office door of the veranda.

'I will take the prisoner in here,' he said. 'He wishes to make a statement. A policeman can be left outside. I will be responsible for him. Do me the favour, señors, to refresh yourselves.'

It was quite out of order, of course, but it was hot and dusty, and, after all, a little refreshment would be very pleasant; so they went off to be put in a good humour by the excellent Bobby.

III.

Brennan led the way into the office, closed the door, and demanded the tale of José's woes.

It was short and somewhat sad. José had worked for a rich *hacendero*, or ranch-owner, up north, one Ignatio Masbate, a much-hated landlord. José lived on an acre or so of land belonging to this man, in an adobe hut. Here his mother lived also, very deaf, very blind, and very feeble. The rent was deducted from José's wage, and this left him with only enough to buy food and supplies to keep himself and his mother alive. These supplies had to be bought at Don Ignatio's store, so one might almost say that Don Ignatio achieved the impossible—eating his cake, yet keeping it.

One fatal day José was told to rope a certain pony close by his master. José was the best roper on the ranch, and did so promptly. He was then told to throw it, and with a clever trick José snaked a loop on the near hind, pulled taut, and over rolled the pony. Ignatio applauded him; but on their approaching, the pony was found to have fallen on a boulder and broken a leg. Then the pony suddenly changed from a thirty-dollar cattle-hustler to a very valuable animal. José was a careless dog; he should pay for the pony. His rent was raised, his wage reduced. A few days after he had words with Don Ignatio, which resulted in a further raising and reduction. José stood it for a week, then went and informed Ignatio that he must leave and find work elsewhere, as his mother was starving. Ignatio put it quite plainly that he could not do this, as he was bound to his master by a debt for the pony—he must work that off. He could give up the hovel (house, Ignatio called it), and live and eat in the peon compound.

'But my mother?' asked José.

Don Ignatio consigned her to a place that, as José tritely put it, would be fuller for his—Ignatio's—fat presence when he came to die.

José lost his temper. Ignatio lost his, also his common-sense, for he struck José; and it's a stupid thing to do, to strike a Yacki Indian. They have a wonderful memory for that sort of thing. This seemed to calm José, and he went. Next day he transported his mother to a village where he found some good sisters in a convent who promised to care for her if José would send money from time to time. Then José left his mother, and returned to the ranch, saddled his pony, his own property, given him two years before by an American ranch-owner, and went to work. Towards midday he met Don Ignatio, also mounted. José had his rope out, and was driving an old cow that had strayed from her proper pasture. Don Ignatio pulled up and grinned, a nasty sneering grin. José threw his rope with the rapidity for which he was famous, and the noose clipped round Ignatio's fat body like a vice. José galloped downhill with his end of the rope snubbed down on the horn of his saddle. Ignatio bumped from his horse to the ground. At about the sixth bump he became unconscious. The rope was a good one, but the strain was enormous, and it parted after some two hundred yards. José kept going all that afternoon and part of the night, making south. The inert mass he had left behind he supposed dead. What he had done was done, as he put it, 'in the light of the noonday sun for all to see.' But he had many friends, Ignatio none. Nobody would know anything. At the same time, he was going to make himself scarce.

'But, alas!' he finished, 'how could one bump the life out of so much fat? He [Ignatio] awoke in a week, and set men to track me. To-day he has caused this trouble. It means the *carcel*, I suppose, or perhaps death. *Quien sabe?*'

'Nonsense!' laughed Brennan. 'I will see the *Jefe Politico* [Chief Magistrate] to-morrow, and try if I can't work things for you.'

So José went off to the neighbouring town, in the centre of a well-refreshed and happy escort, who reported him as a most docile and obliging prisoner when they reached the *carcel*.

(Continued on page 665.)

THE INDUSTRIAL VALUE OF 'RESIDUAL FIBRES' ON COTTON-SEED.

FEW of us in this country realise that cotton is, botanically speaking, the *fruit* of a plant, a fleecy mass containing a number of seeds, in the outer covering of which innumerable cotton fibres are rooted. The mass of cotton fibres and seeds is picked out by hand from the containing envelope (or 'boll'), and is termed 'seed-cotton.' The seed-cotton is then passed through a machine called a 'gin,' which pulls—or saws—off the longer fibres suitable for spinning. The residue of the 'seed-cotton' after being 'ginned' is known as 'cotton-seed.' About 95 per cent. of the 12,000,000 tons or so of the cotton-seed produced in the world annually is of the 'woolly' variety—that is to say, is covered with short cotton fibres, which adhere very tenaciously to the surface of the shell of the seed. The remaining 5 per cent. consists in the main of Egyptian cotton-seed, which is devoid of these short fibres, and hence is commonly termed 'bald' seed.

As far back as the year 1783 the Royal Society of Arts offered its gold medal and a premium to any one who would produce a reasonable quantity of oil from cotton-seed, it being realised even then that the seed contained a valuable oil, and that the residue of the seed, after extraction of the oil, constituted an excellent food for cattle. The offer was renewed for six consecutive years, but no one qualified for the medal or the premium, and it was only during the first two decades of the nineteenth century that any attempt was made, on a practical scale, to extract oil from the cotton-seed. At first the progress of this industry was slow. The literally phenomenal expansion of the manufacture of cotton-seed oil and feeding-cake in the United States dates from about 1860 to 1870. Up to that period enormous heaps of rotting cotton-seed were familiar sights in the neighbourhood of the ginneries, and legislation had to be introduced, on sanitary grounds, to compel the planter to burn, or otherwise dispose of, the cotton-seed resulting from the ginning of the seed-cotton.

In 1860 there were seven cotton-seed-oil mills in the United States, and in 1870 there were twenty-six. By 1910 the number had increased to eight hundred and ten. In 1874 about 35,000 tons of cotton-seed were crushed in the United States, representing about 5 per cent. of that year's crop; in 1910 the quantity crushed was over 4,000,000 tons, representing about 80 per cent. of the seed produced in that year. During the years 1911 to 1915 the proportion of cotton-seed crushed for oil and cake in the United States was nearly 90 per cent. of that grown, and the value of the cotton-seed products of the cotton states to-day is said to be greater than that of their combined crops of wheat, oats, and hay.

During the last five years between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 tons of cotton-seed were produced per annum in the United States, and the value of the cotton-seed crop in 1917 was between £60,000,000 and £70,000,000.

The discoveries made during the past fifty years relating to the thousand and one uses to which the products of the cotton-seed can be put, and the employment of these products and of the by-products resulting from the milling of cotton-seed in hundreds of industries to-day, were recently referred to by Mr J. W. Pearson, chairman of the British Oil and Cake Mills, Limited, as constituting one of the most marvellous romances of commercial history.

In addition to some 900,000 tons of oil and about 2,000,000 tons of cattle feeding-cake now yielded by an average cotton-seed crop in the United States, there are furnished about 2,100,000 tons, consisting of the shell of the seed, on the outer surface of which are found the short residual fibres remaining after the longer fibres required for the spinning of cotton goods have been removed by appropriate machinery.

The proportion by weight of the shell of the seed to the residual cotton fibres is roughly as 3 is to 1, so that about 525,000 tons, or something over 10 per cent., of the original weight of the ginned cotton-seed in the United States (that is, the seed from which fibres long enough for spinning have been gathered) consists of these short residual cotton fibres, which, until some six years ago, constituted the only portion of the cotton-seed that was not properly turned to account.

Scientific men have for many years recognised that these short cotton fibres could be very usefully employed in many industries, but the difficulty was to separate them from the shell of the seed in which they grow. It is stated that hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent by firms and individuals on both sides of the Atlantic in the vain endeavour to construct a machine for recovering the short fibres in a commercially utilisable condition, and the credit for solving this difficult problem must be given to British enterprise, because the first commercially successful machine was worked out by a British engineer. The first plant of machinery for recovering these fibres on a commercial scale was installed in Europe by British capital and initiative, and in 1913 a factory was erected in the United States, entirely by private British enterprise and with British capital, which furnished, up to the outbreak of war, over 2000 tons of these residual fibres to papermakers in Great Britain, and has since supplied upwards of 6000 tons to the Du Pont de Nemours Powder Company of America for the manufacture of explosives.

The dislocation of shipping conditions brought about by the war made it impossible commercially to develop this industry in Great Britain during the last four years, but the material has been subjected to examination by expert analytical chemists and other authorities in England, and to trial on a manufacturing scale. It has been pronounced suitable for the manufacture of nitro-cellulose powders by our Government authorities, and artificial silk has been produced from it by the well-known makers of this article, Messrs Courtaulds, Limited, of Coventry. Mr C. F. Cross, F.R.S., one of the leading authorities on cellulose, has independently examined into its suitability for the production of cellulose acetate, which played so important a part in the construction of aeroplanes during the war, and he states that in this respect these short fibres fulfil the most exacting requirements.

The solution of the problem of detaching the residual fibres from the shell of the cotton-seed has turned a waste product into a cheap raw material for many industries in which the valuable long-staple cotton fibres were hitherto employed, thus achieving a twofold economic advantage—the utilisation of a waste product and the liberation of long-fibred cotton for the purpose for which it is becoming needed with increasing urgency—that is, the maintenance of Lancashire's spinning industry, the manufactured products of which amount in value to about £110,000,000 per annum, or, roughly, one-fifth of the value of our total exports.

The indirect benefits attending the utilisation of these residual fibres are, however, as great as, if not perhaps greater than, the direct benefits.

India is generally considered to be the second largest cotton-producing country in the world, with an annual cotton-crop of some 4,000,000 bales, and a concomitant production of some 2,000,000 tons of cotton-seed. For several reasons (of which space forbids an exposition) India has not hitherto grown the types of cotton needed by Lancashire in anything like the measure required, and for many years our British spinning industry has been dependent for nearly 80 per cent. of its raw material upon the United States, a condition of affairs at the best unsound, but now a grave menace to the life of the industry, owing to the fact that of recent years the United States have been spinning increasing quantities of their cotton in their own mills. While the *quantity* of cotton produced in the United States during the past ten years has fluctuated between 12,000,000 and 16,000,000 bales (of which Lancashire needs from 3,000,000 to 3,500,000), the proportion absorbed by American spinning-mills has risen during the last fifteen years (according to the recently published report of the Indian Cotton Committee appointed in October 1917) from about 33 per cent. (about which figure it had stood for some forty years) to nearly 60 per cent.

Professor John A. Todd, the well-known authority on cotton economics, tells us that the world's requirements call for a progressive increase of 1,000,000 bales of cotton per annum, which will be cumulative, and he gives cogent reasons for the view that 'it is to India that we must turn as the only hope for relief in the way and to the extent which the cotton industry requires so urgently.' It is, therefore, gratifying to note that the report just referred to gives evidence that during the last few years the cultivation of

the American type of cotton in India has made good progress. But if the 1,000,000 extra bales so urgently required are produced, there will likewise be produced some 500,000 extra tons of cotton-seed. Let us suppose that this is done in India. There is at present no scientific cotton-seed milling industry in that country, and large quantities of Indian cotton-seed are exported to British crushing-mills. Now, the Indian cotton-seed retains a goodly quantity of residual fibres. The presence of these fibres not only renders the seed a bad traveller, but is a serious disadvantage in the manufacture of oil and feeding-cake on the British system; hence such seed fetches a relatively low price.

The advent of these new seed-defibrating machines, however, puts a different complexion upon matters. By being defibrated in India before shipment, the seed would be improved from all points of view. It would occupy less space on board ship, thus saving expense in freight (ocean freight being charged according to volume occupied); the risk of fire from 'heating' would be reduced to a minimum, thus commanding lower insurance rates; and the defibrated seed would sell in British markets at a considerably higher price, thus yielding the shipper a larger profit. But this is not the end of the benefits. The material removed in improving the seed is itself a merchantable commodity, the value of which in the manufacture of high-grade papers, explosives, &c. has already been proved and established, and India is notoriously short of such papermaking material. The aggregate additional net revenue derivable from these sources is stated to amount, in the case of certain varieties of cotton-seed, to as much as one-tenth of the value realised for the cotton concomitantly produced, which, in so highly competitive a market as that for cotton, is exceedingly important.

The general subject of the industrial value of these short cotton fibres was dealt with in a lecture recently given by Mr Ed. C. de Segundo, A.M.Inst.C.E., at the Royal Society of Arts. At the conclusion of the lecture one of his cotton-seed defibrating machines was shown in operation, removing from cotton-seed the residual fibres not economically recoverable by any saw-linting mechanism; and in the course of an interesting discussion which ensued, Professor Todd drew attention to the importance of the successful industrial utilisation of these residual fibres. He pointed out that 'there were many countries in the world in which cotton could satisfactorily be grown; but the question was whether it could be made to pay in competition with other crops. One of the factors in that question was the by-products that could be realised, and he thought the by-products obtained from cotton by means of the lecturer's machine might just turn the scale in many cases in favour of cotton. The importance of these by-products could hardly be exaggerated. The use of fibrous cellulose for artificial silkmaking was one of the great possibilities of the future. There was practically no limit to the possibilities of artificial silk, and the lecturer had produced an excellent raw material.'

The commercial development of this industry in Great Britain has been delayed owing to the war, but arrangements are now in progress for the establishment of a cotton-seed defibrating plant on a large scale at a seed-crushing mill in England. The engineer and manager of this mill estimates that an additional revenue of at least £2, 10s. per ton of seed crushed can be earned by treating certain of the woolly varieties of cotton-seed in this machine prior to crushing them for oil and feeding-cake.

During four and a half years of war the resources of science and industry were applied to the destruction of human life and property on a scale and in a manner unparalleled in the history of civilisation. It will be years, perhaps generations, before humanity recovers from this cosmic upheaval, during which a gigantic inflation of credit has been unavoidably caused. Recovery can be effected only by increased production and by scrupulous attention to efficiency and economy in all departments of trade and industry. The provision of a cheap raw material, by turning to account these hitherto neglected residual cotton fibres, is, therefore, a factor in imperial economics which we cannot afford to neglect.

THE VILLAGE WAR-MEMORIAL.

BEYOND the sound of city's rush and roar,
A little hamlet led its peaceful life:
Its lusty manhood roamed its meadows o'er
In happy ignorance of the coming strife.

Where are they now, those hardy sons of toil,
Who left their homesteads for their country's sake?
Sleeping awhile beneath a foreign soil,
Until the Great Reveille sounds 'Awake!'

No more shall they their fruitful acres plough,
Or tend the lush, green pastures o' the vale;
No more at eve frequent 'The Barley Mow'
For cheery gossip o'er a glass of ale.

Their teeming flocks they ne'er again will fold,
That grazed at will upon the breezy hills;
Or call the cattle from the trackless wold,
To stall them safe from winter's cruel chills.

Nothing *seems* changed. There stands the village green,
Whereon in boyhood they were wont to play;
The little church still nestles in the dene
Where in their tender years they learned to pray.

And yet, beside the parting of the ways,
A simple cross of stone now rears its head,
Crowned by the sculptor with immortal bays,
In honour of the noble spirits fled.

And oft, when day is fading into night,
The sorrowing peasants to the shrine repair,
And, resting in the gloaming's mellow light,
For those they've lost send up a silent prayer.

JAMES T. JOHNSTON.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE KEEPER OF THE JEWEL-HOUSE.

By Major-General Sir GEORGE YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., C.B.

I.

THE Keeper of the Jewel-House holds one of the oldest offices under the Crown. In very ancient days, when the regal emblems were few in number and of no great value, the king generally carried them about amongst his other impedimenta when he moved from place to place. Moreover, this was necessary, as the king constantly wore his crown and bore his sceptre, in order that his regal dignity might at all times be impressed on the people.

Even in battle the king wore his crown; he led his troops in person, and the crown round his helmet shone from afar to encourage his followers and throw dismay into the ranks of his enemies. For not only would the king be there, but around him, assuredly, would be gathered his doughtiest warriors. (At the battle of Agincourt Henry V. wore his crown, and in single combat with the Duc d'Alençon a portion of it was chipped off. We may also recall that at the battle of Bosworth Richard III. had his crown on, and retained it till at last he fell, overwhelmed by his enemies. Secreted in a hawthorn-bush, it was there found by the victor, who was crowned on the battlefield as Henry VII. That was probably the last occasion on which an English king wore his crown in battle.)

As the centuries succeeded each other the regalia increased in value and quantity, so that it became inconvenient and unsafe for the king always to carry his treasure with him. Thus it came about that the monarch looked for some safe place where the crown-jewels might be stored when not in use. Edward the Confessor, who had great faith in the sanctity and the safety of the Church, entrusted the guardianship of the regalia to the abbot and monks of Westminster Abbey. This was in or about the year 1042. Thus the abbot of Westminster became the first custodian of the jewels, and the treasure-house at Westminster, which still exists, the first jewel-house.

There the regalia remained for the most part, for nearly two centuries, through the reigns of many monarchs. Soon after Henry III. came to the throne, however, an unhappy occurrence took place. Under the shadow of its sanctity, Westminster Abbey had proved safe enough from outside marauders, but amongst the monks was one who, inured to the phantom guard, achieved the simple task of unlocking the door and removing some of the king's treasure. These items he sold, but fortunately he was caught before he had taken any of the older and more valuable portions of the regalia.

Henry III., who was a practical monarch, came to the conclusion after this experience that perhaps in this sinful world a fortress guarded by soldiers was a safer place in which to store the regal emblems than the holiest church. He therefore removed the treasure to the Tower of London, the strongest fortress in England, heavily armed and guarded. He also appointed the first official Keeper of the Regalia in 1216, a little more than seven hundred years ago. The name of this first Keeper has not been left on record, but a few years later, in 1230, we find that the Bishop of Carlisle held the office. It is not, however, likely that the bishop sat in the Tower and kept personal watch and ward over the crown and the jewels. More probably, as was the custom in those days, he drew the emoluments and delegated an assistant-keeper to do the watching for him. We know, for instance, that Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, who was Keeper of the Regalia in the reign of Henry VIII., held other and higher offices at the same time. The Marquis of Winchester, too, who as Keeper handed the crown-jewels to the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, held another appointment simultaneously.

II.

When the regalia first came to the Tower of London they were probably placed in the White Tower, that being the central keep and the strongest place. And the most likely spot in the White Tower seems to be the little chamber which opens off the crypt of St John's Chapel, a chamber which was until lately erroneously marked 'Sir Walter Raleigh's Cell.' Here the treasure would have the double safeguard of sanctuary and soldiery.

But as time went on and the regalia further increased in number and quality, a special Jewel-House was built outside the White Tower, adjacent to its south face. This Jewel-House is

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shown in the plan of the Tower made in 1597 during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. But though there was a Jewel-House and a Keeper of the Regalia, the crown and the other jewels frequently made their appearance outside the Tower, and sometimes under rather distressing circumstances. Even Henry III., who first placed them there, towards the end of his reign took crown and jewels to France, and there, with the assistance of another sovereign, Margaret, Queen of France, pawned them to a syndicate of French merchants. They were, however, redeemed and brought back to England for the coronation of Edward I.

In the reign of Edward III. the crown-jewels were pawned to some merchants in Flanders, to meet the expenses of a prolonged war. Richard II. again pawned them to a merchant of London, named John Philipot, for £10,000; whilst Henry V. similarly pledged them to the Mayor and Corporation of London for 10,000 marks. Henry VI., in his turn, pawned the regalia on several occasions. Possibly it was these experiences of the misty past which caused a law to be enacted that the King of England may not take his crown out of England. That law is still in force, so that when George V. went to the East to be crowned Emperor of India, it was found that the Coronation crown could not go with His Majesty. A new crown had, therefore, to be made, which may be seen amongst others in the Jewel-House at the Tower of London.

Thus, though the jewels went through strange adventures, they returned safely to the Keeper, and when James I., in his own handwriting, made out the list of the royal treasure, it was both rich and numerous. But, alas! only a few years later the old and priceless regalia came to an untimely end. Charles I. made deep inroads on it, taking most of the plate in order that it might be melted down to meet the costs of the war he was waging against the Parliamentary forces. After that unhappy monarch had met his doom at Whitehall, all crowns and other emblems of royalty were ordered by Parliament to be broken up and totally destroyed. This order was carried out literally. Few items escaped, but amongst these were the Black Prince's ruby, now in the state-crown of George V.; some pearl ear-rings belonging to Queen Elizabeth, which are also in the same crown; and Queen Elizabeth's gold salt-cellar. Amongst the priceless treasures thus wantonly destroyed was King Alfred the Great's crown, made of gold wire and set with jewels.

On the Restoration a completely new set of royal emblems had to be made for Charles II., and these form the nucleus of the crown-jewels of the present day.

III.

Under the Commonwealth, though there were now no jewels to guard, Sir Henry Mildmay seems to have retained the office of Keeper of the Regalia, or, as he was then styled, the Master and Treasurer of the Jewel-House. During some reigns this officer was called the Keeper of the Regalia or the Keeper of the Crown-Jewels, and again in others, as at the present time, the Keeper of the Jewel-House.

The Keeper of the Jewel-House is in a curious, perhaps unique, position in that by ancient warrant 'he hath no superior officer.' He takes no orders from anybody except from the king personally, or those conveyed to him from the king through the Lord Chamberlain. And this right is confirmed to him to this day in that his warrant of appointment reads that all the rights and privileges of his office as enjoyed by his predecessors are to be his. The origin of this distinction is not difficult to trace, for in old and less regular days without this safeguard it would have been open to any officer superior in rank to the Keeper to order him to hand over all, or portions of, the regalia. Even at the present day, but for this safeguard, a military officer, who, under pain of death, has to obey the orders of those senior to him in the army, might find himself in a precarious position—between the devil and the deep sea, so to speak.

The precedence of the Keeper of the Jewel-House was laid down in the days of Charles I. He was to have precedence after privy councillors and before all judges, and as that position has never been abrogated, whilst all warrants to this day confer the privileges held by predecessors, that is still his right. The robes of the Keeper are like those of a baron, but with a crown embroidered on the left shoulder. In ancient days he ranked as a baron and had a seat at the barons' table at the coronation of a king. He was also frequently made a privy councillor, and if not already of higher rank, was made a knight-bachelor, and ranked senior to all the knights-bachelor of England.

Amongst the Keeper's emoluments and perquisites in early days were many curious items. Though his regular salary was only fifty pounds a year, the deficit was bountifully made up. Thus, he had apartments set aside for him in all the king's palaces as well as at the Tower of London. He was entitled to a table of fourteen double dishes per diem served from the king's kitchen, with wines, beers, &c., as seemed good to him. Out of the king's gift-money at the New Year the Keeper of the Regalia received £300. He calculated also on getting another £300 in presents from foreign ambassadors. The king's goldsmiths gave the Keeper twenty pounds in gold every time he signed a bill, doubtless as a gentle suggestion that he should not examine it too carefully. One way and another this fortunate officer could count on an annual income, pay and perquisites combined, of about £6500 of our money.

The Keeper of the Regalia in the days of the

Tudors had his responsibility for the king's crown curiously emphasised. He was, in fact, never allowed to let it out of his sight—from the moment it left the strong guard of the Tower till it returned again—when it was taken out for the king to wear on State occasions, such as the opening of Parliament. The orders went so far as to enjoin that the Keeper should with his own hands place the crown on the king's head, and after the occasion should himself take it off and convey it to the Tower. Even during the whole time the king was wearing the crown the Keeper was ordered not to let it out of his sight; and to enable him to perform this duty he followed the king into the House of Lords, and, together with Black Rod, stood at a corner of the Woolsack during the ceremony. That, never having been abrogated, is still the duty of the Keeper of the Jewel-House. Sir Gilbert Talbot in 1680 made a complaint that, as he naturally arrived late, having to follow the king, certain unmannerly persons, members of the House of Commons and the like, had pushed their way into his place at the corner of the Woolsack, and he bitterly decried this abuse of his privilege.

IV.

Evidently in the easy-going days of Charles II. the strict guard on the Jewel-House, then removed to the Martin Tower,* was greatly relaxed, for when Colonel Blood made his bold attempt to steal the crown the sole custodian was the assistant-keeper, an old man over seventy years of age, named Talbot Edwards. The Keeper himself, the same Sir Gilbert Talbot above mentioned, preferred to live at the Palace at Whitehall.

Besides the Bishop of Carlisle, the Earl of Essex, and the Marquis of Winchester, many celebrated persons have been Keepers of the Jewel-House. Amongst these may be mentioned the Honourable James Brudenell in 1716; Charles Townshend, Lord Lynn, in 1730; William Neville, Lord Abergavenny, in 1739; John Campbell, Lord Glenorchie, in 1745; Sir Richard Lyttleton in 1756; and Henry Vane, Earl of Darlington, 1763–82. On the death of Lord Darlington the office was for some years unfilled, the Lord Chamberlain assuming the duties, and doubtless taking the salary in addition to his own.

The office was re-established, however, early in the nineteenth century in the person of Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Wyndham, who rode in the historic charge of the Scots Greys at the battle of Waterloo, and who, it is said, appears in Lady Butler's famous picture of that event called 'Scotland for Ever.' Colonel Wyndham's appointment formed a precedent, and since then none but old officers of distinguished war service have been entrusted with the custody of the crown-jewels. There is something appropriate in this sentiment, which had its origin with Queen Victoria, in whose generous heart was always a soft corner for the old soldier. Amongst Colonel Wyndham's successors have been many distinguished officers of high rank, known, by name at any rate, to the present generation—Lieutenant-General George Dean-Pitt, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Biddulph, Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Middleton, General Sir Hugh Gough, Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Low, and General Sir Arthur Wynne.

The Keeper of the Jewel-House is no longer allowed to live where he pleases, nor does he follow the king when he moves from one palace to another. He now has an official residence in the Tower of London, over the Traitor's Gate, known as St Thomas's Tower, thus named after Thomas à Becket. The Jewel-House is in the Wakefield Tower, which stands within a few yards, the two towers being connected by a bridge much resembling the Bridge of Sighs. The duties of the Keeper are not onerous, but they are responsible and exacting. For instance, he must be present in the Tower at certain hours of the day, and he must sleep in the Tower. He may not proceed on leave, even for a few days, without receiving the king's permission, through the Lord Chamberlain. By special arrangement with the Constable of the Tower, the Major of the Tower answers for the Keeper in his absence.

Formerly the office of Keeper of the Jewel-House was bestowed by the king on the Keeper for life. But this has now very rightly been altered, for it became apparent that officers in their extreme old age were not physically capable of sustaining the responsibilities and the duties of the office. The pay of the Keeper has greatly varied throughout the ages. Of old, as we have seen, in pay and perquisites that fortunate individual made about £6500 a year of our money; besides which he had free board and lodging at the king's expense. In 1680, however, Sir Gilbert Talbot made complaint to Charles II. that he had received no pay or perquisites for twenty years, and sent in a bill for what he deemed due to him. Whether this debt was discharged is not related, but probably so (at any rate in part), for Sir Gilbert remained on as Keeper for eleven more years. For the past century the pay of the Keeper has been fixed at £300 per annum, with a free residence in the Tower of London. This he draws in addition to his military pension. The Keeper has nothing to do with the Tower of London beyond residing in it, though he naturally conforms to the rules and regulations which apply to all who live within a fortress. The Tower of London is administered by the Constable, the Lieutenant, and the Major, whilst the troops in garrison, usually a battalion of the Guards, are commanded by their commanding officer; but the Keeper of the Jewel-House, who 'hath no superior officer,' is neither above nor below any of these.

* One of the lesser towers in the Tower of London.

WITHIN TOUCH.

CHAPTER III.

FEW rides can have been wilder than that one of ours. Ere we had well started, the maid, to prevent herself being cast out of the pillion, was forced to work her hands along each side of my belt and grip it in front of me, bracing herself with her arms around my body and her breast against my back, so beset were we by jolts, swerves, and stumbles—stumbles which were harrowing uncertainties—to the tune of the Spaniard's desperately striking hoofs and heavy snorts.

She was admirably brave in such a case. I felt her gasps, but she did not let me hear them, and never thought to speak a word of caution. As for me, I resigned myself to catastrophe at any stride. With jaw hardened and muscles tense, I took it for granted that I was about to be launched headlong.

Yet I rode with a certain caution, for what it was worth. The night was not so thick but I could see something of how the road before me lay. I could make out its dark face, gleaming here and there with wet, twenty yards ahead, and perceive when it began to rise or fall. Cruel though the practice was, I drove on hardest when we were going uphill, and thus could afford to hang a little on a downward slope, where full career must have proved fatal.

In such wise, marvellously escaping an actual fall, we made speed towards the marsh, only twice losing time, when I stopped in doubt of the proper road—but decided aright. Our fortune held so good that we met not a single soldier, nor heard a voice accost us save occasionally a rustic shout, which reviled us from a hedge whither the crier had hastily sprung; and presently we had gone by the lights of Bexile, plain enough, and I was facing a fresh difficulty —how to distinguish the spot where we must enter the marsh, just behind Northeye Chapel, which I could not hope to see from the road.

I ceased to goad our Spaniard, dead-beat by now, and spoke of my quandary when I thought we were near the place. Mistress Ruthven and I strained our eyes, but in vain. Her counsel was to go seaward forthwith, yet I hesitated to do that. There was a path to the chapel and a track beyond to the beach, could I but discover them. Both were long gone out of use, desolate relics (or I had not lain so near), but they were of great import to us, for they avoided the dikes and pools. To venture by any other way in this gloom would be to struggle through water and mud at every second pace, and possibly to drown. I pricked on a little, until I was sure I had come far enough, but there was no trace of path. So I drew rein and dismounted.

'We must grope for it, mistress,' I said, holding up my hands to her, 'and we were safer to trust our feet.'

She put her hands on my shoulders and came down in my arms, and the holding of her light body for a second, with her face so close to mine that I could see her smile and the brightness of her eyes, was a talisman that drove all annoyance from me. I led the staggering horse off the road and let him go, after loosing his band, hoping that he would find a kind master, if not claimed by the post-house, for he had served us very well; and then I touched her wrist.

'Will you hold my hand?' I said. 'You are like to need it.'

'And you to need mine,' she said with a little laugh, peering before her; 'for all equally may stumble here. I hope I shall have strength to hold you up.' With a turn her palm came warmly into mine (we were both gloveless), and her fingers clung. 'Is this mud or a rush-bed?' she asked, making a careful step.

We moved on for perhaps a hundred paces; then the gleam of water stopped us. It was a dike. I might have jumped, but there was no such remedy for her.

'To the right or the left?' she queried.

I led her to the left for another hundred paces, only to be stopped by a second dike at right angles to the first.

'So it should have been the right,' she said, still cheerily. 'Come, we must hasten;' and, gripping my hand tighter, she took me at a run back over the firm ground. 'How long will the hoy wait?' she panted after a while.

Before I could reply she drove against me, crying out warningly, and we were sinking into thin mud, dropping as if through water. A terrible fear that our heads would follow our legs under flashed through me as I clutched her by the waist; and, indeed, not until the slime was pouring over the tops of my jack-boots did I feel a solider footing beneath. I was able to maintain my balance, and, lifting her clear, I got us both to firm ground again; but the outcome of the misadventure was that her lightness of spirit was all gone, not because she stood soaked and shoeless, but because we seemed cut off from the sea. I believed I heard a sob from her.

'Nay, nay, we are not beat yet,' I said whilst pulling off and emptying my boots. 'Let us go straight for the sea. I will carry you over the dikes.'

'Can you?' she asked, hope reviving in her voice.

'Yes; I saw this afternoon that the water was not above three feet deep in any of them, and the beds looked not too soft to bear one.'

I would have picked her up there and then and carried her all the way to save her feet, but she forbade me, saying she would take no hurt of the grass. We climbed side by side down to the water-level of the first dike, and I lowered myself into it, and found that I stood quite steady when about waist-deep. Taking her upon my shoulder, I made a big stride and lodged her safe against the other bank, where she must needs pause and bid me clasp her hand to help myself up, which I did readily, though, being afraid to bear on so slight a thing, I had greater trouble to extricate myself than I should have had without her aid.

For a score of minutes, in which we crossed three more dikes, we seemed to make good progress. Then a swamp turned us from our true course, and an accident followed, for the bed of the next dike we essayed proved treacherous, failing me at the very time I was lifting her. We struck the water with a great splash and dived completely under; and I pity her to this hour in thinking what her sensations must have been as she fell from the grayness about her into the blackness which smothered her with an icy shock. My own feelings were bad enough, for I knew not what quagmire might be under us. Howbeit, I gained my legs momentarily, clasping her with one arm, and made a swirling leap at the farther bank, clutching a bunch of rushes thereon before I could fall again, and scrambling forth.

I put her on her feet, yet still held her anxiously.

'Can you forgive my blundering?' I asked.

'What need to ask forgiveness of an accident?' she said, looking up at me. 'And should I not forgive you anything, who have saved my life? Oh! I am the one that must beg forgiveness; I have brought you to a sorry pass. I believe we are lost. I believe we shall never find the hoy. Oh, you have thrown away your life for me—I know it! And I, what shall I do? I dare not go back!'

Her voice rose and then failed her, and she began to cry bitterly. I strove hard to speak her some comfort, and presently she took my arm gently from about her and sought my hand, and, heavy with water and heavy in heart, we fared on again.

The mist had now increased, and several times we doubted that we were keeping straight for the sea, and stopped to listen for the sound of its breaking, which was fallen so gentle as scarcely to be heard, and no great guide, since it stretched so far on either hand. And for a while I was depressed with a strange dread—a dread that we should come upon Leyburn's body. I suppose that my overwrought state made me ill-inclined to see it, for it would really have been of good use, telling me of our whereabouts.

An hour must have passed since our last ducking, when suddenly she shook my hand in excitement. 'Look!' she said, pointing, with her finger close to my face. 'A house.'

I stared, and saw the mist dark and solid a little to one side of us, and my heart bounded for joy.

'A house,' she repeated.

'Ay,' I said, 'and, by God's grace, His House. It is Northeye Chapel, that we have so long sought.'

I drew her forward eagerly, blessing her eyes over and over again as we went, and quickly we were on the path.

It was stony beneath its grass, and without more hesitation I picked her up, and made seaward with running strides. But I had somewhat overrated my strength, I found. The prolonged sufferings of my mind must have told upon me, and several times I was forced to stand and recover breath, feeling my legs very weak and a strange pulsing all over me. And it was during one of these halts that we heard distinctly a man's voice give a shout far behind us.

'Ah!' she cried in my ear, and clung hard to me. 'What does it mean?'

'I know not,' I said; nor did we ever learn. But it gave us a bad fright and drove me to frantic efforts.

Some fifty yards from the white mounds of pebbles which marked the beginning of the beach, and were just to be seen at the distance, I was exhausted, and set her down, listening the while for a repetition of the shout. It did not come.

But presently, as we walked on, my foot struck some shingle, making a sharply rattling cascade—and the sound, it seemed, betrayed us to an ambush. There was a hoarse cough at our very feet; forms which had been lying unperceived scrambled to rise; the shingle all about us poured and crashed beneath scampering steps.

Mistress Ruthven screamed loudly and without disguise, and small blame to her. I heard my own voice as I whipped out the snaphaunce, which I had reloaded lately from some dry powder that was in my tinder-box, and then I changed my tone to an exclamation of relief.

'Sheep,' I said.

She sighed deeply and hung upon my arm, her head fallen against me.

'Sheep?' she said, speaking very low. 'I thought it was death. But soon it will be death, will it not? We cannot escape. Nay, I cannot move farther.'

'The hoy,' I said, trying to encourage her.

She shook her head mutely, hopelessly.

Somehow I found strength to pick her up again, and to carry her across the shingle almost to the water's edge. There I lowered her down until she lay, and I dropped beside her, as despairing as she, for there was no sight of boat or man, no sound of oar or voice.

The hoy had gone. What chance of safety now for me—for her? None! We were finished

with life, we two drenched, exhausted figures, sunken down here—finished, except for a few days or hours of weary evasion.

But ere long I sat up; I must think. The hoy had gone; let all thoughts of it go too. What of the future? Was it worth pondering upon? Should I rouse myself to plan, or yield to the apathy I felt settling upon me? Had I been alone I should have lain down again dully, abandoning consideration as a torment and useless. But this little form by me! Beatrix Mary Ruthven, prone on her face now, with her brow pressed on her arms. Could I let her suffer anguish of disappointment, perchance *die* of grief for want of cheering words, when there might yet be a chance in a thousand of my saving her from our enemies, when Cromwell still might spare her, since the rescue had been no device of her contriving? No, in troth, not if there were any manhood left in me. Dreadful as a turning-back into England was to me, I must paint such in bright colours for her.

I stood up and touched her shoulder. 'Since the hoy is gone, Mistress Ruthven, we must arrange matters anew,' I said cheerfully, 'and keep ourselves secure and comfortable until Telkirk is again ready to help us.'

She raised herself a little—shivering, by the sound of her voice. 'Secure—where?' she said.

I turned and faced inland. 'With one or another of my friends.'

'No!' she cried. 'No, no! I cannot go back. I will not leave the shore. To see soldiers, to see towns—prisons, would send me mad. I will *not* go back. I will lurk in the marsh, if I die of cold and want. Better die peacefully here than in a cell or on scaffold boards.'

I lifted her and held her hand as before, she weeping again piteously.

'Walk,' I said. 'You are cold. And now, listen. What matter a few more weeks in England? Honestly, I think you have little to fear. Even if you be taken, the Protector will give you your life. But you shall not be taken. Presently, when dawn comes, we will find the horse and be once more Captain Leyburn and his prisoner. As such I can safely carry you whither I list for days to come, and that shall be to a certain faithful house where you shall find friends, sisters and a mother, and' (I chafed her hand) 'bright fires to sit by and a bright supper-table too, where the talk shall be of Telkirk hasting back to fetch you away.'

Thus I spoke, and at great length, showing even how she might walk abroad without fear by practising some change of her appearance, until to my delight she began to turn brave, and to be as confident as I made pretence to be, though her confidence, as she let me see, hung upon a condition.

'It is very wonderful,' she said, 'how you have heartened me. There seems scarce any danger in what we have agreed upon, and I shall be of good courage now, so long as you are by me; but otherwise'—— Both her hands gripped mine tightly. 'Oh, go not from me, go not out of call, till we be safe in Holland, or I am lost! Surely lost!'

I enfolded the pleading hands. 'Till Holland,' I said; 'and there I shall not go far from you, unless you bid me.'

She looked at me earnestly as she drew her hands from mine. 'I shall not bid you,' she said. 'You—you shall see me into France an you like. And now,' she added quickly, 'what are we to do till daylight?'

I thought of the shout we had heard, and balanced its suggestion of danger against the cold of the night and our wetness.

'A fire inside the chapel walls,' I answered. 'The sacrilege will be forgiven us in our poor circumstances.'

I felt against my pocket to make sure that I had put back the tinder-box after recharging the snaphaunce—and, just as before it had been her eyes, now it was her ears, for, 'I can hear a boat rowing!' she exclaimed.

I held my breath, held it long, and was on the point of telling her she was deceived, when a faint *oup-oup, oup-oup*, caught me from out at sea. Darting my hands to my mouth, I shouted over the water.

'They have answered,' she cried, whilst my own voice echoed deafeningly in my ears. 'There!'

And this time I heard a weak and distant 'All right—coming.' That calm reply banished doubt. The boat was the hoy's. 'Telkirk,' I said to her.

For the moment following neither she nor I stirred or spoke, nor, I believe, thought it strange we did not. Each guessed the prayer of thanks filling the other's soul. And then we went joyfully to the edge of the sea, and after a little space I called again: 'Captain Telkirk!'

'Ay, ay,' came the old man's voice. 'Is dat Mr Simpson?'

'It is, captain, and well pleased to hear you. I feared to have missed you.'

'Oh, de fog and calm make us very late. But no matter now. Dere vill be vint at dawn.'

The yellow blur of a lantern, which some one had lifted, showed, and soon we could make out the boat's hull and the figures in her.

'Vat—eh? Two?' exclaimed Telkirk.

'Yes, an extra voyager, by your good leave, I said.

'A luty! Is de laty in de same box?'

'Ay,' I answered; 'and a desperate box it has been. You will not refuse her?'

'No, certainly. I dake her vit pleasure. Ah, de vater shallow hereabouts.'

'No need to run aground,' I said; 'we will come out to you.' I turned to my companion and put my arm round the slim waist that necessity had made me so free of. 'For the

last time,' I said, meaning that I should have no occasion after this to carry her.

'Yes,' she answered softly. She let her hand rest on the arm about her, as if she thought I referred only to that. 'Yes,' she said, 'for the last time, of course. I have liked to feel it in danger, but I shall not want it in safety—on our Franceward road.'

Her voice seemed scarce in accord with her words. I paused in the act of stooping to lift her, and my face was scarce an inch from hers. I read her eyes. Then quickly she looked aside, with plain intimation. She had shown me a promise, but I must expect no more as yet.

So I kept my gaze on the boat as I waded out, nor seemed to think of what I bore, yet all the while I was telling myself that, dear as my life had been to me when I carried it, as the saying is, in my hands, it was become infinitely more precious now that I carried it in my arms—which I knew full well I was doing.

THE END.

SPITTING-SNAKES AND SNAKE-POISON.

By H. A. Bryden.

WE in Europe are fortunate indeed in being almost completely free from the terror of those poisonous snakes which in tropical countries are a very real and constant danger to human life. European vipers, of which there are various species, do certainly exist; but they are, compared with their tropical relatives, not very formidable, and deaths from their bite are few and far between. In Asia, Africa, and other continents it is a very different story, and deaths from snake-bite, especially among natives, are to be numbered annually by thousands.

Certain serpents, especially among the African species, have the faculty not only of inflicting a deadly wound by a lightning-stroke of the perforated fangs through which the poison is forced, but of ejecting their poison for some considerable distance in the direction of the person or animal to whose near presence they object. When the eyes, which are nearly always aimed at, are thus struck by the poison emitted, the consequences are painful and even serious. Blindness for several days, often a week or more, is certain to follow; while, if the poison should happen to come in contact with a wound or a cut, and so become mingled with the circulating blood, death even may ensue. Among the species which are known to indulge commonly in this unpleasant habit are the African cobra (*Naja haje*) and the ring-hals of South Africa (*Sepedon hæmachates*). Dogs, oxen, horses, and mules are often temporarily blinded in this manner. In searching for a snake in the wall of a stone kraal, or enclosure, I have seen a native herd struck fairly in the eyes by a thin, practically invisible, stream of poison, which hit him at a distance of at least six feet. The man was in great pain, and suffered for a long time. The eyes were bathed in warm milk-and-water; they became terribly red and inflamed, and the Kaffir did not recover the use of them for more than a week. In severe cases the inflammation may become chronic. One very careful investigator of South African snakes and their poisons, Mr Eugène Marais, has expressed his belief that if sufficient of the fluid reached the eye 'death would inevitably result, since the virus is rapidly and completely absorbed by the conjunctiva.' Usually in the process of ejection the poison is spread over a wide surface, and only a small quantity reaches the eye. Mr Lyster Jameson, in some investigations of spitting-snakes, counted no fewer than one hundred and fifty minute drops on a pane of thick glass, from the spray of one of these discharges. How the discharge is effected is not yet clear, but one theory, possibly a correct one, is that it is done by a sudden blast of air expelled from the *rima glottis*. 'This orifice lies well behind the fangs, and during excitement snakes inflate and deflate their lungs with great vigour.'

The venom is frequently spurted a considerable distance. As already stated, I have been witness to its effect at six feet range; but cases have been observed and recorded where men and dogs have been hit by ejected poison at twice that distance. In such cases the spitting-snake was the ring-hals.

Scientists and naturalists long expressed doubt as to the capacity of serpents for thus ejecting poison. Yet the old Dutch settlers at the Cape, no doubt warned and educated on the subject by Hottentots and Kaffirs, soon laid hold of the fact. They labelled the cobra much more than a hundred years ago *spuug-slang*, 'spitting-snake;' and they have long been aware, too, of the similar capacity of the other serpent that I have mentioned, which they call, from the yellow band round its neck, ring-hals. The ring-hals is also often referred to by them as a *spuug-slang*.

Even now it is not, apparently, recognised by closet naturalists that certain of the Indian snakes display at times this same characteristic of spurting their poison to considerable distances, and thus crippling their opponents, if, as so often happens, they are struck in the eyes. The Indian cobra and Russell's viper have both been observed to display this habit, as has the saw-scaled viper. Moreover, Audubon remarked many years ago that he saw a rattlesnake in a wire cage strike at the bars, and poison was sent several feet towards him. This, however, may

have happened involuntarily, merely from the force of the blow, and not, as in the African and the Indian snakes, by the voluntary action of the enraged reptile.

Notwithstanding the labours and researches of European scientists during the last century, no really reliable antidote or serum has been brought to light in aid of human beings against the deadly effects of a bite from a dangerous poisonous snake. Owing to the fact that most white men who move abroad in districts where these reptiles abound wear thick boots, and very often strong gaiters, they are much less exposed to the danger of snake-bite than natives. Yet there are many instances where Englishmen have lost their lives from this cause. In the year following the Zulu War Colonel Montgomery, while shooting amid some long grass, was bitten by a black mamba through his riding-breeches, just below and behind the knee. In spite of the fact that medical aid was available an hour or so after the infliction of the bite, the unfortunate officer was dead within four hours. The writer once saw a Boer who had been bitten by a puff-adder, and had had the great good fortune to escape with his life. He had been struck in the shoulder at night, the reptile having no doubt crept to him for warmth. Two facts may have contributed to his almost miraculous recovery, one being that it was the cold season, when the venom of serpents is not nearly so plentiful or so virulent as in hot weather. The other was the fact that, providentially, he was struck through his clothing, and in consequence some portion of the virus may have failed to reach the wound. It is worthy of note, also, that the puff-adder's method of injecting its poison is neither so rapid nor so fatally certain as with other snakes—cobras, for instance, which deal a lightning-like stroke, and yet manage to inflict a fatal wound. In the case of the puff-adder there are three distinct motions. First there is the stroke by which the fangs are fixed in the flesh or the skin of the victim. These fangs are extraordinarily curved, and the first action seems to be merely to hold and retain the object of the blow. Instantly the reptile closes its lower jaw, and the fangs are pressed home deep into the flesh. Then follows the pressure upon the poison-gland and the injection of the full, lethal dose into the blood of the victim. There have been a good many instances in South Africa where the persons struck, after being hooked by the curved fangs of the puff-adder, have shaken the deadly creature off before it could inject a full dose of poison, and so escaped a horrible death. This may possibly have happened with the Boer I saw; for it is undoubted that no human being struck and fairly dosed with poison by a puff-adder ever escapes with his life. The Boer in question had a very narrow escape. He was terribly ill for months, and even at the time I saw him the flesh of his shoulder was sloughing badly and was very offensive.

Innumerable professed antidotes against snake-poison have been announced during the last century. In 1878 Professor Pedler, in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Society, made the following vigorous assertion: 'Experiments without number have been made with a view to discover an antidote for snake virus; but although many so-called remedies have been reported, it has been found, on closer examination, that none of them has been of the slightest efficacy in modifying the action of the poison, or in any way tending to save human life.' It is true that Dr Calmette, of the Pasteur Institute, who has long been engaged with the terrible mysteries of snake-poison, has prepared an antidote in the shape of a serum obtained from the blood of immunised animals. This serum seems to form a true antidote, but unfortunately it does not keep, and is, therefore, useless in foreign countries.

In the *Pioneer Mail* for November 1905 an extended account was given of some experiments by Mr Greengrass of the North Arcot District, Madras, who stated that he had arrived at the conclusion that acetic acid, even in the dilute form of ordinary vinegar, is a very reliable and important remedy, and that it can be used effectively even as long as an hour and a half after the insertion of the poison. He recorded twenty-nine cases of cobra-bites which had been cured where this treatment had been followed, only one of his tests being a failure, due to the fact that the vinegar was merely rubbed into the bites, instead of an incision being made so as to apply the acid to the poison which had been injected. Mr Greengrass's instructions are that if the wound is on a limb, which is usually the case, a ligature should be at once applied over the bite, and as much blood as possible squeezed out. The vinegar should then be injected or poured in. It is fourteen years since this announcement was made; but we have not heard that this remedy has been adopted with success in other parts of India, and it is to be feared that snake-poison still remains without a real antidote.

French scientists, who have given much labour and thought to this subject, have made certain important discoveries in recent years, which may yet lead the way to some method of giving immunity against this frightful danger. A few years ago Dr Calmette, who has already been mentioned, stated that he knew of only three mammals which are immune against snake-bite, these being the hedgehog, the pig, and the mongoose. The alleged immunity of the last-named animal was disputed by the late Dr W. T. Blandford in the *Fauna of British India;* but recent research seems to have justified the ancient Indian tradition that this courageous little animal is in truth completely immune against the poison of serpents. In 1909 Dr Billard, a professor at the School of Medicine

at Clermont-Ferrand, was able to announce, after repeated experiments, that the Continental garden dormouse (*Myoxus nitella*) known in France as the *lérot*, a somewhat larger species than our British dormouse, was to be added to the small list of immune animals. Not only has Dr Billard proved that the French dormouse is immune against normally fatal doses of viper-poison, but it seems clear also that its blood, when injected into other animals, acts as a powerful anti-venom. Later investigations of this distinguished professor demonstrate that the badger and the domesticated cat are to be included amongst the mammals which cannot be killed by snake-poison; and Dr Billard hazards the belief that some of the great *Felidæ*, such as lions, tigers, and leopards, may be found to share the same immunity. In some experiments with birds, Dr Billard has found the raven to show remarkable immunity against large doses of viper-poison. A domesticated duck exhibited great resistive powers, and recovered in half-an-hour after being bitten by a large viper. This experiment was tried a second time, when the bird again recovered. Owls, apparently of the tawny species, also displayed no ill effects, except slight local swelling, after being bitten by vipers.

These experiments indicate that scientists are still busily at work endeavouring to find their way to an antidote against the venom of the most deadly creatures in the world. Whether they will eventually succeed future years must determine. At present tropical poisonous snakes remain complete masters of the situation, confident in their terrible power of inflicting death, sudden, horrific, and certain, wherever they fairly plant their blow.

THE VERY CHRISTIAN SEÑOR.

PART II.

IV.

NEXT evening happened a wonderful dinner-party *à deux* in the best—in fact, the only—hotel in the neighbouring town, the 'San Carlos.' Soup, lobster (tinned), salad, stuffed chilli, wild-duck, *dulce* (a sort of conserve), washed down with Lacrima Christi, coffee, and liqueur brandy. The gourmets who partook of this repast were the *Jefe Politico* and Brennan. Brennan paid.

When the coffee and cognac had penetrated the coldest cockles of the heart, Brennan broached the subject of José.

The *Jefe Politico* was interested, even amused. He knew the whole case; also knew Don Ignatio, and apparently had no use for the gentleman.

'Bumpity-bump, señor,' he laughed, 'over rocks and sand. They say he shaved off much of his fat. A good boy, this José, but in great trouble. Ah yes, it will mean ten years or more; unless'——

Brennan filled his guest's glass. 'Unless?' he asked.

'Unless I could arrange,' went on the *Jefe*. 'You see, if you would care to go *confianza* [bail] for this man, I could manage. Lately I have had information of a certain man that the Republic has been wanting badly. I could place my hand on him to-morrow. It would be quite easy for me to say the information came from this protégé of yours. This service would remit his sentence, and, of course, with a *confianza* from you, he would be a free man inside a week. Ah yes, señor, it might be arranged.'

The long and the short of it was that an arrangement was made; and that night, when Brennan counted over his wad of notes, he murmured to himself, 'Yes, there are ways and means—principally means.'

In a week's time, after complicated formalities, José was released. His gratitude knew no bounds. Brennan became his god on earth. Twice he had saved him—and why? The question worried José so much that he asked Brennan right out the reason for his kindness.

'Because,' said Brennan, 'I like you. You are made of the stuff one can trust, and I want one man about me that I can have perfect confidence in. I am going now on a long trek, and I intend to take you with me. I shall be carrying large sums of money and buying cattle all along the Balsas River. I do not want every *ladrone* and bad man in the district to know that I carry money. I am banking on your gratitude not to talk, and to defend—with me—this money. I have been let down and robbed by a *mozo* [guide] before, because he talked. Do you understand?'

'Perfectly, señor,' said José, and no more. No protestations of fidelity, no long-winded speech, for which Brennan liked him the more.

V.

The long trek started, and as the days went by Brennan and José became more than master and man; they became friends. Day after day they would ride across the sierras, dipping down to the scrub-oak belt, then up again to the pines, and higher yet to the barren lands, where the cold caught them at night, so that they would huddle over the camp-fire smoking, one cigarettes, the other a pipe. Then on again, and down perhaps to the hot country plain, where no blankets were needed and the fire was allowed to die. A hard life, but a glorious one! Both hard men, used

to taking the hot or the cold, the rough or the smooth, as it came their way.

Passing through villages José was wonderful. He could get chickens and eggs at absurd prices, because he never seemed to possess much money. As for his master, he would cheerfully lie about him, making him out to be a very poor man roaming to the coast in a vain prospect for copper. Also, José cared for him like a mother. Once Brennan mentioned that in England tea before rising was a delightful luxury. Always after that, and at whatever hour the Englishman was astir, José was before him with a tin mug of tea, or, failing that, of chocolate.

Brennan looked into the half-tamed mind and found much good. This man who could neither read nor write, whose value of life and death was placed on so low a plane, whose ideas of personal property were so hazy that all property not actually guarded belonged to him—this man had a code of his own. And the code seemed to be that the master to whom he owed his freedom must be served to the utmost ounce of his ability; Brennan must never want; he should never have to ask for a thing twice. Everything must be achieved for him, if it meant pulling down mountains in the achievement.

One day José asked his master if he was anxious to return home to England.

'Yes, some day,' said Brennan. 'Some day in the vague to-morrow I should like to go back to see it all again, if only to sit on a good horse and ride a good line behind a good pack of hounds. But I'm content here with free, open-air life, and I don't want to change it for a long while yet. But supposing I made quite a bit of money, then I should feel it my duty to go back, and back I'd go.'

This last worried José not a little, and deep down in his Indian heart he hoped fervently that Brennan never would make that 'bit of money,' which would break up their friendship for ever.

VI.

Months went by, and Brennan amicably severed his connection with the big cattle company, and started in to deal on his own. José remained with him; they were inseparable.

Brennan was making his way rapidly—each month saw an improvement in his balance sheet—until at last he told José that if he did well on his next big deal he would leave Mexico and go home. José's spirits fell to zero. But Brennan never noticed it—he was busy on his last big deal. He had bought two thousand head of cattle up the Santiago River at an absurdly low price. He knew he could sell again to his old company at nearly double, and all parties pleased. Certainly he had to get them delivered and driven through a bad bit of country. He could afford to lose a few, but he would superintend the drive himself.

The first part of the drive was bad—bad as it could be; but they managed it with practically no loss in spite of the fact that the cattle were wild. They then got into more open country, not so hilly, with no timber. The cattle had settled down to a steady six to eight miles a day, grazing when possible, and even staying, if the grass was exceptional, from twenty-four to forty-eight hours in one spot. The cattle looked well, and Brennan saw his trip home within appreciable distance. And then the blow fell.

At the end of a grassless day's trek they came on a long *barranca*, or gully, with sides like the sides of a house, running east and west. Here Brennan decided to camp. It needed only two men to hold the cattle—one at the opening, and the other down the *barranca*. There was no getting up the sides, so two men at a time on two-hour shifts could hold the herd through the night. The cattle seemed quiet, but Brennan took a watch. About ten o'clock he turned in. All was well. José was to come on an hour or so before dawn, and take up his beat down the *barranca*. The camp was at the other end, at the opening.

José went on shift, stumbling down the dried water-course, which here and there held small pools fed by springs. He watered his pony, then mounted and relieved the watching *vaquero*.

José took a long sniff. The air was dead-still and very hot. He lit a cigarette. After the match went out it seemed oppressively dark. Most of the cattle had been lying down when José came on watch, but now by the sounds in the darkness they were rising and moving with that shuffling, vague meandering of restless cattle. José rode slowly up and down from one *barranca* wall to the other, crooning one of those interminable songs common to the muleteer and the *vaquero* of Mexico: a song full of love, adventure, hate, and life and death—the words most disturbing, but the tune most soothing.

Now and then he would stop in his singing and listen. There would be a quick scramble of hoofs over the stony ground, a clash of horns, and out of the darkness a disconcerted bellow. Then more trampling and nervous snuffling. 'Storm-herding,' thought José as he glanced at the sky above. Not a star was to be seen, and occasionally he felt chill little eddies of draught come dancing down the *barranca*, making the dry leaves on the ground rustle and swirl. A faint gray light suffused the east. José pulled his woollen blanket closer round him, and sat still on his pony, thinking. The storm-herding that so often leads up to a stampede, and yet not always. The storm would come with the dawn, and break its fury overhead. The cattle would get their tails towards the wind and stand like old work-oxen once the storm broke. But it was now, during this waiting for the unknown, that danger was near. Such a little might start them. The sudden barking of a dog, and off they would go, and nothing would

stop them till they galloped their hoofs to the bone. It would be best, perhaps, to loosen them up; to ride away, calling them to follow, starting the day's drive at once; get them loosened and doing a definite thing; then, when the storm broke, to hang up and wait till it was over.

José went on with his song. Suddenly he made up his mind not to loosen them up, but to chance things, and wait for the storm.

VII.

It was growing lighter. Gray forms would loom up before him, stand for a moment stiff-legged, then wheel sharply and crowd back into the herd. Then, before José realised it, the cattle began to 'mill.' Those on the outside started to trot, shambling along, heads up, trying all they knew to press into the centre, all moving the same way, the whole herd like an enormous horizontal fly-wheel, circling faster and faster. Soon it would break at one point and pour away in a wedge which nothing could stop. José jammed his pony up to the herd, trying to beat against the stream, to loosen out a few head down the *barranca*, to break them up before the real panic seized them. His rope laboured like a flail over the tossing heads; his curses and shouts rang out.

Brennan tumbled out of his tent just in time to see them break, to see his great bunch of cattle burst like a dam and fill the *barranca* from wall to wall with a chaos of galloping hoofs, with a dim shape but twenty yards in front—José riding in the half-light, riding for his life with all the odds against him. Brennan knew the end of it. The *barranca* was cross-cut a mile farther on by a dry water-course, and to enter it meant a drop of ten or fifteen feet. A right-angle turn to the left and the trail sloped down to the river-bed, easy driving with cattle going slow and well strung out; but as they were now, at the pace they were going, there could be no turning. They would flow over that drop like water over a fall. Brennan knew this road, José did not; and José was in front, galloping, galloping, as hard as Heaven would let him, to certain death. There was nothing to do but wait, no possible way of reaching him, no possible chance of letting him know he must swing to the left. It was misty down there—he would never see the drop.

But José did see it—when only a few yards off. He heaved himself back in the saddle in an endeavour to stop the pony. Stopping, however, meant being beaten to death by the flying crazed hoofs behind. The pony sat on his hocks and slid on and on, his impetus gradually giving way to the friction of his four hoofs. Suddenly, with a stagger, he dropped like a plummet down on the boulders below, to lie, an inert mass, with José pinned by the leg under him. Then the cattle flowed over them like a cascade into the shambles beneath.

VIII.

Brennan was kept hard at work that morning. José was practically dug out from a tangle of dead and dying steers. He was quite unconscious, and was carried in a blanket slung between two horses to the nearest railroad depot, then shipped to a hospital in Guadalajara. The injured cattle had to be destroyed; great skinning-work had to be done, a few dollars saved on the hides. Then, having shipped the uninjured beasts, Brennan ran down to Guadalajara to see José.

He saw the poor *vaquero*, also heard his wild, delirious ravings, and learnt much from them.

'Will he live?' he asked the doctor.

'Ah, certainly he will live,' answered the kindly Mexican medico who had the case in hand. 'He is much broken up, and has concussion, but a wonderful constitution. He will be fit for work in a few months. Luckily he fell under the bank, or he would have been more crushed. He worries a lot about you, and yet he does not wish to see you. In his delirium you appear to be his friend, and yet he fears you. I do not understand.'

'I think I do,' said Brennan.

Brennan had to get back to Mexico City, but daily there he received a bulletin with regard to José. At last a letter arrived to say that José was 'conscious and doing well;' there was absolutely no fear for him. Only, he seemed very worried over something, and appeared to dread a meeting with his master; it was quite inexplicable. Also, worry kept him from eating.

Whereupon Brennan sat down in the British club and wrote the following letter to José:

'*AMIGO* [FRIEND],—Don't worry. No cattleman with your knowledge and experience would have let the cattle go that night. I realised that, and it worried me; I thought you had gone mad. I saw you, heard you, when you were delirious, and grasped your point of view. You thought that if these cattle were destroyed, if I lost money over them, it would prevent me from going to England. That (my going to England, I mean) seemed the end of our friendship, and on that dark, stormy morning you decided to break me to keep me. All this I have learned from your raving. It was wrong of you, but *you* all over; it was psychologically (a word you won't understand) correct. But, you silly one, didn't you understand I was coming back to Mexico? No! you didn't. Well, let this relieve you. I had the cattle insured, and although I have not made as much as I might, I have made enough to go home on. I shall be back in three months, when I want you to manage a ranch I am buying. José, stupid one! I forgive you; but in the next storm-herding, loosen them out, and soothe them with a song, as your mother taught you. I send some dollars for you and for that same mother.—Your *amigo* and master.'

José heard the letter read, and at the close sighed a great sigh, and smiled at the old doctor. 'Señor doctor,' said he, 'now I have no more worries. My master understands. But, then, I always said he was very Christian.' After a pause, during which he snuggled down comfortably, 'Doctor,' the patient went on, 'I do not know how it is, but I feel suddenly terribly hungry.'

THE END.

VEGETABLES AS CURATIVE AGENTS.

NATURE, that stern mistress who metes out justice so impartially, exacts a full measure of payment from those who transgress her laws, but at the same time extends a gracious helping hand to all who endeavour to live in harmony with her.

This is a truism especially applicable to diseased conditions of the human body. Nature provides, in the form of vegetables, remedies which are easily grown and which are essential to the maintenance of health, as well as being valuable allies in the fight against disease.

In this connection that true disciple of nature, the late Count Tolstoi, is said to have remarked as follows, pointing to his vegetable-garden: 'There is my medicine-chest. It contains all the remedies that a man requires. The only thing necessary is to know what to eat for the ailment that troubles you, and once you know that, you will never hear the bells of your doctor's droshky outside your door.'

Ill-health may be caused by the lack of certain organic salts which are supplied by vegetables, or it may be caused by an over-supply of acids in the blood and the tissues that will be neutralised by the alkaline juices of raw vegetables. By their influence on the body these juices will, through time, even neutralise the chemical poisons of the brain caused by auto-intoxication.

Cabbage is one of the vegetables most frequently seen on the tables of the rich and the poor alike, but it is usually in a cooked form, a condition which does not give the best results to the consumer, as in many cases a great portion of the organic salts in the cabbage is lost in the water during the process of boiling. This applies to most vegetables which can be eaten raw, but are generally cooked. For this reason it is advisable to save the water in which the vegetables have been boiled, and use it for making soup and gravy, inasmuch as it contains from 20 to 30 per cent. of the most nutritious and valuable part of the vegetable.

Cabbage largely contains sodium, and is, therefore, a powerful aid to digestion. The best results are obtained when it is eaten raw, and preferably young and tender. In America 'slaw' or raw cabbage cut into ribbony slices, soaked in vinegar, is served in all first-class restaurants as a salad. Some people will not eat cabbage unless it is raw. A Jewish acquaintance of the writer, a literary worker in Salt Lake City, Utah, invariably followed this custom, even to the extent of nightly making his supper off raw young cabbage and Brazil nuts! This, however, is probably carrying the cult of raw-cabbage eating to extremes.

Sauer-kraut, a form of pickled cabbage much relished by Germans, is an insult to the stomach, because it is practically putrescent when it is eaten, and the cellulose, or woody fibre of the vegetable, is hardened and rendered indigestible by the action of the vinegar.

Many people never eat cucumbers, possibly because they believe in following the advice of a learned doctor who said that 'cucumbers should be skinned, cut into slices, salted, soaked in vinegar, and then thrown into the dust-bin'! This is somewhat drastic advice, as cucumber, when eaten slowly and in small portions without salt or vinegar, is not only easily digested, but is also very nutritious. While engaged in surveying and constructional work on a new railroad being built in Nevada a few years ago, the writer observed particularly the noon meal of the Italian labourers employed at the laborious work of handling heavy rails and sleepers. It consisted entirely of big slices of bread and a large cucumber! These men were all brawny, powerful fellows with clear skins, tanned to a deep mahogany hue. Cucumber-juice is a 'beautifier' of ancient origin, and, when applied to the skin, is said to have a stimulating and cleansing effect on the pores. The real reason why some people consider cucumber harmful to them is probably because they eat too much at a time, and season it with salt and vinegar, causing diarrhœa in consequence.

Tomatoes for a long time were looked upon with suspicion, but of recent years their true value has been discovered, and they are appreciated accordingly. People inclined to be 'liverish' would be quickly and agreeably surprised at the beneficial effect on their liver and skin if they were able to include in their daily dietary, preferably at breakfast, a hearty dish of raw tomatoes, free of condiments of any kind. It is said by an American doctor that 'slices of tomato, if rubbed briskly on the cheeks, will quickly remove freckles of long standing, stains, and burns; also, its mild acid and cathartic juices help to overcome the causes of obesity.'

Lettuce is a most indispensable and appetising vegetable, and should be on all household tables when procurable, as it is a blood-cleanser and a stomach-regulator of a very high order. It cools

the blood—that is, actually lowers the temperature of the vital fluid when rich and heating foods have caused feverishness. Vinegar should not be used on this vegetable when it is made up as a salad, as vinegar is a preservative that tends to interfere with the digestion of foods. Lemon-juice and olive-oil are quite sufficient dressings for lettuce. There is a harmless natural narcotic in lettuce which induces sleep, if the vegetable is eaten prior to going to bed, and its regular use has been known to cure insomnia and night nervousness.

A 'sour stomach' will be quickly sweetened by a diet of young raw carrots. This vegetable has established itself firmly in the dietary of those who seek beauty and health. Regularly used, it tones the system, imparts vigour to the nerves, and brings the bloom of the rose to the cheeks. The following combination makes a very palatable dish: a selection of choice nuts and raisins and young raw carrots grated into fine particles, the whole thoroughly mixed by stirring.

'Parsley is a broom that sweeps the stomach' is a much-quoted proverb used by that nation of natural cooks—the French. Parsley is a great corrective of the stomach and a destroyer of a bad breath. Onion-eaters should chew a little parsley after eating their favourite in its raw state, and they will find the smell of the onions to be much lessened. Parsley also stimulates the flow of gastric-juice.

Spinach contains in great quantity iron salts, which are easily assimilated. It is, therefore, a natural tonic of the greatest importance. Anæmic people will find that better results are obtained from eating foods which have iron salts in abundance than by using iron in mineral form purchased at a druggist's shop, as the stomach does not readily take up iron in this form and absorb it into the blood.

Asparagus, as is well known, has a marked effect on the kidneys, both in a functional and a remedial form.

Potatoes are essentially a fattening food. This is especially true of the sweet-potato, which contains sugar, in addition to the starch so prominent in ordinary potatoes. A good many thin people are unable to digest the common kind, but seem to increase their weight by using the sweet-potato in their daily dietary.

Celery is a nervine and a soporific of great value. Eaten after severe mental exertion, it restores the molecular balance of the nerves. Celery should be eaten raw if the greatest benefit is desired.

Radishes are particularly rich in phosphorus and iron, which organic salts feed depleted nerves and overcome brain-fag. Well-masticated radishes are easily digested, and provide the elements used up by muscular and mental labour. It is best to eat them without salt, as then the flavour of the natural salts they contain will be properly appreciated.

Raw leeks and onions contain iron salts in abundance, and are marked stomachics. They have excellent cleansing properties as well, and are healing to the lungs and the bronchial tubes.

Garlic, because of its strong flavour, is not in great favour in this country. The Latin races believe in its cleansing and stomachic properties so much that it is used, in some form or other, at all meals.

Beetroots and parsnips are generators of vitality, and possess fattening qualities.

Dandelion greens are a positive tonic because of the iron salts they contain. They also cleanse the liver.

Water-cress is a blood-cleanser, and is very useful in ridding the blood of the impurities that cause malaria, typhoid, and smallpox fevers.

WANTED—A PRISONER.

WITH hundreds of Germans just in front of you, to get a prisoner—just one—would seem (and unfortunately did to some) an easy task. You just go and fetch one—a sort of 'Nuts in May' game. A requisition for a prisoner is put through the various headquarters to the battalion, and an unlucky 'one pip' detailed to 'fetch 'em away.'

Corps to Division: 'Hullo, Black! is that you? White speaking.—Anything doing? No; very quiet. How about some prisoners, old man?—Might as well. Yes, certainly.—Coming up to-night?—Good! Cheerio!'

Division to Brigade: 'Black speaking. The general says you had better get identification of the enemy on your front. How about it? Can you arrange for a raid? Just a small one—no artillery.—Good man! Right-o!'

Brigade to Battalion H.Q.: 'That the adjutant? Brigade speaking. Look here; you've got to get a prisoner.—Yes, to-night.—*What!* But you must. And send 'em down here just as soon as you get 'em.—What! No, no; it's very urgent. *Corps* are asking for it—must have information to-night. . . .—All right, sir. Good-bye.'

(The Staff part of obtaining the prisoner ends here.)

Adjutant to C.O.: 'Brigade, sir. Usual thing—prisoner wanted at once.'

C.O. (to himself): 'Damn!!!'

Usually there were set methods employed for these small raids and patrols, which in their frequency became monotonous; but this particular raid was quite out of the ordinary, and presented the 'party' with an unexpected thrill—hence my story.

We were at Lens. The Boche held the east end of the town, and we the west—so that the centre was No Man's Land. The town was in absolute ruins, houses totally destroyed, except in a few instances, and the whole area was a mass of brick, roofs of houses, iron, and general débris.

Our front-line trench ran through streets, gardens, and even houses; garden-fences crossed the trenches, and vegetables were growing all round. Our supply of 'green stuff' was never better. Many patrols went out at night, and came back with sacks of cabbages, &c.—captured, taken unawares—and casualties light!

Our front line was held by a system of 'posts' consisting of a few men, and in some places we occupied houses, or what was left of them. We had one forward position pushed well in front of the others, in a house on the main Lens-Arras road. This was in a row of houses, and the Boche occupied a house on the other side of the road. He didn't show himself very much, however, and our men said they only saw a fat German once or twice through a hole in the wall where the window used to be. It was not a nice piece of line to hold, as one never knew quite what to expect. Among so many houses it was well-nigh impossible to see anything going on, and at night it was *quite* impossible. Several times one of our posts was attacked by a small party of Boches at dawn with a 'flammenwerfer' (liquid fire-thrower), but we usually spotted such moves in time. The Hun had a silly habit of 'pine-appleing' the post to be attacked, always at dawn, for about half-an-hour beforehand, so we knew what was coming, and dealt with it accordingly. Altogether both sides saw very little of each other—so much so that Brigade said, 'We *must* have a prisoner for identification.' A big raid was impossible; the ground-wire, fences, and houses wouldn't allow of it. A small patrol was very difficult—you made an awful noise in the dark, falling over bricks, tins, wire, and rubbish. A Boche listening-post would soon discover you—up would go a 'Very' light, and the place would be alive with machine-guns. You and your patrol would probably be caught crawling on 'all-fours,' like cats on the tiles, and then your difficulties would begin—or perhaps end very suddenly.

A small raid was planned on some old boilers in the station-yard, presumed to be an enemy post. It was going to be very costly to carry out, owing to the difficulties mentioned. We should have many casualties. Was it worth while?

In the meantime a peculiar thing had happened. The corporal in charge of the advance post in the house had discovered a large hole in the cellar wall, covered over by boards and blankets. Being curious and a very 'stout' fellow, he started to investigate, climbed through the hole into the cellar next door, lit a candle, and found a large hole in the floor about five feet deep, and from that a long shallow tunnel sloping downwards. He went down this, and came to a series of rooms and passages; and, as his story ran, after going some distance, he opened a door and saw a room lighted up with a lot of electric lights. This so frightened him that he blew out his candle and made his way back as best he could. The corporal reported that he also saw a clock and heard it *ticking* on a shelf in one of the passages. Coming back very excited, he told his story to his company commander, who told it to the colonel, and so on it went till it reached Brigade. Every one was very excited. Here was our chance, perhaps, to get a prisoner. Of course, the story as it was retold didn't lose anything in dramatic thrills. This place must at least be a German officers' mess, &c.! We had instructions to go after it at once.

As it was going to be a peculiar job, the C.O. thought it a good chance to use the scouts, so I picked four excellent men, absolutely trustworthy and fearless, to assist me in capturing this officers' mess. I told them the thrilling story, and what a magnificent opportunity they had, and they entered into the spirit of the thing with wonderful keenness. As it would be impossible to use rifles, I got revolvers for them, and took them out in the afternoon for a little shooting-practice. The colonel told the general we were having a go at it that night, and Division promised ten days' leave to any one who secured a prisoner. It was impossible to get to this house by day, so we set out from headquarters as it was growing dark, and had about a mile to go in trenches. The colonel came with us. It was a nasty, dark night, and just starting to rain. The colonel left us at company headquarters, as he wanted to warn the company of what was going on, and have them keep a close watch out; so we carried on, and soon reached the front line.

It was raining hard now, and very dark, and walking in the mud and trenches made an awful noise. We were very close to the Boche, and had to be extra careful. Climbing out of the trench, we made for the house, about fifty yards away, falling over things and sliding in the mud. Eventually we reached the house, after much laughing and swearing (one can't help laughing when a fellow, trying to be very quiet, falls over something into a shell-hole, and then says a 'few kind words'). We were challenged by the sentry, and entered. Down in the cellar we found the corporal and his men, and I got him to tell me all he could about his experiences when he explored the place, and what I might expect to find down there. I then worked out my plan of action, first of all taking the precaution to double all the sentries round the house and have others 'standing by,' as I was afraid, if we were discovered down below, the house might be rushed and we should be cut off. We had every-

thing fixed up, when I heard footsteps, and, to my surprise, in walked the colonel! He said he had felt nervous about us, and wanted to know if everything was all right. He couldn't rest at headquarters, so thought he would come up. I assured him everything was quite all right, and he said he would go back.

The tunnel apparently led from the cellar next door underneath the garden and the road to the Boche house opposite. All our work had to be done in the dark, but I took a flash-lamp with me in case we should need it—and we did. We removed our box respirators, wound our puttees round our feet to deaden any noise in walking on the boards, and when all was complete climbed through the hole in the wall into the next-door house. We then helped one another down the hole in the ground, and listened for some minutes at the opening of the tunnel. It was a very shallow entrance, and we were just able to squeeze through; but the tunnel itself was larger, and sloped steeply down under the road to the house opposite. We could hear absolutely nothing, so started to climb through feet foremost and on our backs, there being barely enough room to sit up straight. I examined the roof near the entrance for a spring-gate (one that could be let down from the roof by a wire pulled at the other end of the tunnel), because the Boche might have let us walk into that place, pull a cord, and there you are—or we were! However, there was no sign of anything. The tunnel was all boarded, and we slid down very quietly, but even so we knocked down bits of earth, which went rolling to the bottom, and seemed to make an awful noise. We felt the sides and the roof all the way for 'traps.' I had Sergeant Knox beside the left wall, one man on the right, and I was just behind in the centre, looking after the roof and the floor. I left one man at the top.

It seemed to take ages going down there. Presently the sergeant pulled my arm and whispered to me that there was an opening on the left. We found we were at the bottom. I went ahead, and bumped into something. By feeling about I discovered it was a small table, with pens, ink, paper, and books on it; also some tins. These had evidently been piled up at the entrance, and if knocked over would have made a lovely noise. We carefully removed the obstacles and got busy 'Hun-hunting' (the new parlour pastime for grown-ups). On the right we found some beds let into the wall—bunks; on the left the passage turned, and on going down two steps we came to a door. In front of me I saw more steps, which I went up, to find myself in a back-street, but it was too dark to allow me to see anything. The road had been cleared of débris, and had evidently been used for transport. Some distance away I could hear voices and the unloading of wagons—probably rations.

I brought the man I had left at the top of the tunnel to the bottom, and then started on through the door. It led into a long passage with rows of bunks all along one side, with mattresses and blankets. We moved on slowly, expecting to put our hands on a German at any moment. Suddenly we came to another door, and, passing through, found the passage turned to the right. On the left wall we could feel jugs, pots, and things hanging up, so we were evidently near the kitchen (Sherlock Holmes!). On a table was some food—bread, jam, and tinned stuff. Of course, we all put our hands in the jam, feeling over the table in the dark. We now came to another door, which was to lead into *the* room lighted with electric light (intense excitement!). We opened the door very slowly—no light—crawled in on our hands and knees, and waited for some time, but nothing happened.

Owing to our movements being in the dark, and our having to keep very quiet, it had taken us a long time to go a short distance, but we felt as if we must be miles away from our base. As the place appeared to be deserted, I thought it quite safe to put on my torch-light, so wrapped it up in a khaki handkerchief to give a dim light. We moved on very slowly. Suddenly the sergeant pulled my arm and said, 'Light ahead, sir,' and I saw a small light that seemed to be at the far end of a large room. I put my torch out, and at once concluded that the Boches were on the same game, for the other light vanished also. We moved forward a bit, and as there was nothing doing I tried my light again. I felt my arm tugged. There was that other light again. I at once put mine out and waited. We could hear nothing but Boche machine-guns rattling away and an occasional shell bursting outside.

That light puzzled me, so I started to investigate. It seemed to be about twenty-five feet away. We had a whispered council of war. I was to crawl forward, and they were to kneel up and cover me with their revolvers. If I bumped into any one I was to put my torch-light full on, which would blind him, and the other two would fire. Anyway, we would give whoever it was 'some' scare. The excitement was feverish, and I felt as if I was playing 'blind man's buff,' or rather 'blind man's bluff,' with a revolver in one hand and a torch in the other (I should have had a knife in my teeth to complete it, and a long black cloak). Soon my head touched something, and from the distance a light seemed to come through a hole in a wall. I moved my hand over the wall for this opening, but could only feel something very cold. I couldn't understand it. I put my light on still wrapped in a handkerchief, and on came the other light. I quickly took the handkerchief off and put the light full on, and, to my horror, I saw a man kneeling right in front of me pointing

a revolver! My promising career was about to end. I was so taken aback, I waited for the shot which never came. My enemy looked every bit as surprised as I—and why not? For I was staring fiercely at *myself!* It *was* myself! I was kneeling in front of a large mirror.

All at once the place seemed to be full of light. I turned round and saw a grin on the faces of the others; they had been taken in too. We laughed when we realised the position. We were in a very nice, large room—bed with blankets and feather pillows, wonderful French blue-and-gold chairs (stolen from some château), table, and stove, but *no* electric light. There were, however, a number of mirrors, which explained the electric lights seen by the corporal. When he opened the door his candle had been reflected by several of these. A candle between two mirrors looks like dozens of candles, and in his hurry and nervousness the corporal had fancied he was looking into a brilliantly lighted room.

We now had a good look round, as the occupants seemed to have flown. More steps to the street, and a door which led into a small passage to the left. Feeling much braver now, we decided to investigate further. In the room, evidently at one time an officer's bedroom, we found some clothes which gave us identification, and several interesting articles. Suddenly we heard voices in the passage. Now, had our chance come at last? We quickly moved over to the wall, so as to be behind the door when it opened, and put the light out.

We had not long to wait. After much whispering outside, the door opened slowly. Some one behind was holding a light, which showed the bayonet on the rifle of the front man. More whispering and the door partly closed. My heart was beating now so hard with excitement that I was afraid they would hear it. And what if they happened to be a strong party? Was I asking for trouble? The sergeant, a small fellow, was lying on the floor just where the door would open. After a little louder talking the door opened again—not so much hesitation this time. Bayonet, rifle, and then the man himself appeared. Just as he entered he collapsed on the floor. The sergeant had pulled his legs from under him. I threw myself against the door to close it as Boche number two with the candle was entering. His left arm was jammed in the door, and his own light blinded his vision, so I had him covered before he could move with torch-light and revolver. It all seemed so impossible, it was hard to realise what had happened.

We lost no time in getting away with our prizes, and returned to the tunnel without difficulty with the aid of the light, picking up the men I had stationed to warn us in case of surprise. We had been away an hour and a half. I brought the clock back with me. We climbed the tunnel, got through the hole, and dropped into our cellar post. The first person I saw was the colonel. He had stayed there all the time, and had never moved. He was very anxious to hear our story, and was delighted at the result. We now had a look at *the* clock, and found it had no works in it. And that was the clock the corporal had heard ticking! How we laughed! But I don't wonder at his having heard things. The colonel said he could have sworn he heard revolver-shots and a bomb. He thought we were well in it, and as we were so long he was getting nervous, and was just starting off after us! I wonder how many C.O.'s you would get to do that!

Our prisoners turned out to be a N.C.O. and a man of a near-by post. We took them down to battalion headquarters, where they were well cross-examined and chaffed by cooks and batmen, and from there despatched them with escort to brigade headquarters.

The colonel sent in a full report to Brigade, not forgetting to ask for the leave warrants.

Brigade to Division (very excited): 'We have two prisoners for you. Report following at once.'

Division to Brigade: 'Good! Send 'em along.'

Division to Corps: 'Is that you, White? Black speaking. We got those prisoners for you. They 're on the way down.'

Corps to Division: 'What prisoners? Oh yes, of course. Good man! Splendid! Beastly night, isn't it?'

APOCALYPSE.

I WHO was dumb long barren years
Have found at last a voice to sing,
And all my being breaks in flow'r
As buds at the warm breath of Spring.

'The light that lighteth ev'ry man'
Hath flash'd its glory thro' my soul;
Mine eyes, no longer 'holden,' see
The manuscripts of God unroll.

The fragrance folded in the rose
No longer is a mystery;
I read the lily's pure white soul—
A page of sacred history.

I hear the singing of the stars,
Interpret, too, the sea's strange moods,
And lend an understanding ear
To the vague whispers of the woods.

What magnet draws the earth-born lark
Up singing to the feet of God?
What makes the crocus blaze her way
Thro' the dark portals of the sod?

All this I *know*, since I have learn'd
'Love's the fulfilling of the Law;'
I put the shoes from off my feet,
And kneel on holy ground in awe.

From the dark sepulchre of doubt
An angel-hand has rolled the stone.
'All things are yours,' spake One who knew;
And I have come into my own.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

THE perfect liquid green of trees and shrubs by the banks of lakes in Cumberland and Westmorland, the purest green that Nature, enjoying her favourite colour, has prepared, yields in early days of autumn to golden tints which celebrate achievement of the harvest. The holiday-makers leave Windermere, and Derwentwater, Ullswater, and Coniston, returning to the cities and the old anxiety, the hard problems not only of the public kind, of supply and demand, wages and production, but the inner problems of their hearts and minds, the question as to the good and the meaning of the greatest things, the enormous interrogation of life and the soul. More people than ever before have lived for a while in the country about these lakes, climbed the craggy mountains, tramped through the lonely, lovely places where nestle the secret tarns, and they have some advantage over others when they square themselves to these difficult questions. They may have hurried to such scenes as these in August or September with something of the vulgar curiosity of tourists, often unthinking and even a little stupid; but it is a hopeless heart that leaves the land of Wordsworth and Ruskin without a certain conversion, without a sense of purification and betterment. It is a sweet country, where hope is instilled by beauty into the weary spirits of war-worn men, where they may be led to new beliefs in a goodness and a greatness beyond the crushing materialism of modern times. Little wonder that here the poets lived and worked; Britain could find for them no better place. The many thousands who have delighted in a brief season in these parts, and paid, in the usual manner of visitors, a call at Coniston, contemplated Brantwood, where Ruskin lived, the little museum in the village where are Ruskin relics, and were led by such and other circumstances to thoughts of the man beyond the bare statement of a small guide-book, may have been impressed by a coincidence which upon reflection seems to bear a strange significance. For this year is the centenary of the birth of Ruskin, who in his time set himself out on a great mission for the beautifying of life at a period when, largely as the result of wars, it had fallen through materialism to a sad ugliness and coarseness. The effort, with splendid talent to support it, was one of the finest ever made by any man in the prosecution of such an endeavour for the betterment of life; and now we are confronted with the situation that, great as was Britain's need in this matter in those days, it is at least as great at the present time. Never did a capable and well-meaning people who somehow seem to have lost their way (or are in danger of so doing), and who in their distraction are missing the vision of their ideals, need the guidance and the inspiration of such an apostle of the beauty in life and the world as Britain does to-day. But there is this question, whether if a new Ruskin were to rise among us he would gain a hearing and achieve his effect, for in these times the materialism appears to have fastened harder on the people than before; vulgarity has become more firmly established; confusion and distraction have produced a sense of ennui; and such mountains of printed matter are being thrust upon the people, chiefly political propaganda and sensational news, that it is difficult for the true prophet and preacher, of great sincerity and with an important message, to gain a hearing. He is lost in the confusion. Again, people now are more suspicious of preachers of every class; they have been much misled by the insincerities of politicians. Never was the beauty of life stamped out by authority more than now. Nearly a year after the stoppage of the war national picture-galleries and museums are still in the occupation of Government clerks with typewriters, and the chastest scene in London, as many thought it, the view across the lake towards Whitehall from the bridge in St James's Park, is still suppressed through the emptying of the lake and the erection on the bed thereof of more Government offices and a huge Government restaurant for the exclusive enjoyment of the vast company of the bureaucracy. It is unlikely that for many years such an evidence of the loss of the sense of beauty and fitness, such a sign of surrender to materialism and vulgarity, will be removed. The case would be disheartening if there were not real and impressive signs of an awakening of the people themselves, unassisted by their leaders—really in spite of them—to the better possibilities of their existence, to the exhilaration of the pursuit of ideals. One of the

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signs is the very definite improvement that took place in the theatre during the summer; another is the extent to which the spirit of the people was affected by the simple, noble cenotaph that was raised to 'The Glorious Dead' in Whitehall. The daily and nightly pilgrimages of heroes' kindred to this shrine, piling masses of new wreaths continually about its base, higher and higher, a plain and noble sincerity of sentiment the Government had not imagined, are better evidence of a people's soul than the tawdry artificialness of official and belated demonstrations. There is place for a Ruskin then.

* * *

Now those who were by the Lakes and thought upon the centenary, that Ruskin was born a hundred years ago, would likely proceed to some new examination of the circumstances of his life and work, and they would find new studies more apposite to these times, more enlightening or of greater consequence. As we approach the winter season, when men and women form plans for reading, it will occur to them that they could hardly give themselves more delight, more instruction upon things of beauty, or stir up in them more active thoughts upon the possibilities of life in this harassing period, than by a careful study of some of Ruskin's works, his lessons on beauty, the delight and the satisfaction of art, on the one hand, and his arguments upon economic points and problems on the other. There is a fashion now to depreciate this genius, suggesting that he was scarcely so fine as was supposed, that his fame is rightly lessening, that his tricks are stale, that he was careless of his own reputation, that he contradicted himself, and so forth. Men who fought against prevailing ways and customs and challenged the conduct and the character of the arbiters of public manners and taste are always denounced, decried, in after-times when such conditions and circumstances are repeated and intensified. But if Ruskin were really stale, and if his fame would now always decline more and more, the sharp electric kind of appeal that much of his writing makes to-day to some who glance at it for the first time would not be intelligible. Let us, for example, take up, as by a sort of chance, the little volume of (originally) three lectures which has the title of *The Crown of Wild Olive* (1866). These lectures were delivered to different types of communities at Camberwell, Bradford, and Woolwich. There is the first essay or lecture on 'Work,' wherein is treated simply and yet effectively a question, vague and mysterious in its depths, which is troubling our people more than any other now. Almost upon any page of this discourse may be found a thought or two which force consideration and application to the present times and circumstances. Lighting upon such a page by chance, see this: 'The lawful basis of wealth is, that a man who works should be paid the fair value of his work; and that if he does not choose to spend it to-day, he should have free leave to keep it, and spend it to-morrow. Thus, an industrious man working daily, and laying by daily, attains at last the possession of an accumulated sum of wealth, to which he has absolute right. The idle person who will not work, and the wasteful person who lays nothing by, at the end of the same time will be doubly poor—poor in possession and dissolute in moral habit; and he will then naturally covet the money which the other has saved. And if he is then allowed to attack the other, and rob him of his well-earned wealth, there is no more any motive for saving, or any reward for good conduct; and all society is thereupon dissolved, or exists only in systems of rapine. Therefore the first necessity of social life is the clearness of national conscience in enforcing the law—that he should keep who has JUSTLY EARNED.' Then in another place there is this: '. . . But, if, having enough to live upon in the manner befitting his character and rank, he still wants to make more, and to *die* rich, then money is the principal object with him, and it becomes a curse to himself, and generally to those who spend it after him. For you know it *must* be spent some day; the only question is whether the man who makes it shall spend it, or some one else; and generally it is better for the maker to spend it, for he will know best its value and use. This is the law of life. And if a man does not choose thus to spend his money, he must either hoard it or lend it, and the worst thing he can generally do is to lend it; for borrowers are nearly always ill spenders, and it is with lent money that all evil is mainly done, and all unjust war protracted. For observe what the real fact is, respecting loans to foreign military governments, and how strange it is. If your little boy came to you to ask for money to spend in squibs and crackers, you would think twice before you gave it him: and you would have some idea that it was wasted, when you saw it fly off in fireworks, even though he did no mischief with it. But the Russian children, and Austrian children, come to you, borrowing money, not to spend in innocent squibs, but in cartridges and bayonets to attack you in India with, and to keep down all noble life in Italy with, and to murder Polish women and children with; and *that* you will give at once, because they pay you interest for it. Now, in order to pay you that interest they must tax every working peasant in their dominions: and on that work you live. You therefore at once rob the Austrian peasant, assassinate or banish the Polish peasant, and you live on the produce of the theft, and the bribe for the assassination! This is the broad fact—that is the practical meaning of your foreign loans, and of most large interest of money.' . . . But, of course, such thoughts taken from their context and their time should not be applied too closely to

modern matters. It is sometimes a difficulty in quoting from Ruskin that one must either take a passage that seems a little trite, or else the meaning may be misunderstood or the moral misapplied.

* * *

In this same small volume there is a lecture on 'War' (which Ruskin addressed to the students at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich), one of the main ideas of which was remembered and severely condemned when we were in the depths and utmost anxieties of our latest European war, when we were suffering, but still building great hopes on the many catch-phrases that the politicians let loose—'the war that was to end war.' Alas! we hear less now of the end of war; nor to some does 'the next war' seem quite such an appalling thing to contemplate as it did three years ago, for which one reason is that, apart from the sundry comparatively small wars that are in progress in various places, it appears that it may be far off, and another because the public feelings in such matters are dulled. Three years or so ago there was a turn against Ruskin when this lecture was remembered and quoted from, because he preached that war was good for art, and therefore for the beauty of life. That appeared to be a revolting doctrine to a people who were then suffering the keenest pangs, and from whom all that was good in life day by day seemed to be torn away; but Ruskin had his argument, though one suspects he might have revised his views and thoughts and expressions could he have seen how wars are conducted now, when whole peoples and not small armies are bent to them, and what are the effects. Wars to-day are not as wars in which Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans engaged; their causes, their conduct, and their effects are different. Ruskin's entire work was accomplished under the influence of the Napoleonic wars in that he strove for the recovery of beauty in life when it had disappeared under the ugly commercialism and materialism that had succeeded the drain of those wars in a Britain yearning to be more and more prosperous; but great things, vast and awful conflicts, as those wars appeared, how little they were compared with the long struggles of the last few years! And if in future war there shall be the complete and sudden elimination of large cities by means of poison-gas and bombs, which from our recent experience seems quite likely, it is hard to see how a doctrine can be held that war is good for art, and therefore for beauty, and therefore for life and the soul; nor do we think that Ruskin would so maintain it, for the argument, with modern circumstances attached to it, must lead to the negation that the best thing for civilisation is to end it. He said: 'All healthy men like fighting, and like the sense of danger; all brave women like to hear of their fighting and of their facing danger. This is a fixed instinct in the fine race of them; and I cannot help fancying that fair fight is the best play for them; and that a tournament was a better game than a steeplechase. The time may perhaps come, in France, as well as here, for universal hurdle-races and cricketing: but I do not think universal cricket will bring out the best qualities of the nobles of either country. I use, in such question, the test which I have adopted, of the connection of war with other arts; and I reflect how, as a sculptor, I should feel, if I were asked to design a monument for a dead knight, in Westminster Abbey, with a carving of a bat at one end, and a ball at the other. It may be the remains in me only of savage Gothic prejudice; but I had rather carve it with a shield at one end, and a sword at the other. And this, observe, with no reference whatever to any story of duty done, or cause defended. Assume the knight merely to have ridden out occasionally to fight his neighbour for exercise; assume him even a soldier of fortune, and to have gained his bread, and filled his purse, at the sword's point. Still, I feel as if it were, somehow, grander and worthier in him to have made his bread by sword-play than any other play; I had rather he had made it by thrusting than by batting—*much* rather than by betting. Much rather that he should ride war-horses than back racehorses; and—I say it sternly and deliberately—much rather would I have him slay his neighbour than cheat him. But remember, so far as this may be true, the game of war is only that in which the *full personal power of the human creature* is brought out in management of its weapons.' Before this he had said: '. . . All the pure and noble arts of peace are founded on war; no great art ever yet rose on earth, but among a nation of soldiers. There is no art among a shepherd people, if it remains at peace. There is no art among an agricultural people, if it remains at peace. Commerce is barely consistent with fine art; but cannot produce it. Manufacture not only is unable to produce it, but invariably destroys whatever seeds of it exist. There is no great art possible to a nation but that which is based on battle.' But Ruskin then wrote in peace, when the Napoleonic wars were already distant things, and when the 'blessings of peace' upon which he cast a certain contempt were being overdone in the cultivation of materialism, causing him, the lover of beauty, veritably to loathe machinery, industrialism, and all the productive works and organisations of cities. He himself anticipated enormous developments in war; but if he had seen war and its effects in our time, so soon after his, it is to be doubted if he would have considered it as a great stimulant of art and beauty. All the present indications are that the latest war has had the opposite effect, and though in wars and after them there have always been profiteering scandals, the crop that has arisen since the recent war corresponds fully to it in scale and in ugli-

ness. Ruskin could not have considered this a good thing.

* * *

Thus and otherwise Ruskin provokes criticism and dissent in modern times. As some say that, whatever merit and truth once attached to his views upon questions of political economy the expression of which was one main section of his life work, they have only a minor value now, so say others that his thoughts on art, vigorously and dogmatically expressed as they were, have lost much of such truth as they ever possessed. But then art view, and opinion and standards, are not fixed and constant—far from it; and thought has moved more and more from Ruskin, who, for example, was strongly opposed to the new Impressionist movement, a circumstance well advertised by the famous libel action that Whistler brought against him for what was written in *Fors Clavigera* of his pictures. Much is made of this failure to appreciate the quality of the new Impressionist movement and Whistler's work, but it were well to remember that Ruskin was not alone in this. This year one has seen employed for advertisement purposes on the walls of London and in railway stations reproductions of that famous 'Portrait of my Mother' which is as familiar to the people now as almost any picture. Here is the blunt and vulgar but enormous compliment paid to it of using it thus for advertisement without any explanation, assuming (and correctly) that to the mass of the people it is known and understood. Yet, artistic folk of London, do not forget that when Whistler sent this picture to the exhibition at Burlington House the hanging committee refused it, only one member voting for it, and that Whistler took it then to Paris, where it gained the gold medal at the Salon and was bought by the French Government, who installed it in the Luxembourg, where it still is. Again, Ruskin did not appreciate Rembrandt, and one of the most serious charges against him is that he made a mistake committed by others of not merely failing to appreciate Constable, but scorning him as a third-rate painter—a mistake the more surprising when we remember how Constable makes us feel the emotions and the beauties of English nature as no other did before him, the sunlight upon the trees, breezes sighing amid the leaves, the wonder of skies and gathering clouds. Constable, in another way, made emotions kindle in the breasts of the least artistically sensitive among men and women, as Corot with his morning dews and poetic mists of evening did. Ruskin, the nature-lover, should have been more discerning and more just; his individual judgments were often imperfect; he was inclined to dogmatic stupidity, and was impetuous.

* * *

But those are details, and they matter little now when we contemplate the value of the grand principle of the cultivation of beauty in life, the rescue of existence from the sordidness of mere commerce and materialism. This may be doctrine that is easily overdone; but it is well it should be, for thus some effect may be produced. After the Napoleonic wars Britain was exhausted, and in due season settled down to hard work, from which the beauty of life was banished. This was the early Victorian period. Industry, commerce, inventions, manufactures were developed with a wild enthusiasm, and Britain soon grew rich, but nothing else. Her material prosperity was enormous, but her artistic soul was numb under that flood of materialism. Life contained money, but little more. It was a dull thing without the spiritual joys. It was against this that Ruskin raised his standard, and in the first of the great campaigns of his career fought for the beauty and the enrichment of life in such manner as they had never been fought for before. In prose of superb melody he wrote of art and architecture and matters pertaining to them and to life in a clear, direct, and beautiful style which, with its allusions, fascinated every reader and helped his artistic soul along. Think of the extent to which architecture was degraded in the Victorian times, when buildings were duller things in their plain and untouched ugliness, their ordered blankness, than they had ever been before. That was a time for Ruskin to write: 'Among the first habits that a young architect should learn is that of thinking in shadow, not looking at a design in its miserable liny skeleton; but conceiving it as it will be when the dawn lights it and the dusk leaves it; when its stones will be hot, and its crannies cool; when the lizards will bask on the one, and the birds build on the other. Let him design with the sense of cold and heat upon him; let him cut out the shadows, as men dig wells in unwatered plains; and lead along the lights, as a founder does his hot metal; let him keep the full command of both, and see that he knows how they fall, and where they fade.' Ruskin was led to what some felt to be excesses in his campaign against the rampant materialism, in his praise of the nature beauties that God presented, and his call to man to devote himself to them and achieve a new and higher happiness by them. To him the hills and the vales of England were the 'true temples of God, and their waves and clouds holier than the dew of the baptistery and the incense of the altar.' So when Manchester poached for water among his beloved lakes he would have flung Manchester to the bottom of them had there been room for her there. Manchester, he said, produced no art, no literature, yet would 'steal and sell for a profit the waters of Thirlmere and the clouds of Helvellyn.' He would have destroyed the new town of Edinburgh and the city of New York, the signs everywhere of Industrialism disfiguring Nature. If he was excessive, surely if there is anything more in life than money and the

struggle for it and the most vulgar pleasures, if man has a soul, then in the grand principle Ruskin was gloriously, splendidly right. And if he fought a dragon in his own day, that of materialism, over-belief in industrialism, the creed that nothing matters but money and possessions, is there not such a dragon here again to-day, grown bigger and more repulsive than before? It is true that now we should work for our salvation, and that men and machinery must exert themselves in industrialism as never before; but let it be remembered that heaven and man's salvation are not gained either by politics, capital, or the exertion of the most modern appliances. In one of the periods of agony in the recent war the leader of the people declared in a ringing speech that in the peace-time that was coming—that now has come—nothing would matter except capital and labour and machinery. Would it really be worth the war if there should be nothing of value now but this capital, labour, and machinery? It is for antidote to the doctrines of what is coarse and merely material that we need a Ruskin now, and the centenary comes to emphasise the danger and the need.

THE MINIATURE.

By MARY F. RAPHAEL, Author of *Phœbe Maroon*, *As Chance Would Have It*, &c.

I.

OUTSIDE the old shop stood a smart motor-car.

The street was quiet. Only a straggling company of pigeons busied themselves amongst the venerable cobble-stones. The trams, passing every now and then, sent the birds flying. But they returned as soon as the temporary turmoil had died down and the road was clear again for them to resume their gleaning.

A holland awning protected the goods in the shop window from the rays of the spring sun. Across the front of the awning was painted the word *Antiquités* in large blue letters.

It would indeed have been a pity had the old-rose brocade of those Louis XV. chairs become yet more faded. The strong sunlight might have stolen the colour, too, from the silk embroideries of that wonderful vestment, or from the quaint shawl flung so artlessly, yet artfully, over a corner of the gilt Empire cabinet.

It was the cabinet where part of Monsieur Dumont's priceless collection of miniatures was shown.

In the window there were to be seen, besides, cut-glass girandoles, carved and moulded frames of which the gilding had been mellowed to bronze by that most competent artist Time, Venetian-glass mirrors, old Chinese lacquered chests, *cloisonné* enamel vases, queer porcelain figures. . . . There was, in fine, as Madame Dumont herself would have told you, of everything.

A tall old man alighted from the car and paused for some moments, scanning the objects in the shop window.

He was obviously an aristocrat of the old French school. He carried himself erectly. His white beard and moustache were trimmed. And his tailor evidently gloried in his distinguished bearing.

He adjusted his eyeglasses and examined with interest the miniatures displayed in the cabinet. Presently his attention was claimed by one different from all the rest. It showed a Madonna and Child. The work, broad and skilful, was frankly modern. Its method of treatment contrasted strongly with the stippled technique of the other and older paintings. Contrary to convention, the Madonna was robed in white, and the Child had dark curly hair.

Who had painted that Child? *Parbleu!* he must find out. . . . It was exactly like. . . . It was the *portrait craché!* . . .

The miniature seemed to hold some strange attraction for him. At last he pushed open the shop door, and entered.

Madame Dumont, smiling, portly, good-humoured as always, greeted him from the farther end of the establishment.

'*Bonjour*, Monsieur le Comte. One little moment and I am with you.'

But before he could reply, he became aware of the presence of a third person—another customer to whom she was talking.

A tall, elegant girl. Her face was somehow familiar to him. A fancy, of course, for she was quite a stranger. It was annoying that Madame Dumont was engaged. He had looked in only for a few moments on his way from the station to the château. He could not stay—but——

Suddenly his interest was riveted by some words of Madame Dumont's that he chanced to overhear.

'But yes, madame. It is true what monsieur says. As it is modern work, it strikes a false note here. It is out of harmony with the other miniatures. But, *ma foi!*—what will you? Dumont is in love with it'——

The young lady murmured something which the count did not catch.

'*Enfin*,' went on Madame Dumont, 'pray monsieur to trust my husband yet a little longer, I beg you, madame. He is infallible. I guarantee you that he will not deceive himself.

Never in life, I assure you, Dumont has he badly calculated.' . . .

The good dame hesitated, shrugged plump shoulders eloquently, and glanced towards Monsieur le Comte. There was a pause. . . .

'Very well, Madame Dumont, I shall tell my husband what you say. He will perhaps be willing to leave it with you a little longer—before—before deciding. But of course he likes the miniature. In every case, madame, we thank you very much.' The young lady bowed and left the shop.

The count glanced at her as she went out.

A graceful *tenue*, he thought. A pretty girl, *Sapristi!* Where had he seen that face? Quite recently, too, here in Versailles. . . . It seemed she had been speaking of the miniature which had attracted him. Well, he was resolved she should not have it. He would outbid her, no matter what she offered. He must have it for Rosalie. The child's wide brow, the small, straight nose, the dark hair and eyes, the fat little chin with, already, the suspicion of a cleft in it—the resemblance was really striking!

'It is some time that we have not seen you, Monsieur le Comte,' said the buxom lady of the shop, coming towards him. 'And Madame la Comtesse, she is well, I hope?'

'I thank you. Yes, my wife is well. But—we are getting old, Madame Dumont. We are no longer very gay, we two old people up at the Castle.'

'Ah, the fine Castle of Monsieur le Comte—*certes*, it is so vast! There should be little feet—the grandchildren. See you, Monsieur le Comte, there is nothing as beautiful in one's old age! The grandchildren—it is like the return of spring after winter for elderly folk.'

The old man drew himself up with dignity. '*Eh, mon Dieu*, Madame Dumont, we shall know how to continue to bear it. It is so long since our son is a negligible quantity to us. His heart must be dead to his parents.'

'By pity, Monsieur le Comte, do not say so! Monsieur le Vicomte'——

'*Enfin*, evidently he prefers his art to our company. We heard rumours—a marriage—an impossible person, a model. But one must not believe all one hears. We wrote. He ignores our letters. Well, so much the worse. We are learning to accept the inevitable.'

'But, *voyons*, Monsieur le Comte, probably Monsieur le Vicomte fears'——

'We are his parents, Madame Dumont. Love should chase away fear.' The count lifted his eyebrows and changed the subject. 'You have some new miniatures, madame.'

'There are three fresh ones, Monsieur le Comte. But one of them would not interest you. It is modern. Only two are antiques. One of them is a replica of a wax medallion of the reign of Louis XIII. Dumont says it has great merit. *Tiens*, permit that I fetch it from the window'——

'*Pardon*, madame, but it is not that one I wish to see. It is precisely the modern one which interests me.'

'But . . . Monsieur le Comte . . . and you who are so great a connoisseur,' remonstrated the wily saleswoman.

She was also an old retainer of the count's family. She had been born and bred on the estate. She was devoted to them all, root and branch. And . . . there was a little plot she had in hand—ah, if only the good God would favour it! . . .

'I know well,' said the count, 'that, in comparison with the technique of the old miniaturists, the painting of which I speak is coarse. As a work of art it has certainly less merit. But there is something, all the same, which pleases me. I should like to examine it, madame.'

With a show of reluctance Madame Dumont fetched the Madonna and Child from the cabinet in the window.

'*Voilà*, Monsieur le Comte. It is pretty—pretty as everything; but it is modern, you see.'

The count held the little painting in his thin aristocratic hand. It trembled slightly, that hand—for in truth the likeness was startling, *épatant!* The thing might have been painted thirty-one years ago from his own boy, from Marcel himself. It was strange that he should have come across it. It was almost as if Providence had willed that he should possess it. . . .

And while he studied the miniature, Madame Dumont's shrewd, kindly eyes studied him. *Eh, bon Dieu*, the little plot was ripening. Monsieur le Comte and the young madame—to think these two should have found themselves in the shop together, and quite unconscious of each other, too! Surely, it was the destiny!

'What are you asking for the thing?' inquired the count at length.

'It is for almost nothing, Monsieur le Comte—a mere bagatelle; two hundred and fifty francs, Dumont said. For, see you, though it is modern style, it is good painting. Ah, as to that, yes, for example, I guarantee it you! A bagatelle only. It is the last price, Dumont said, without benefit to us, well understood. For the artist is little known. The price is low because he needs the money.'

'No matter,' replied the count. 'I will take the miniature. A little nothing, a birthday gift to Madame la Comtesse. It is her fête to-morrow.'

'I know it well, Monsieur le Comte. I thank you. Permit that I pack up the painting—so. Assuredly Madame la Comtesse will be pleased. Otherwise, you will bring it me back, quite simply. A thing so pretty, that sells itself always. *Bonjour*, Monsieur le Comte. A thousand thanks.'

II.

Next morning about twelve, just as Madame Dumont had finished her *déjeuner*—it had been *croûte-au-pot*, with an omelette to follow and a little cup of black coffee—she was surprised to see Madame la Comtesse enter the shop.

Madame Dumont came through the glass partition into the showroom. 'My felicitations on the birthday of Madame la Comtesse,' she said. (We must remember that she had been brought up on the estate, and was housemaid at the Castle till she married Dumont.) 'You are not, then, content with the miniature that Monsieur le Comte has chosen? You wish to select something else? But willingly, Madame la Comtesse—anything that you like.'

'Thérèse,' said the countess—such an elegant countess, in her velvet coat and ermine furs, with her pretty shining gray hair showing below the black velvet of her toque—'Thérèse, this miniature . . . how did you come by it?' . . .

The poor lady! Madame Dumont saw at once how greatly she was agitated.

'But of course she had divined something. How will you that she should not have guessed? The women, they are sharp, more sharp than you others—you men,' Madame Dumont assured her husband when she was relating the affair to him afterwards.

'And so then,' she went on, 'I told her. "But yes," I said, "the painting is by your son, by Monsieur le Vicomte. It is a painting of his wife—ah, the sweet little lady!—and of his son—but what a love of a child—*quel amour d'enfant!*—and it is the very spit of them, so to speak."' . . .

'You told her! But what cheek you have, you other women!' said Monsieur Dumont. And he pinched his wife's plump chin.

'Eh, my faith! yes, I told her. It is months, now, that they are here in Versailles, and the thing stretches itself out till it gets on one's nerves. And these poor young ones, they get thinner. They eat *maigre* all the week round, to make the money go far enough. And the old ones, up at the Castle, they get more sad and lonely, month by month. It is nonsense, all that.

'"You have seen him, Thérèse—my grandson?" she asked me. *Parbleu*, Dumont, I assure you—she was jealous! Madame la Comtesse jealous of me!

'"*Certes*, yes, that I have seen him, Madame la Comtesse," I said. "It is the finest child possible. And as to Madame la Vicomtesse—the dearest little lady in the world—and witty—and *spirituelle!* When they come here together, they make us laugh—Dumont and me—but laugh!"

'"Yet they say—I hear—she was a model," the poor lady told me. And I was sharp. *Dame*, yes! I think I showed tact, Dumont. For I said, quite simply, "I know nothing of that, Madame la Comtesse. That does not regard me. All I know is that she is as elegant and *comme-il-faut* as any princess—what do I say?—as even Madame la Comtesse herself." . . .

'And then, figure to yourself, she came out with it. Would I take her to see them? Would I take her then—then, at once? I had to go and put on my bonnet and mantle—*moi*, who had but just eaten my breakfast. And off we went in the auto—ah, *dame*, yes, in the grand auto, Dumont—to the Rue de la Poste.

'When we reached the house she was all pale, poor lady! from emotion. They are on the third, those young ones. Up she went, trembling, in front of me, and I puffing behind, for I had not digested, and, my faith! there is not a bad number of steps, see you.

'And she made me to enter first, and announce her. But what a scene for a play, and how touching! *Moi*, quite frankly, I had the tears in the eyes.'

'I think well,' said Dumont—'you with your heart of stone!' and he patted her fat, rosy cheek.

'Great silly, be silent, then, that I tell you the rest. "My mother!" cried Monsieur le Vicomte, and he embraced her nearly to crush her. And then he led that dear young wife of his to her, and said with a very noble air, "If you love me, my mother, you must also love my wife." And the little cabbage, watching it all!

'I suppose he felt himself abandoned. . . . Anyhow, he ran to the three of them, and, "*Maman*," he cried, "me too! Embrace Paul, too!" His father picked him up and put him in Madame la Comtesse's arms. . . . Ah, it was a pretty scene, I promise you!' . . .

III.

The same evening the car from the Castle passed down again into the town, and halted in front of the house in the Rue de la Poste.

Presently a trio of people came out—a tall young man carrying a child, followed by a graceful girl. The groom fetched wraps and packages. Then the car made its way back to the Castle.

There was a stir in the old place. . . . Lights showed in rooms that had been uninhabited for years. Servants hurried to and fro. And in the great dining-room the table was laid for five. . . .

The count had been absent in Paris all day. He returned to Versailles only half-an-hour before the dinner-hour, so that he was not able to greet the countess until he had dressed and they met in the beautiful drawing-room adjoining the dining-room.

Many counts and viscounts, with their ladies and children, in swords and periwigs, in hoops

and ruffles, in powder, brocade, and patches, looked down on them from the damask-panelled walls.

'*Sapristi!*' said the count, 'you have made great *toilette* to-night, Rosalie.'

'It is in honour of my birthday, Paul.'

'It seems, too, we have guests? I saw five covers laid in the dining-room.'

'Yes. To celebrate the anniversary. I—I thought you would not mind.'

'But no. Certainly not, my dear. Whatever pleases you'—— answered the count. But his brows were raised. He was intrigued—and a little bored.

'I went to Dumont's shop this morning,' said the countess, 'and Madame Dumont presented me to the artist who—who painted the charming miniature you gave me. So I invited him with his wife to dine with us'——

'Ah!' said the count.

'They are—rather an interesting young couple, Paul. I—I hope you will like them.'

'No doubt, *ma chère*. And the fifth guest?'

'They are bringing their small son. You see, they could not leave him quite alone. You are not annoyed?'

'But on the contrary. I shall be interested to see the child.'

'Yes,' murmured his wife, 'a splendid child. And we have so rarely a child here, Paul. I—I think I hear them coming.' . . .

Something unusual in his wife's manner awakened yet more the curiosity of the count.

He drew himself up and took his stand with his back to the great wide hearth, where logs burned, for the spring evening was chilly. Life-sized cherubs, wrought in marble, supported the high mantelpiece. But a real child, a child of flesh and blood—that would indeed be a novelty in the place. . . . The count adjusted his eye-glasses. . . .

And then—the doors opened and the three guests entered.

'Ah!' said the count.

For, straddling across the floor towards him, he saw a small figure. It seemed to come to him from the past of more than thirty years ago . . . It had the same wide brow, dark curls, brown eyes. . . . And behind he caught sight of his son Marcel's face—demanding—entreating . . . and of the face of the graceful girl whom he had noticed at the antiquity-shop—or was it the face of the Madonna in the miniature? . . . Then a light went up in his heart.

'Ah!' he exclaimed again.

'Paul!' begged his wife.

'Here's Paul, *grand'maman*,' answered a confident, childish treble. And the small person ran forward.

The count took a deep breath. 'There seem to be two of the same name,' he said with some formality.

'There cannot be too many after your pattern,' murmured the countess.

'It must be as you decide, *ma chère*.' . . .

'We have—all—decided, have we not? And the little Paul has set the example.'

'Madame la Comtesse is served,' said the butler, announcing dinner.

'Then there is evidently nothing more to be said,' acquiesced the count dryly. But there was a humorous twinkle in his eyes that his wife had not seen there for many a year. 'May I therefore have the honour, *madame ma belle-fille*, of conducting you to table?' And he offered his arm to his daughter-in-law.—'Marcel, escort your mother.—As to Paul, he will no doubt show us the way.' . . .

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

NEW WASHING-MACHINE FOR THE HOME.

THE cost of having clothes washed at a laundry has now become so great as to be an important item of household expenditure. Any machine, therefore, which enables the 'washing' to be done at home with a minimum of effort will receive a warm welcome from the long-suffering housewife. A washing-machine that has been designed with this object in view is now on the market, and is selling in considerable numbers. It hails from Canada, where many have been in use long enough to reveal any shortcomings, if such were latent in the machine. The wash-tub is made of cypress wood, and is fitted with the usual bands to hold the staves together. It is mounted, at the most convenient height for the average woman, on four maple legs, which are bolted to the bottom and stayed by a wood cross with through tie-bolts. The mechanical washer is carried upon a substantial hinged lid made of wood in two thicknesses, the grain of one being at right angles to that of the other, whereby any tendency to warp is avoided. Movement of the dirty clothes in the tub is effected by the well-known dolly, which is mounted on a square spindle in the centre of the lid. Through the medium of a rack and pinion, the dolly is turned about half a revolution alternately in each direction by a vertical wooden hand-lever. This lever is placed at exactly the right height for operation without stooping, and the force required to work it backwards and forwards is only six ounces each way, as proved by actual tests. We all know how much easier it is to turn a handle when a flywheel is attached, to equalise the force required; the same applies to the movement

of a lever. Furthermore, a light flywheel running at a high speed is equally effective with a heavy one at a low speed. In the Canadian washing-machine lightness is of prime importance, as the mechanism has to be lifted every time the lid is opened. Multiplying-gear has, therefore, been introduced, the lever driving a large gear-wheel through a connecting-rod, which turns a small pinion on the spindle of a light flywheel. All the gearing is of steel, with the teeth cut from solid blanks, while the rotating parts are mounted on ball-bearings. The square spindle of the dolly slides in an outer spindle, and has a knob at the top by means of which it can be released from the clothes before the lid is opened. A strong metal catch clamps down the lid tightly so as to keep in the steam. As is usual in other washing-machines, the sides and the bottom of the tub are corrugated. The tub will hold six full-sized sheets at a time, which the makers claim can be washed in five minutes. A segment of the lid is firmly fixed to support a wringer, which is fitted with the usual rubber-covered rollers and adjustable springs for providing the necessary pressure. Here, again, ball-bearings have been used for the roller spindles, thereby reducing the effort needed to work the handle. The wringer is detachable, and the machine can be bought without it if desired. All metal parts exposed to the wet clothes are galvanised, while the exterior of the mechanism is thickly coated with enamel paint. The main advantages claimed for this washing-machine are reduced effort in an upright position and the confining of the steam inside the tub when washing operations are in progress, thus keeping the water hot for a longer period, and minimising the risk of the operator taking cold.

STERILISING THE SOIL WITH THE AID OF STEAM.

If ground in which delicate and valuable crops are to be grown could be completely sterilised as regards insects and weed germs, better results would naturally be obtained than is the case when part of the nourishment in the soil is absorbed by alien plants and the seedlings are attacked by injurious living organisms. Tobacco-growers in the United States have lately hit on a plan whereby perfect sterilisation is achieved without injuring the soil as a medium of cultivation for seedlings. The plan referred to is the blowing of steam into the ground from a portable boiler. Rectangular pans of metal or wood are constructed and inverted over the seed-beds to be treated. If built of wood, each pan has strips of iron along the edges, which fit close to the ground, and thus prevent the escape of steam. About seventy-two square feet are covered by each pan, and steam under pressure is turned on for half-an-hour, when the pan is lifted by ring-bolts in the corners and moved to the next section. After being steamed, the ground is covered with blankets, to retain the heat as long as possible. According to the *Scientific American*, it has been found that thirty minutes' steaming will heat the upper two inches of soil to from 208 degrees Fahrenheit to boiling-point, while the temperature reaches 170 to 180 degrees at a depth of three or four inches, and 120 degrees at a depth of six inches. Two hours later, however, the soil at the last-named depth is found to be hotter, reaching 160 degrees. If two pans are used alternately, one may be left on each area for half-an-hour after the steam has been turned off, thereby improving the effect. One thousand square feet of soil can be treated with steam at a cost of twenty-five shillings, which would about equal the cost of weeding, and as less fertiliser is needed for sterilised than for unsterilised ground, there is a saving under this head. Although the early growth of the plants in steamed ground is slower than in untreated soil, they come along more quickly in the later stages, and are ready for planting out a fortnight sooner.

CHEAP CONCRETE HOUSES.

Owing to the present high cost of bricks and mortar and of the labour needed for erecting houses therewith, special attention has recently been given to other building materials, various forms of concrete construction having aroused particular interest. This departure from customary practice is much older than many people imagine, concrete cottages with flat roofs having been built by an enterprising Essex manufacturer a great many years ago. Even before the war the possibilities of concrete houses were attracting notice, and examples had been shown in connection with at least one exhibition in London. During the last year or two still greater attention has been directed to concrete houses, which have been built in several localities. Particularly good results have been obtained at Sheffield with a special mixture of clinker or boiler ash and cement, seven parts of the former to one of the latter being used, together with a proportion of sand. The walls are built on the cavity system, which gives greater warmth in winter and is less pervious to heat in summer than the solid construction. Two houses built on this plan, on the estate of a local landowner, have been occupied for about four years. The special concrete is said to cost less by 40 per cent. than the usual mixture of broken brick or stone, cement, and gravel. According to *The Times*, the experiments show that a bungalow with sitting-room, three bedrooms, kitchen, bath-room, &c. can be built for £400, as compared with about £700 for one of bricks and mortar. Moreover, the operation can be carried out in three months by two men working under supervision, and the house can be made habitable in another week. At the time of writing thirty-two houses were being built on this system, of which ten had been sold. The concrete is

moulded, and the buildings are surmounted by roofs of the same material, so painted as to give the appearance of being tiled. No fireplaces are provided, the rooms of each house being warmed from a central heating system.

PAINLESS OPERATIONS WITHOUT UNCONSCIOUSNESS.

For many years, in fact ever since anæsthetics were brought into general use, one of the aims of surgical scientists has been the discovery of some method of operating painlessly without rendering the patient unconscious by inhalations of ether or chloroform. According to the *Sunday Times*, this desideratum is now an accomplished fact, a system based on the use of phenol having been successfully employed by the surgeons at the chief military hospitals in Milan for some thousands of operations, among which were over three hundred on the lungs, performed by Professor Bruschi of Como. The proposed line of incision is marked with phenol (carbolic acid) by dipping a sterilised scalpel into this liquid, and using the back of the point of the scalpel as a marker. After the lapse of a few seconds, the scalpel is again dipped into the phenol, and the tissues are cut with a slow and gentle up-and-down movement similar to that used in sawing. What happens is that a film of phenol is formed on the blade when it is immersed, and this anæsthetises the tissues as they are cut. Frequent dippings are necessary to maintain the film, which is rubbed off by contact with the tissues or washed away by blood.

A NEW GAS-RANGE.

So little has the ordinary gas-cooker altered in form during the last decade that one might well have been excused for assuming that it had reached finality. Even in the best models, however, the degree of efficiency achieved has not been truly commensurate with the amount of gas consumed, and in certain types there has been marked room for improvement. Realising this position, the makers of the 'Eagle' gas-range described below set themselves the task of bringing out a new gas-cooker in which the known drawbacks of existing types should be removed. They had achieved a large measure of success early in 1914, but owing to the war the new appliance has been placed on the market only within the last month or two. One notable instance of wasted heat in ordinary gas-ranges is the loss from the bars at the top which support the cooking-utensils. The jets from the burners actually impinge on these bars, which become very hot and communicate heat to the whole top. In the new range the framework over the rings is of such a pattern that the jets nowhere play upon the bars, which therefore do not become nearly so hot, the heat being brought to bear almost wholly upon the utensil. Then the burners themselves are so designed that they cannot be blocked or extinguished by foods that have boiled over—an improvement which will be appreciated by every woman who cooks by gas. Although the burners are small compared with the usual rings, they have a greater consumption capacity, the object being to shorten the time taken for boiling, thus reducing the loss of heat and enabling the cooking to be done more quickly. Each burner gives a concentrated heat at the centre of the bottom of the utensil, so that flames do not rise up the sides of a saucepan or a kettle. Some of them are of the duplex type, one set of jets above another. The taps for the burners are all arranged at the front of the range instead of at the side, and each tap has a 'full flame' and a 'simmering' position. For each duplex burner a quarter revolution of the tap turns both sets of burners full on; half a revolution shuts off the large burner, but leaves on the simmering burner; and a further movement to the stop reduces the consumption to a 'minimum point' of one and a quarter cubic feet per hour. The grill burner has also received careful attention, with the result that the heat is more evenly distributed, while its efficiency has been much improved when this burner is used for boiling. All burners are fitted with means for varying the supply of air, which enables them to be used with inferior qualities of gas at different pressures; in fact, gas containing only 350 heat units, against the pre-war average of nearly 600, has given satisfactory results. The chief innovation in the oven is a solid bottom-plate with the burner immediately below it, which distributes the heat evenly. Pastry can be browned in any part, and no drip-pan is required. Another novel feature is the oven door, which has hinges at the bottom and opens downwards into a horizontal position, where it forms a convenient temporary rest for dishes or tins. The tap for the oven burner is similar to those for the top burners, in that, after being left full on for heating the oven, the lever can be pushed over against a stop, in which position the tap will pass just enough gas to maintain the correct baking temperature. Although the oven in capacity is not smaller than the ordinary type, its height is not so great, but legs fitted to the bottom of the cooker raise it to a convenient height. The equipment is completed by an enamelled splash-plate at the back, fitted with a wire-mesh plate-rack, and by detachable extension plates at the sides of the top to accommodate vessels temporarily out of use.

DRAWING LOTTERY BOND NUMBERS.

Most of us at one time or another must have wondered how the lucky numbers are drawn for lottery bonds, and whether due precautions are taken against fraud. In connection with the issue of a loan of 1,500,000,000 francs by the City of Paris, 3,125,000 bonds are to be paid off at par over a period of sixty years, and

some of these will be entitled to bonuses, varying in amount according to the order in which their numbers are drawn in a lottery. It has accordingly been necessary, says the *Scientific American*, to devise some method of conducting the drawings which shall be free from every suspicion of fraud or collusion. To effect this there has been constructed a huge globe, mounted on trunnions, and consisting of an iron framework with half-inch-thick glass panels between the bars, so that the contents of the globe may always be fully visible. The only means of access to the interior is a hole less than one inch across, which opens into a short tube. Cartridges containing the numbers of the bonds are put into the globe automatically by an electric device. When this operation is completed, a steel valve at the inner end of the tube is closed by a spring, while an outer brass door, fitted with an American patent lock manipulated by three separate keys, is secured and sealed with the City seals. Before a drawing takes place the numbers are mixed up by revolving the globe, which is effected by electric motors. The globe comes to rest with the hole at the bottom, and the seals having been broken and the outer door unlocked, an electric extractor is inserted. On a button being pressed, the inner valve flies open for an instant and allows one of the cartridges to fall into the extractor. The pressing of a second button causes the cartridge to fall out of the extractor and through a long glass funnel into a thick glass bowl, from which it is taken for the number to be read and recorded with due formality and precautions.

CONCRETE FOR RAILWAY TRUCKS.

Although the use of ferro-concrete has proved a commercial success for lighters and barges sailing in smooth waters, and bids fair to be extended to the construction of ocean-going ships, one would hardly expect, taking into consideration the severe vibration to which they are subjected, to find railway vehicles built of this material. Yet a fifty-ton coal-wagon was built of ferro-concrete early in this year, and put into service on the Illinois Central Railway. Primarily this development was due to the shortage of steel owing to the war, but a company has been organised to continue the construction of railway goods-wagons on the same lines, and designs for various types have been prepared. The body of the first example measures forty-one and a half feet in length outside, and has a width of nine feet eight inches, while the depth is four feet ten inches. The frame is built of steel angles and plates which serve to support the steel reinforcement bars. Wood panels or forms were placed beneath the floor and outside the sides, says *The Engineer*, and the concrete was then shot in place against these panels by a cement gun inside the car. The appliance, which is much used for ferro-concrete structures, sprays the concrete in a sufficiently solid form to enable it to retain its position when projected on to the steel framing and network. The thickness of the sides and the bottom of the wagon is two and one-eighth inches, and the weight of the complete vehicle, with underframe, wheels, and other accessories, is about twenty-four tons. In future wagons, however, it is hoped substantially to reduce this weight, which was due to the unexpected density of the concrete when applied by the cement gun. The concrete used is known as 'Haydite,' and it is made of shale burnt in a kiln with Portland cement. It weighs only 105 pounds to the cubic foot.

FIBRE GRAMOPHONE-NEEDLES IN THE MAKING.

As the fibre gramophone-needle is rapidly displacing its steel forerunner in public favour, it is obvious that enormous numbers must be manufactured, and it is interesting to learn how the bamboo from which such needles are made is converted into the finished product. The poles must be twenty feet in length, and two and a half to three and a half inches in diameter, says the *Scientific American*, while the exterior must be relatively free from flaws. This feature is of great importance, as only the hard outer skin of the bamboo is suitable for the points of the needles. Each pole is sawn into sections one inch long, which are split in halves. These halves are next cut up by special machines into rough blanks for needles at the rate of 125 to 180 a minute, the soft inner part of the bamboo being removed from each blank in the process. The blanks are then filled into perforated containers, and immersed in hot baths containing an oily mixture at a temperature of 340 degrees Fahrenheit, the process being continued intermittently for about forty minutes. Any excess oil which has been taken up is now removed in rotating barrels containing hardwood sawdust from which the finer dust has been screened out. During this operation a certain degree of polish is also given to the blanks. Finally, the needles are inserted into bushings on a machine which cuts each to a point terminating in the hard cortical surface of the bamboo. The pointing-machines are each capable of dealing with 30,000 needles a day.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

JOCK'S TERMS.

A TALE OF THE MALTA HOSPITALS.

By ALBERT G. MACKINNON, Author of *Hospital Jock*

CHAPTER I —HIS TASK.

'JOCK, we have a case for you in Ward 10,' said the surgeon cheerily as he drew up at M'Gowan's bed. 'The man is in the dumps, and he will not give us a chance to make him well. Try your hand on him, like a good fellow, and find out what is the matter.'

It was not the first time Jock M'Gowan had been entrusted with such commissions. He had a wonderful way with him, and no probing of the surgeon's knife could go so deep as Jock's artful questions and tactful sympathy. Few secrets could defy his methods.

'Ay, weel, I'll dae my best. I'll find oot what the maitter is, onywey,' he replied in tones of confidence.

'His name is Roderick Macpherson. He has been seriously wounded, and unless you can buck up his spirits a bit, it may go hard with him. He has got something on his mind that is troubling him. His moaning and groaning are caused by mental distress, not physical. You must draw out his worry'——

'Like a poultice,' Jock interrupted with a laugh. 'Weel, I'll get it oot, never fear; an' maybe that'll relieve him.'

'Thank you, Jock,' said the surgeon as he turned away. 'You are working your passage in this hospital. I think we shall have to get you put on to the permanent staff. You are the most useful man in the place.'

Jock smiled. He never seemed to need encouragement, but a word of well-merited praise is always a stimulant. Getting into his invalid's chair, he began to wheel himself through the ward, greeting the various patients with a cheery sally as he passed along. Out into the corridor and the adjoining ward he steered his way, and pulled up at a bed above which hung a Scotch bonnet.

'Hae they been giein' ye caster-oil, mon?' he asked in his quizzical way.

A face that was like a map of Scotland, or, rather, a photo of its mountains on one of those cloudy days when its scenery is a study of shadows, looked up at him from the pillow. Rugged, weather-beaten, darkened by a perpetual frown, it was that of a man with a grievance, or something worse. The heavy eyebrows intensified its sombre aspect, though they did not hide the keen scrutiny of eyes very much alert.

'I hae been dosin' mysel'—wi' carbolic,' was the glum response, though it did not lack just a hint of humour. Macpherson had caught the mood of his questioner.

'Gey strong stuff, that. It'll burn ye, mon,' said Jock, feeling for a clue to the patient's real malady.

'Ay, it does that; but it canna burn a' the rottenness that's in here;' and the wounded man pointed tragically to his heart.

It was evident that Jock had won his confidence.

'Tell me hoo ye got yer wound,' asked Jock.

'Which?'

'Weel, we'll begin wi' the ane in yer leg, an' then ye can tell me aboot the deeper ane in the hairt.'

'There's a connection atween the twa,' began Macpherson. 'It was durin' the attack on the Bulgar lines that I got knocked oot. We had ta'en the third trench, an' then had to retire. A shrapnel burst beside me, an' emptied itsel' intil my legs. The doctor has lost coont o' the bits he has extracted. I lay there unable to move, juist lookin' up at the sky. I watched the day breakin', for oor attack had been at nicht. Never afore had I observed sae intently the sun risin'. I had naethin' else to dae, an', strange to say, I didna feel ony pain, but only a numbness. I cudna move my legs, an' sae I lay on my back. Sune I got mair o' the sun than I wanted. It had the range o' me a' richt, an' it didna miss its mark. My lips got pairched, an' then my tongue began to swell. It felt juist as if I had a piece o' red-hot iron in my mooth. There was only ae thocht in my mind, an' that was water. I thocht o' a' the drinks I had ever drunk. The vision o' the well in my mither's back-gairden cam' afore me. Aince or twice as I dozed aff I imagined mysel' workin' as hard as I cud at the haundle, but the water didna come. I tried to turn ower on my side, but the moment I attempted to move a hundred spikes seemed driven intil my legs, an' sae I had to gie that up. I longed for nicht. I prayed for it, but it looked as if my prayers wud never be answered, an' the sun had forgotten to move on, as it did i' the days o' Joshua. I got tired o' my thochts, but I cudna get awa' frae them. Then at last it began to get cooler, an' never hae I blessed a sunset mair. I didna ken that there was waur in store. For a while I felt cool an' contented. The stars cam' oot, an' it was nicht, an' wi' my heid on the grund I lay gazin' up at them wi' mony a queer fancy in my mind.'

'Ye didna feel feared?' interrupted Jock.

'No at the time,' answered Macpherson. 'But it wasna lang afore I got a start that set my hairt thumpin'. When it was quite dark I

began to see figures movin' aboot i' the nicht. At first I thocht that maybe I was dreamin'; but ane o' them cam' quite close, sae that I cud mak' him oot. They were Bulgars prowlin' aboot like ghouls, robbin' the deid an' wounded. I was lyin' in a hollow, an' sae weel hidden. The mon had his back tae me, an' passed on withoot turnin'. I saw the shadows o' several efter that, an' I heard gasps an' cries, an' kenned fine what they were up tae; sae I kept verra quiet. Then the pain began in my throat an' legs, an' I cudna remain silent ony langer. I gied twa three cries, though my voice didna seem like my ain. I thocht the Bulgars wud hear an' search for me, but I was in that state that I didna care what happened. Weel, I kept up my shouts an' groans every noo an' then. It was gey lonesome, I can tell ye, to feel that there was nane to heed. It wud be i' the sma' 'oors o' the mornin' that I pricked up my ears. I heard an' answerin' ca' frae the direction o' the British lines. It wasna lood, but mair like a whisper, an' had a note o' caution aboot it.'

'It wud pit fresh courage intil ye,' said Jock.

'Ay, I'll never forget the music o' that ca' i' the nicht. Mony's the time I hae heard the human voice in song an' speech, but never did it soond sae welcome as then. I forgot a' aboot the Bulgars, an' shouted back. Nearer an' nearer cam' the answerin' voice. Then a' o' a sudden it ceased, juist when I thocht relief was at haund. I called again an' again, but there was nae response. Then day began to dawn, an' I kent the chance was lost. I dinna like to think o' the awfu' horror o' the next day. The sun was mair peetiless than afore, an' my tongue seemed to burn the inside o' my mooth. I prayed for daith to end my misery. Then as nicht cam' on again, an' darkness gathered roond me, a new fear seized me. I feared then I was gaun to dee, an' a' o' an instant the thocht gripped me that I wasna ready. The sin o' my past rose up afore me. Whiles I think my mind wandered, for I thocht I saw the deid bodies roond me movin' an' crawlin' up tae me, an' their deid eyes lookin' intil mine, an' remindin' me o' a' the evil I had done. I began to realise hoo wicked I had been. Then ae sin stood oot frae the rest.'

'What was that?' asked Jock with intense interest.

'I dinna ken whether I shud tell it tae ye or no, but as I hae gane sae far, I may as weel gang the haill length. I telt a lee aince. It didna seem a big thing at the time, but it had awfu' consequences. It sent as guid a mon as ever breathed to the dogs. It slipped aff my lips a'maist afore I kent. Ye see, I was in love wi' Janet Fraser, an' I was verra jealous o' Sandy M'Gibb, especially as I saw he was takin' her fancy. Ae day she an' I were thegither, an' oor talk turned tae Sandy. "I'm hearin'," I said verra jauntily, "that he's tryin' to break aff wi' that Glesca' girl to marry yer money." She looked at me startled an' innocent like. "Ye maun be mista'en," was a' she said; but her falterin' tone let me see that my words had ta'en effect. "Mista'en!" I lauched. "Weel, ye can read the proof wi' yer ain eyes." I happened to hae a letter in my pocket frae a freen' in Glesca inquirin' aboot Sandy. The de'il aye has a tool ready to pit intil a mon's haund. My freen' wanted to ken aboot Sandy's bank accoont, as he had a bill oot-staundin'. He enclosed Sandy's ain letter, in which there were these words: "I wull settle the accoont shortly, as I am comin' intil some money. Margaret Page threatens me wi' a lawsuit if I break my contract, but I'll tak' my ain wey." "There," I said, showin' her the letter, "you can see for yersel' that what I say is true. Whase money does he speak o' but yours, an' wha is this Miss Page but the girl he's engaged tae?" A' the time I kent it was a lee. Sandy M'Gibb had a sma' saw-mill, an' his letter dealt wi' machinery he was gettin' frae Glesca, an' the second remark aboot Margaret Page was entirely a business ane. It referred to a furnishin'-shop that had aince belanged to a person o' that name, an' since her daith the business had been cairried on as before. I kent this, but it suited my purpose no to explain it at the moment, wi' the result that Janet Fraser believed what I said. She left me in great anger at Sandy, an' by some ill-luck he chose that verra nicht to gang an' ask her to be his wife. What she said I didna hear, but it maun hae been pretty stingin', for the next day he was a changed mon. He selt his saw-mill, an' left the pairish. "Roderick," he said tae me the last time I saw him, "I'm gaun tae the dogs," an' if report be true, he didna tak' lang aboot it.'

'Ay, ye've got summat on yer conscience,' remarked Jock gravely. 'Was the lee ever fund oot?'

'That it was, but ower late to undo the wrang, though no to punish the culprit. Janet made inquiries, an' unbeknown tae me wrote tae my freen' in Glesca; an' when I went in my turn to propose tae her, ye ocht to hae heard her words. I didna wunner then that Sandy had fled, an' when I left her door that nicht I kent there was nae livin' for me in the same pairish. I left tae as sune as I cud, an' I've never been back since. I cudna face her for warlds. I wud raither chairge a hundred Bulgar trenches than gang hame. Weel, I thocht it a' ower that nicht as I lay there, an', mon, my wounds were naethin' tae the pain at my hairt. It maun hae been aboot ane o'clock when I heard a low ca' again, juist as the nicht afore. This time it was nearer me. I tried to answer, but words stuck in my throat, though I managed to mak' some kind o' a soond. Then the ca' cam' nearer still, an' sune I saw a

mon crawlin' alang on his haunds an' knees tae me.

'"Whist! Quiet!" he whispered. "There are Bulgars aboot."

'His words startled me, no because o' what they said, but on accoont o' their accent. Was I dreamin' or wanderin' in my mind? The voice was that o' Sandy M'Gibb, the mon I had been thinkin' aboot, an' that I hadna seen since he had gane tae the dogs.

'"Sandy, is that you?" I gasped.

'"Ay, Roderick, it's me," he answered. "I didna expect to find you here. It mak's me a' the mair gled that I didna turn back. Last nicht I heard yer ca' an' tried to find ye, but had to gang back owin' to a patrol o' Bulgars juist aheid o' me. There are some o' them gaun aboot the nicht, sae we maun be gey carefu'."

'"It's guid o' ye, Sandy, to risk yer life for me as ye hae done," I replied, wi' remorse in my hairt.

'"My life's no muckle worth, Roderick boy," he whispered. "I hae made a bad mess o' it. I touched bottom, an' that's gey far doun. Then the ca' o' King an' country fanned the last spark o' guid left in me. I felt there was ae thing I cud dae wi' my muddled life, an' that was to gie it for ithers. The chaps say I hae been gey reckless wi' it, but then they dinna ken the reason. Ye'll be the fourth mon I'll hae brocht in since oor stunt, an' yet somehoo, mon, it disna ease the conscience."

'"Ye're troubled that wey tae," I said. "Sae am I."

'"Weel, this is no a place to discuss it. I maun get ye back if I can," he replied. "We canna staund up, or we'll be seen. I'll hae to drag ye in, since ye canna dae onythin' wi' yer legs."

'He untied his puttees, made a rope o' them, passed it under my airms, an' then ower his ain shouthers, an', still crawlin', began to haul me alang. I helped as much as I cud wi' my haunds, but the agony o' thae moments beats a'. Every nerve in my body seemed to be a bayonet stickin' intil me; yet it was naethin' tae what I was sufferin' in my hairt. Here was I bein' saved by the mon I had ruined. At last I cud staund it nae langer, an' when he halted to tak' a rest I said, "Sandy, I hae somethin' to tell ye. Ye're heapin' coals o' fire on my heid, an' it's causin' me mair pain than my wounds. I dinna deserve to be saved by you."

'He was gey tired, an' had to listen. Sae I made a clean briest o' my sin, an' telt him a' aboot my lee to Janet Fraser, that had caused her refusal, an' that had started him on the track o' ruin. He said naethin', but I saw his feelin's were workin' hard. I ended by beggin' his forgi'eness, though I acknowledged I had nae richt or claim. Efter I had feenished, it was a lang time afore he spoke. Then he said in a voice as hard as iron, "Ye hae tempted me the nicht mair than I hae ever been tempted afore. I made up my mind to leave ye here to dee like a dog, the vile cratur that ye are; but efter a' I hae risked to get ye in, I'm no gaun to gie up at the last. Sae come alang. I'll save yer life, but dinna ye ever ask me again to forgi'e ye, for I'll no dae it—na, never!"

'Wi' that he started to pull me on, an' then he seemed to hae the strength o' a Samson. He had nae regaird for my wounds, an' though I cried oot for pain, he didna stop. I suppose he was ragin' sae in his mind that he forgot a' else. I believe if the puttees had broken he wud hae left me; but they held, an' sae we reached the trench. He had to staund up there to roll me ower, an' juist at that moment the risin' moon peeped through a cloud an' showed us up, an' next instant a sniper fired an' hit him. We were baith cairried doun the line. The last I heard o' him was that he was daein' weel, an' had been ta'en tae Malta also. Noo it's an awfu' thing to be unforgi'en, an' that's what I'm feelin' the noo.'

Roderick Macpherson ended his tale with a groan of misery that seemed to rise from the very depths of his soul.

'I'm gled ye hae telt me a' this,' said Jock. 'Maybe I'll find Sandy, an' bring him to anither frame o' mind.'

'If ye cud dae that!' said Roderick, as his eyes shone for a moment with joy. Then he shook his head, and added, 'It's nae use. I ken Sandy, an' he said, "Na, never!"'

CHAPTER II.—HIS TACT.

JOCK did not waste time in his search, and next day, to his great delight, he heard that Sandy M'Gibb was a patient in St Paul's Hospital, which was only a short distance from his own. To get a friend to wheel him over in his chair was an easy matter. It was not Jock's nature to do anything by halves, and so he could not rest until he had started on his errand of peace-maker.

He trusted to circumstances to guide him, and to give him an entrance into the hard heart whose lack of forgiveness was killing poor Roderick Macpherson.

'I hear ye're to get the Military Medal,' Jock began tactfully as he drew up at Sandy's bed, 'an', as a brither Scot, I've come to say hoo prood I am. I'm telt that ye brocht in fower wounded men efter that stunt at Saloneek.'

'Ay, ane ower mony,' was the gruff response.

'Dinna say that, mon. I hae seen the last ane ye saved, an' though he is gey bad, the doctors hope to pull him through, an' a better sodger there cudna be. Ye've helped the "man-pooer," as they ca' it. But yer job's no richt done yet, an' I hae nae patience wi' half-feenished wark.'

'Div ye mean that I didna save Roderick Macpherson? Weel, if I didna, I dinna ken wha did or cud. I'll confess that I was verra near leavin' him in No Man's Land, but as I had risked sae muckle to find him, I determined to complete the job.'

'But that's juist what ye havena done,' interrupted Jock with some severity, which made the other open his eyes in wonder.

'Ay, I did that; an' it cost me this wound, worse luck!'

'Ye got him intil the trench, I admit; but that's no a'.'

'Weel, it's for the doctors to dae the rest.'

'Is it?'

Jock had a startling way of putting a question that seemed somehow to undermine all one's reasoning. Sandy certainly was taken aback. He was conscious that some axiom, whose sureness he had never doubted, was suddenly discovered to be rotten.

'If the doctors canna cure, wha can? Tell me that!' he demanded with some warmth, answering, Scot-like, question with question, in his determination to show that he could handle the gun of interrogation as well as his interviewer.

'You can,' answered Jock, unable to restrain a smile, for he had most successfully led the conversation up to the point he desired. He had strategically won the dominating position.

'Me?' was the astonished reply. 'I'm no a doctor.'

'There are some pairts o' us medicines canna reach, but words can; an' Roderick's warst wound lies there. He's deein' o' remorse, an' its only cure is forgi'eness, an' it's only you that can speak the message o' pardon that'll pit new speerit intil him.'

'He can dee, then,' was the uncompromising response from the bed.

'An' the British Airmy'll hae lost a guid sodger a' through you. Mon, if I was a general, I wud mak' ye forgi'e him, or duck yer heid.'

'Ye can dae what ye like; but when I think o' a' my past, an' hoo it was due tae Roderick Macpherson, it's no in me to pardon. I'm no made that wey. Sae ye needna fash yersel' wi' talkin'. I'm no the kind to be got roond wi' palaver.'

Jock looked at the wounded man with some amazement and no little secret admiration. He had met his match. All his persuasive powers had failed. He had sense enough to see that it was useless to persist, that it would only render the other more stubborn in his resistance. So, with a curt 'Good-day,' he wheeled his chair round and out of the ward.

Defeat did not agree with Jock. He could not eat his meals, and he did not talk for thinking. His cheeriness vanished, and the ward felt the chill of its eclipse.

'What's wrong with you, Jock?' asked the nurse in surprise.

'There's naethin' the maitter wi' me but my brains,' was the response, for he was cudgelling them to no purpose, and was angry with himself.

But Jock was lucky. Perhaps his luck consisted in always seizing his chances, and being on the lookout for them. Two days later he was still battling with the problem on his mind, when he overheard scraps of a conversation near him. An R.A.M.C. man who was going to Egypt, and whose boat had called at Malta, had come ashore to see a wounded friend in the next bed to Jock.

He was amusing his listener by giving an account of his voyage and describing his fellow-passengers.

'We have a Scottish nurse, a perfect brick,' he was saying. 'Her name is Janet Fraser, and she does credit to the clan.'

'I wunner if she's frae Loch Darroch, by ony chance?' interrupted Jock.

The visitor looked round at him with curiosity. 'Yes,' he answered, 'that is the parish she comes from. Do you know her?'

'No personally, though I hae been thinkin' a great deal aboot her this last day or twa. Is she mairrit yet?'

'I should think not, or I should not be so interested. I do not know why a girl like that keeps single.'

'I ken,' Jock replied with emphasis; 'an' the reason does her credit. But she'll no remain unmairrit lang noo. In fact, she'll no leave Malta withoot bein' engaged.'

'Well, it will have to be to myself, then,' laughed the visitor. 'The boat leaves to-morrow, and she is not coming ashore, and of the men on board I think I stand the best chance.'

'She maun come ashore at aince. Tell her a life is hingin' i' the balance. Gang an' bring her this meenit. It's maist imperative. Noo, dinna hesitate. She disna ken my name, sae there's nae use sayin' wha sent ye; but tell her that her ain future depends on it, an' the happiness o' three lives. Noo, haste ye.'

There was something very commanding about Jock on occasions, and this was one of them. The visitor felt his mesmeric power, and did what many a nurse and doctor had done before —his bidding.

No sooner had his messenger gone than Jock got into his chair, and calling for a volunteer to wheel him, set off for St Paul's Hospital. He found Sandy M'Gibb in much the same mood as he had left him.

'Weel, Sandy, nae cheerier?' was his salutation. 'I hae got news for ye, though, that'll mak' ye sit up an' brush yer hair. Wha div ye think I am gaun to bring to see ye?'

'No Roderick Macpherson, I hope, for I'll hae nane o' him, sae ye needna trouble.'

'If that 's yer speerit, I hae a guid mind no to bring her.'

'Her? Wha?' asked Sandy with a new suspiciousness in his voice.

'Janet Fraser, of course. She 's here in Malta.'

Sandy's face flushed, the frown passed, and a softness crept into his voice. 'Ay, I wud be richt gled to see her, an' wud be muckle indebted tae ye. Dae ye happen to ken, lad, if she 's mairrit?'

'Na, she 's no mairrit, an' for a verra guid reason.'

'Why?'

'She 'll no tak' them that want her, because she didna get the ane she wanted. She 's been loyal tae ye a' thae years, Sandy, though ye dinna deserve it. Mind ye, it was only her mind that was turned against ye, an' no her hairt.'

'Dae ye think sae, mon?' There were tears now in the wounded man's eyes and a tremor in his voice.

'Ay, I hae nae doots aboot that.'

'Gang an' bring her at ainee. I 'm fair deein' to see her noo,' said Sandy, sitting up in bed and beginning to make himself tidy.

'No sae quick, Sandy. I hae got my terms.'

'Terms?'

'Ye dinna expect me, surely, to dae a' this for naethin', an' tae a grumblin' body at best!'

'What dae ye want, then?' asked the other in surprise.

'That ye 'll write wi' yer ain haund on a piece o' paper that ye forgi'e Roderick Macpherson frae the bottom o' yer hairt for a' the ill he has done ye, an' that ye 'll never bear him a grudge. I 'll no budge a step to get Janet until ye pit that intil my haunds, an' withoot me she canna find ye, for she disna ken ye 're in Malta.'

'Mon, ye hae got me fine,' laughed Sandy. His hardened heart had been burst by the explosive of love, whose power Jock knew only too well.

The message of forgiveness was written, and Jock hurried with it to Roderick Macpherson, who could scarcely believe his eyes as he read it again and again.

'He forgi'es me,' he cried with the exuberance of a new-found relief. 'Mon, Jock, I 'm thinkin' that the next best thing to forgi'ein' is bein' forgi'en.'

When Jock got back to his ward Janet Fraser was there. In simple words he told her the whole tale.

'It was I who did the great wrong in ever doubting Sandy,' she cried. 'Take me to him that I may ask his forgiveness.'

'He 'll gie ye that a' richt,' answered Jock. 'He 's learned the art o' it.'

He took her to her former lover, and then he left them alone. They did not notice him slipping away—they were too busy forgiving each other.

THE RED-HOUSE GARDEN.

WADI GHUZEE, BEFORE GAZA, PALESTINE, SUMMER, 1917.

O'ER ridge and plain calm hung the mist of dust,
Save where it soared amidst the whirlwind gust.
The distance trembled 'neath the noonday glare;
Hot airs hung stagnant in the wadi, where
The transport toiled along.

Above, along the banks, the garden slept,
With yellow-flowering cactus-hedge, where crept
Gray lizards, rattling through the fleshy leaves
And bushes, all entangled with the reeves
Of blue convolvulus.

Aweary of the constant, thundering guns,
I turned old Sandy up the path that runs
Toward the red-tiled house, which ruined lies,
Veranda wrecked, roof gaping to the skies,
A heap of masonry.

I led him through a gap, and carefully
We picked our way between an almond-tree
And snipers' post by sandbagged, loopholed hedge,
With cartridges still littered on its ledge,
Where nigh there lay some graves.

I saw the broken water-wheels, the wells,
The fruit-trees green, though riven by the shells,
Citrons and oranges with whitest flowers,
Vines, olives, fig-trees with their richest dowers,
And limes and towering palms.

The tamarisk and cedar gave their shade,
Whilst in the open places melons strayed.
And yet the garden in its beauty lay
A waste o'ergrown with weeds—I turned away:
Despair was even here.

I wondered why should all this slaughter be;
And then I saw a dark pomegranate-tree,
Aglow with crimson blooms. Some petals fell
Like showers of drops of blood that seemed to tell
Of wounds, and pain, and death.

It seemed as if the very trees did bleed;
But when I closer looked, then I took heed
That whence the flowers had fallen always hung,
Unripe and small because they were so young,
The round pomegranate fruit.

E'en then the fruit swelled with the luscious seeds
That satisfy the thirsty traveller's needs—
I saw the promise, when this war should cease,
Of all this weary land refreshed by peace,
And rich with seeds of life.

This land from tyranny we yet should free;
Not useless then would all this slaughter be.
A random shrapnel's smoke came drifting by;
But hopefully I turned, and horse and I
Walked on toward the sea.

ROBERT R. THOMPSON.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SEVENTH SERIES

KAVANAGH'S LUCKY BEAN.

By MARY STUART BOYD, Author of *Our Stolen Summer*, *The Fortunate Isles*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE LASCAR'S GIFT.

TURNING up the collar of his coat, Dennis Kavanagh trudged homewards through the mud of the Glasgow streets, his soul hag-ridden by sullen dissatisfaction with existence. If fate had nothing better to offer a man than long days filled with arduous labour whose profits others reaped, and nights spent in a dreary lodging, then life, he reasoned, was hardly worth living.

As he passed across the Suspension Bridge, his rain-sodden cap pulled down over his eyes, his hands thrust deep into his pockets, Kavanagh's bitter musings were abruptly broken by a wail of distress. The night was a dark one in late September, and it was not until he was close upon them that Kavanagh realised that the inarticulate cry for help rose from the centre of a group of lads. As he came abreast of them the wail was repeated. Shouldering aside the youths, who had been too busy baiting their victim to notice his approach, Kavanagh found that the object of their interest was an Asiatic, who crouched against the framework of the bridge, his whole attitude abject with terror.

Kavanagh was a powerful man. It was the work of a moment to knock two of the assailants' heads together, and to disperse the others by a threatened onslaught. The bullies scattered and vanished, Kavanagh turned his attention to the creature huddled against the railing. Restraining the oriental's attempt to prostrate himself in gratitude before the muddy boots of his deliverer, Kavanagh helped him to stand up. Then, seeing that the brown face was livid with terror, and that the spare form in the flimsy Eastern garments was still shaking with fear, he said, 'See here, now. Them blackguards is settled with. You've no call to be vexin' yourself. Where would you be wantin' to go? I'll take ye there.'

When, with some difficulty, Kavanagh had gathered that his protégé was a Lascar seaman belonging to a ship that was berthed a little way down the river at the Kingston Dock, he resolved, against his physical inclination—for the night was damp and he was weary—to escort him within sight of it.

Deciding that the shivering Lascar would be the better of inward warmth, Kavanagh took him into a public-house at the corner of Bridge Street, and treated him to a glass of hot rum. It was gratifying to watch the magic wrought by the steaming liquor. Under its influence the man became another being. His limbs ceased to quiver; the warmth of colour returned to his face. He waxed communicative, and Kavanagh found himself listening to a confidential recital from which he vaguely comprehended that the Lascar was urging upon his acceptance something that he evidently considered specially precious—something for which he claimed marvellous powers.

They were seated in a quiet corner of the bar; and, after glancing cautiously about to make certain that his action was unobserved, the Asiatic produced furtively from some secret hiding-place in his flowing raiment an object wrapped in a scrap of oily rag.

'Bring good luck. He give weesh,' he whispered, pressing it into Kavanagh's hand.

'Give *what?* Oh, a *wish!*' cried Kavanagh, amused. 'Faith, then, why don't ye keep the good luck for yourself?'

The Lascar shook his head, and held up one lean finger. 'One man, one weesh,' he said solemnly.

'An' it's one, is it? An' you've had yours? An' if it's a fair question, what might be the nature of the luck it brought yourself?'

But the light had died out of the brown man's face. Shaking his head, he affected not to understand the meaning of his host's question.

'I'll wager it's maybe been something the creature would have been better without,' Kavanagh decided with quick sympathy, and tried to induce his guest to accept a shilling in exchange for his treasure. But the Lascar was resolute in refusing the money. 'Him not for sell. Him give,' he stubbornly reiterated; and a few minutes later Kavanagh bade him good-bye at the entrance to the dock where his ship lay.

The glow induced by the hot spirit had evaporated by the time Kavanagh, after retracing his steps, had reached Apsley Place, and climbed the three long flights of steps leading to his lodging. Opening the front-door with his latch-

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key, he let himself in, and entered the room that was his.

He lit the gas, which whistled shrilly when turned up, and his habitation was revealed as a chamber of uninviting aspect. The wall-paper was sad-hued and dingy. The red-and-black table-cover showed traces of long wear, the chiffonier and horse-hair-covered chairs were old-fashioned and clumsy, and the tread of generations of feet had robbed the carpet of its original pattern. Clothes hung on pegs, and the half-open doors of a wall-bed hinted at the place of his repose.

Glancing round with a sensation of disgust, Kavanagh sat down, and had begun unlacing his boots, when the bump of an iron tray on the outside of the door heralded the entrance of his landlady with her lodger's tea. Mrs Knox was a gaunt widow of depressing exterior. Her leading characteristic was a habit of punctuating conversation with laconic and non-committal 'Imphms!' Had she been more happily circumstanced, Mrs Knox would have been esteemed good-looking, for her features were regular, and her spare figure erect. But a long-drawn fight with poverty, and the grievance she cherished against her late spouse, had embittered her, rendering her complexion sallow and her eyes dull; while her strictly antagonistic attitude towards life had the lamentable effect of lowering the mental temperature of those with whom she came in contact.

Mrs Knox's housekeeping might be scrupulously honest, but it robbed living of all its graces. The meal she now brought in was singularly unappetising. Set forth badly on the uncovered tray were a brown tea-pot with a broken spout, the half of an ill cut loaf, and a plate containing a segment of salt butter.

'You're surely late the night? Your tea's been masket a good while,' Mrs Knox remarked in the tone of one who thinks she has a grievance. 'Ay, a good half-hour. Imphm!' Finding her lodger was not in a loquacious mood, she repeated 'Imphm!' tentatively, and departed.

Left in peace, Kavanagh drank his bitter tea and took some bread-and-butter, scarcely knowing what he ate. Then, pushing aside the tray, he resumed his reverie at the point where it had been interrupted by his rescue of the Lascar.

Yes, it seemed indeed a pitiful thing that his years of unremitting toil had brought him so little satisfaction. Yet another winter was beginning without any change for the better in his prospects. He saw before him months wherein he would stumble out in the murk of early morning, to return after nightfall, weary and dispirited. Months of unsavoury meals, of a woefully limited horizon, of distasteful recreations in suffocating halls, of Sundays and infrequent holidays spent in loafing, and smoking, and drinking adulterated liquors. Yet there seemed no way out, he told himself.

As he groped in the pocket of his overcoat for his pipe, his hand encountered the gift that the Lascar had forced upon him. Taking it out, he unrolled the greasy rag. Enclosed was something carefully wrapped in cotton-waste. Peeling that off, Kavanagh found a small substance neatly sewn up in a covering of faded green silk. Beginning now to feel a certain respect for a treasure on whose coverings so much thought had been bestowed, Kavanagh slowly unpicked the stitches with the point of his knife. To his disappointment, the talisman was revealed as a crescent shaped bean about an inch and a half long. Its glistening black surface was girdled by a scarlet band.

From the first Kavanagh had been sceptical regarding the magical properties attributed to the bean, and now that his sympathy for the persecuted Asiatic had subsided, he was almost inclined to ridicule the whole matter. But the man's earnestness had unconsciously impressed him. Something in the curious appearance of the seed attracted his attention, and he fell to dreaming. Suppose this strange gift, to which its former owner had attached such value, really owned the supernatural power ascribed to it of being able to grant him a wish, what form would that wish take?

As he rammed the tobacco into his pipe Kavanagh told himself that he already knew what that wish would be. His one haunting craving was for a life in a new country where there was room to move unjostled, pure air to breathe, and clean earth to till; a land where the work of his hands would enrich himself, and not only his masters. As he mused, his thoughts stole back to his early boyhood's days spent in a remote part of Ireland, where, small and turf-smoked though it might be, their cabin was yet a cosy home; where, though they were not rich, there was always a potato and a sup of milk, or a cup of tea, to spare for those poorer than themselves.

A dark time of trouble had succeeded those happy, care-free days. Hidden discontent had given place to open rebellion, which was followed by stern action on the part of the Government. Dennis remembered how his pacifically inclined father had been arrested by their own fireside, where he was sitting in his shirt-sleeves, and taken off handcuffed to jail, with some other suspects, in an open car on a bitter winter's night.

'An' niver the coat on the bare back of him. An' him the wan that coughed all through the winter. Oh, wirra, wirra! but it was clane murder. An' him the innocent man!' had been his mother's constant moan, until the news came of her husband's death from pneumonia in the county jail. After that she ceased complaint. Dennis recollected coming with his widowed mother to Greenock, where, after seven years of longing for the happiness of which she had been robbed, his mother died.

As he sat by the fireless hearth with the strange bean in his hand, these old memories returned to him with unusual clearness. Dennis remembered, too, how, the night after he had seen his mother's wasted body consigned to the pitiful resting-place which was all he could afford to give her, he had gone, in the bitterness of his grief, and in his desire for revenge, to a secret gathering of one of those societies against which his mother had always cautioned him; and how at the meeting, mere lad as he was, he had taken a vow, signed with his own blood, to be at the call of the society whenever his services, in any capacity, were demanded.

That was now ten years ago. The lad of seventeen was a man of twenty-seven. His ideas had matured and modified. He realised that though undoubtedly Ireland had grievances, of which the most had been made, she also enjoyed many privileges which were totally discounted by the stirrers-up of sedition. Of late, reports of disturbances, murmurings, murders, and informations had troubled him. He was glad that he had so completely severed all connection with Ireland; for, since the night of frenzied grief on which he had ruthlessly signed away his freedom, he had never had the slightest dealings with the little group of embittered men who constituted what was known as the Society of Silent Workers. When, a few nights after his single attendance there, he had revisited the ramshackle building where the meeting had taken place, it was so obviously deserted that Dennis could have doubted that he had ever been inside it, whether the scene in the dimly lit cellar between himself and the five masked men had actually taken place.

Dennis recalled, too, how, later, when the thought of what he had done hung heavy on his heart, and the earnest warnings of his dead mother haunted his mind, he had written a letter to the society asking to be released from his promise, on the plea that he was too young to be held to a pledge that had been given when he was beside himself with sorrow, and 'fair distracted' by the loss of his mother. Stealing up at night, he had pushed the letter in below the shabby door, leaving a corner exposed that he might know whether it had been taken in. When he stole up again the corner of the envelope was not visible, but the meeting-place seemed as abandoned as before. Seven years later, when he left Greenock for better-paid work in Glasgow, Dennis Kavanagh had assured himself that a chapter in his life that he would fain have forgotten had been completely blotted out.

Now, as he sat with the odd-looking bean in his hand, it all came back to him with disquieting reality; but he thrust the memory aside impatiently, and returned to the matter of the moment. He would wish, and give the alleged luck-bringer an opportunity of proving the efficacy its late owner had claimed for it.

'Sure, an' it 's mighty bad taste in him to be a Lascar, an' a fireman at that, when he had a wishin'-bean on him,' Dennis commented with a smile. Then he remembered how the man had tried to impress on him that the bean would grant only one wish to each owner. If he could have but one wish, Kavanagh counselled himself that he must make that wish a tolerably comprehensive one.

'What I 'm wishin' for is a new life in a decent, clean country, where it 'll be my own land that I 'll be workin', an' my own home that I 'll be livin' in, an' where I 'll be a free man, an' not a slave to nobody. Are ye listenin'? D' ye hear me, bean?'

As Dennis spoke, half-playfully addressing the seed that lay on his toil-hardened palm, he started a little, and looked more closely at it; for it seemed to him as though strange signs, like some cryptic writing, had suddenly revealed themselves, clear and vivid, on the scarlet band that encircled the bean, and then, before he had time to note their form, had as swiftly faded away.

When he went to his wall-bed, it was with a pleasant expectation of coming adventure that Kavanagh fell asleep. Something exciting, he felt convinced, was about to happen.

CHAPTER II.—THE SMALL, GRAY MAN.

THE incidents of the previous evening had assured Kavanagh that a change in his circumstances was impending. But when the strident, insistent hooter awoke him as usual in the darkness of the late autumn morning, and he scrambled into his soiled garments and went out into the clammy streets to resume the work that seemed to have neither end nor beginning, going on and on like some endless revolving belt, he felt dismally convinced that nothing ever would occur to alter the existing monotony of his life.

Two important matters, he knew, handicapped him—the lack of education and the want of capital. Even after he had repaid the money he had borrowed to buy comforts for his sick mother, and to defray the expenses of her interment, he had found it impossible to lay by anything worth considering. Seven times he had contrived to put past a little sum, and each time some tragic occurrence or other stern necessity arising among fellow-workers who were less well off than himself had touched his tender heart, and he had impulsively given all that he had. No, while he was surrounded by so much poverty, Dennis knew he would never be a hoarder.

'It 's not in me to save,' he ruefully told himself when, for the seventh time, he found his pockets empty. 'It 's myself that has

known too well what bad trouble is, to be standin' by an' not lendin' a hand when times is hard.'

Kavanagh took his breakfast to the works with him, warming his can of tea at the furnace in the brief space allotted for the morning meal. At noon he returned to his lodging to eat, hastily, a dinner which consisted alternately of stewed steak and potatoes, and minced collops and potatoes, varied on Saturday and Sunday by broth and boiled beef. As the day was Tuesday, a soup-plate of very liquid mince and a bowl of potatoes boiled in their skins awaited him.

As he was peeling the potatoes with a black-handled knife and fork Mrs Knox entered the room, and stood, a gaunt figure in a funereal widow's cap, gazing stolidly at her lodger.

'Imphm!' she said at length, a note of challenge in her voice. 'So ye've had a veesitor for once.'

Dennis nearly choked over a lump of potato. 'A visitor? Is't to see me, you're meanin'?'

'Imphm! A veesitor,' repeated Mrs Knox, nodding her head affirmatively, and awaiting further questioning, as though she regarded the exclusive information she held as something too precious to be lightly parted with. 'Imphm!'

'Who was it?' Dennis was getting impatient.

'He didna say.'

'When was it he would be comin' here?'

'Oh, jist about the back o' breakfast-time.'

'And what might he be wantin' with myself?'

'He didna say, and I didna speir. Imphm!'

'Och, then, woman alive, what in Heaven's name *did* he say?'

'He speired were ye in. And that was jist about all. Imphm! That would be all.'

'An' what was he like?'

'Oh, jist ordinary-lookin'. Imphm! verra ordinary.'

Dennis was naturally a patient man, but had he obeyed the impulse of that moment, he would, without a regret, have throttled the lean, scraggy neck of his maddeningly taciturn hostess. A visitor of any kind was a novelty to the lonely bachelor, and a strain of romance in his nature associated with his lucky bean the guest whose call he had been so unfortunate as to miss.

'An' was that the last word that ever he spoke?' demanded Kavanagh, keeping a tight grip on his self-control.

'Every word—exceptin', maybe, that he'd call back.'

'Faith! an' that's one thing, anyway,' cried Dennis, cheering up.

'And that's maybe him the now,' Mrs Knox added deliberately, as a gentle ring sounded at the door-bell.

A moment later she showed into the room a man whose appearance Dennis felt she had been right in speaking of as 'ordinary.' Had he been asked to describe his unknown visitor, Dennis would have said that he was small, and gray, and quiet-looking. It was only when he spoke that some hint of a resolutely forgotten memory thrilled Dennis, and set his nerves aquiver.

'Dennis Kavanagh?' the stranger said interrogatively.

'That's my name.'

'Who's in this house?'

'Not a livin' soul exceptin' herself.' Dennis's thumb indicated the direction in which Mrs Knox presumably was. 'The other lodgers doesn't come home at dinner-time.'

'Send her out. Tell her to go for beer, or anything,' he added as Dennis hesitated. 'We must speak without being overheard.'

Opening the door abruptly, Dennis had an impression of the skirts of the worthy dame vanishing into the kitchen. Presumably Mrs Knox was reluctant to leave home, for she took an unconscionable time in dressing to go out to fetch the beer Dennis requested. When at length she departed, attired in a beaded cape, a crape bonnet, and black cotton gloves, the small, gray man leant out of the window and watched for her appearance at the street door, before assuring himself, by opening the doors of the other rooms, that the flat had no occupants save themselves, and that they were likely to be undisturbed till her return.

That done, he drew a chair close to that of his host, and in a low, impassive voice revealed the business that had brought him.

'Dennis Kavanagh, you are a member of the Society of Silent Workers.'

'But that was ten years ago, an' in Greenock. How ever did ye find me here?' Dennis asked, a cold perspiration breaking out over him.

'We have never lost sight of you for a day,' the man said quietly. 'But till now we had no need of you. When you voluntarily joined the society, you pledged yourself to perform any task that might be required of you.' . . .

'It was but a lad I was then, an' half-crazed by my poor mother's death,' Dennis broke in. 'I was clean beside myself, so I was, an' when my senses came to me again I wrote an' took back my word.'

The small, gray man waved a deprecatory hand. 'Once a member, always a member, until the society releases you,' he said conclusively. 'Now, I have come to tell you of a service that, successfully carried out, would free you from your pledge.'

'An' what's the nature of that same?' Dennis asked hoarsely.

'If you have followed events in Ireland lately, you will have seen that three men have been executed on evidence sold by an informer. That traitor is at liberty to enjoy his blood-money, while the victims of his treachery are dead and rotting in dishonoured graves. Under the protection of the Government, the traitor is on the

eve of sailing for the Colonies, where he expects to live long and prosper.' . . .

There was a pause. Then the gray man leant over and touched Dennis on the knee. 'That informer may sail, but the Society of Silent Workers has vowed that he shall not reach land alive, and you are the member who has been elected to carry out their decree.'

Kavanagh sat rigid, his eyes fixed upon the man who was thus impassively committing him to cold-blooded murder.

'This is Tuesday. His ship sails from London on Friday, going direct to Auckland. A passage will be taken for you. I shall give you money to get your things for the voyage. Any outfitter will tell you what you require travelling second-class,' the visitor went on, as though nothing was left for Dennis but to obey. 'And here is a weapon.' He laid a neat parcel on the table. 'But you are free to choose your own method. There are many ways possible on a long voyage. Only, I give you a solemn warning that if he lands alive your life won't be worth an hour's purchase. Quigley must never set foot in New Zealand.'

'Quigley!' Dennis had started forward, hot colour flushing cheeks that a moment before had been blanched. 'Not Nathan Quigley what kept the store at Ballymacrana?'

'That's him.' The gray man was watching him closely.

'The scurvy devil! An' it's himself that's the informer, is it? Then he's back at his old tricks again. My poor mother—Heaven rest her soul!—always said it was Nat Quigley that sent my father to his death. So it's Nat Quigley, is it? The dirty blackguard!'

'Well, it's either your life or Quigley's now.' The man spoke quietly, but with finality. 'If Quigley fails to survive the voyage, no matter in what way he meets his death, you'll find yourself the owner of some land in New Zealand, and money to work it; and your membership of the Society of Silent Workers will be instantly cancelled. But if Nathan Quigley steps on to Auckland wharf alive, another member of the society will dispose of Quigley, and you can order your coffin, for'—here he spoke more quietly than ever—'you'll stand in urgent need of it.'

Dennis sat silent. Matters were moving too swiftly for him to grasp.

'You'll find money and a single ticket to London in this pocket-book. Let me see. To-morrow is Wednesday. Get your outfit to-morrow. Have it packed in a steamer-trunk and sent to the Central Station. Take the morning train on Thursday, and when you get to London go to the Remenham Hotel. It's a small place just outside Euston Station. A room will have been taken in your name, and you'll find your passage ticket and further instructions awaiting you there.'

The sound of steps on the stair outside and the click of Mrs Knox's latch-key in the lock warned them of her return. The gray man rose to go. As he also stood up Dennis caught sight of the Lascar's bean lying on the mantelpiece, and a thought flashed to him.

'You'll excuse me for askin',' he said with elaborate courtesy, 'but when might all this have been decided on, in a manner of speakin'?'

'The lot was cast last night—about nine o'clock, to be quite accurate. There were three other members of the Society of Silent Workers who would have served our purpose equally well; so we balloted, and the lot fell to you. By the way, what name would you choose to travel under?'

'I'll stick to my own, by your leave,' Dennis decided with sudden heat.

On re-entering the house, after watching the head of the small, gray man disappear down the stair, he cannoned against Mrs Knox, who carried a tray on which were a jug of beer and two tumblers. She gaped in open-mouthed astonishment at the unexpected departure of the visitor.

'He's never away without the beer, and me that's had all the bother of going for it!' she exclaimed indignantly.

'Faith! an' it's mighty bad taste he has to be leavin' the same,' Dennis agreed; 'but it's yourself that'll have to drink it, I'm thinkin', for it wouldn't suit me at all.'

Dennis returned to his room, where his scarcely touched dinner still stood on the table. He had no stomach for food. As he lifted his pipe from the mantelpiece the lucky bean again attracted his attention. To his surprise, its appearance seemed to have altered. It looked dull now. The once shining black surface was dim. It scarcely resembled the brilliantly striped object he had held in his hand while he wished for—what was it?—a new life in a clean country, and his own land to work on. And this was how he was to get the desire of his heart. A church clock near by had just finished tolling nine, he remembered, when he wished the fatal wish; and the gray man had said that it was only a few minutes after nine that the lot appointing a member of the Society of Silent Workers to cold-blooded and deliberate murder had fallen to him.

Snatching up the bean, with a swift spasm of anger, he threw it on the floor and ground it under the iron heel of his boot, determined to make an end of it. But the bean resisted his strongest effort to crush it. Picking it up and hastening into the kitchen, Dennis thrust it into the hottest part of the fire, and covered it up with the glowing coals.

Mrs Knox, still attired in the rusty-beaded cape and the crape bonnet, was sitting by the table, which was littered with the débris of dinner, sipping a glass of the rejected beer. She watched Kavanagh's action curiously, but without com-

ment. When he had left the house to hasten back to his work, she deliberately poked out the fire, and raked among the embers until she found a crescent-shaped object girdled by a faint red band.

Brushing the powdering of ashes from its surface, she wrapped the bean in a fragment of tissue-paper, and put it carefully away in a large, empty pill-box, which she placed in a drawer of the dresser.

'Imphm!' said Mrs Knox.

(*Continued on page 707.*)

CURIOSITIES OF THE PEERAGE.

By Charles G. Harper.

THERE are few more interesting and entertaining studies than that of the history of the Peerage of Great Britain and Ireland, whether from the purely historical, the genealogical, or the human, personal point of view. It is a subject full of poignant incident and unexpected humour, of surprising eccentricities and contradictions, as well as of somewhat fine-drawn distinctions. For instance, take the co-existence of a Duke of Devonshire and an Earl of Devon, the holders of those titles belonging to the unrelated families of Cavendish and Courtenay. The explanation of the two territorial titles being extant, against all the rules governing such dignities, may be found in the fact that when the title of 'Earl of Devonshire' was created, in 1618 (the earldom was raised to a dukedom in 1694), that of 'Earl of Devon' was assumed to have become extinct in 1556. Not till 1831 was the belated claim made and allowed that in the case of the earldom of Devon the patent of nobility, instead of limiting the succession to heirs *de corpore suo*, included collateral heirs-male. Thus for 275 years the Courtenays of Powderham had been earls, unknown to themselves.

It is the usual practice, but one by no means invariable, for newly created peers to adopt for their titles the names of places in which their properties lie. A notable exception is that of the earldom of Lytton, a peerage originally a barony, created in favour of Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, the famous novelist, in 1866. The novelist was 'Baron Lytton'—in which we see an ennobled family name, without territorial application (as in the case of Earl Roberts and other instances). The second Baron Lytton was, in 1880, advanced to the condition of Earl of Lytton (or Litton), in Derbyshire—an extraordinary change when it is pointed out that the family have not, and never have had, any properties in the hamlet of Litton, near Tideswell. Further, except by adoption on the most slender grounds (or none at all), the family name is not properly 'Lytton,' but 'Wiggett.' The history of this ennobled family is, in fact, a curious example, among many which might be adduced, of the assumption of a high-sounding name in place of an ancestral plebeian one. Thus, inquiry into the Lytton genealogy shows that the father of 'Bulwer-Lytton,' the novelist, was one William Wiggett, who in 1756 assumed, instead of his own name, that of 'Bulwer,' which had been his mother's. The novelist, naturally enough, with his romantic temperament, copied the paternal example and added to 'Bulwer' the maiden name of *his* mother, Barbara Lytton, who was daughter of one Richard Lytton, a person whose name had been 'Warburton' before he changed it in 1762, on inheriting Knebworth from his maternal uncle, William Robinson Lytton. This maternal uncle himself had not a drop of the ancient blood of the knightly Lyttons of Knebworth. Coming into possession of their lands as 'William Robinson,' he completed and rounded off the circumstance by taking their name as well.

The ignorance of clerks who drew patents has been responsible for some quaint, abiding errors. Thus, when Henry Bennet, in 1663, was created Viscount Thetford and Earl of Arlington, he had really selected for the superior title the village of Harlington, in Middlesex; but a Cockney clerk wrote the title without the letter 'H,' and so 'Arlington' that notorious member of the Cabal became and remained.

It is sometimes difficult to ascertain which place, among several of identical name, confers a title. It has been suggested that the Earls of Derby are not earls of that county, but of the Hundred of West Derby in Lancashire, in which the greater part of their property is situated. The actual patent does not make the point clear. It has also been suggested that Godmanchester in Huntingdonshire, and not the great city of Manchester in Lancashire, confers a dukedom upon the Mandeville family; but the patent distinctly reads, 'Manchester, co. Lancashire.' Yet, against this, the family lands are in Huntingdonshire, which (since we have already indicated the ignorance of old-time clerks) may only mean that an error was made in imagining '(God)manchester' to refer to the better-known place.

However that may be, it is certain that the Duke of Newcastle takes his title from Newcastle-under-Lyme, and not from Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Earl of Roden, whose title comes from one of the numerous Roding, Rothing, or Roothing villages in Essex, where the old family seat of 'New Hall,' now a farmhouse, is situated, was styled of 'co. Tipperary' for a purpose. No one could conceivably have been ignorant of the

fact that the river Roding and the numerous villages in Essex along its course are not in Ireland. But the peerage was an Irish and not a representative British one, entitling the holder to a seat in Parliament; and so this quaint evasion was resorted to.

On the other hand, numerous older peerages were held by the possession of lands, and passed —not necessarily to heirs in blood—with the properties. These were the baronies and other dignities 'by tenure.' The new owner acquired the title also. In Italy and elsewhere on the Continent, it is said, the purchaser of an estate may still purchase a title of nobility as well. Upon this point rests an ancient bitter exchange of gibes between Henry VIII. and one of his nobles. The king chanced to meet Lord Burgavenny, who was a baron by tenure of the castle and lands of Abergavenny, but had mortgaged them, and was presumably, therefore, not strictly in theory a lord. 'Good-morrow, my Lord of Burgavenny, without Burgavenny,' quoth the king. To which retorted that more witty than discreet noble, 'Good-morrow, my Liege-lord of France, without France.' The peculiar sting of this repartee lay in the fact that English sovereigns, long after they had lost those parts of France they once ruled, continued to quarter the lilies of France upon their royal shields; and so they continued to do until George III. abandoned the hoary pretence. Henry VIII. owned only Calais, which was lost in the reign of his daughter, Queen Mary. It was generally ill jesting with Henry VIII.; and as we do not hear of anything happening to Lord Burgavenny, it is perhaps not unfair to surmise that he thought of this quip afterwards, and put it about that he had dared that furious Tudor to his face. But, indeed, the story may be a vain tale, although it is certainly an old one, having been told by Sir Roger Wilbraham in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

It is singular to reflect that there are several peerages whose titles confound the identical names of extremely large and very insignificant places. Thus, the Duke of Leeds is duke of a village of that name near Maidstone, in Kent, and not of the great Yorkshire city of Leeds. The Earl of Wilton takes his title from Wilton near Ross, not from Wilton near Salisbury, where the Earls of Pembroke have their seat. Nor does the Earl of Wilton now own Wilton, which was sold to Guy's Hospital more than two centuries ago. Again, the Earl of Bradford is not of that great textile-weaving town, but of a place in Shropshire; and Lord Berwick's title comes not from Berwick-on-Tweed, as might be supposed, but also from Shropshire.

The spelling of the title of Lord Willoughby de Broke hides from general recognition the fact that this ancient barony derives from a little brook. The proper pronunciation is 'Brook.' This peerage has an interesting descent from a Sir John Willoughby who, in the fifteenth century, married Anne Cheney, daughter of Sir Edmund Cheney of Broke, in Wiltshire. Their son, Sir Robert Willoughby, by writ of summons to Parliament, 12th August 1491 (or 1492), became Baron Willoughby de Broke. With the death of this nobleman's son in 1522 the title lapsed into abeyance in default of a male heir, but was regranted to the grandson of the second baron's elder granddaughter, Sir Fulke Greville, who thus, in 1621, became Baron Brooke of Beauchamp Court, Alcester. Fulke's cousin, Robert Greville, succeeded him, and a long line of Brookes followed. The eighth Baron Brooke was promoted Earl Brooke in 1746, and in 1759 was created Earl of Warwick. The present Earl of Warwick is likewise Earl Brooke, and 'Lord Brooke' is the courtesy title of his eldest son and heir. In 1695 the House of Lords recognised the claim to the original barony of Richard Verney (a descendant of the first Lord Brooke's sister), who thereupon became third Baron Willoughby de Broke. The present holder of the barony is Richard Greville Verney, nineteenth Lord Willoughby de Broke. The actual 'Brook' indicated may easily be found, about half a mile south-west of Westbury Station, Wiltshire; and Brook House, the former family seat, is still there, although it is long since any of the Willoughbys or Grevilles owned it. The mansion is now a farmhouse, and the brook runs below it picturesquely in a water-splash. Although much of Brook House has been demolished, and though what remains is largely put to use as barns and cow-bartons, enough is left to show that it must once have been not only a stately residence, but also something of a fortress.

Instances of quaintly perverted place-names in titles include that of Winchelsea, which in the Earl of Winchelsea's patent is 'Winchilsea;' while the extinct earldom of Pomfret perpetuated the local way of pronouncing 'Pontefract.' But no instance can be more amusing than the patent by which John Campbell, the first Earl of Breadalbane, was in 1677 made to figure as a French rather than a Scots peer—'Earl of Brea d'Albane.' He was, however, much more than this, being also Earl of Holland (in Lincolnshire), Viscount of Tay and Paintland, Lord Glenurchy, Benederaloch, Ormelie and Weick; on the whole, rather an intimidating personality, so far as titles went. Beside this glittering galaxy of titles, with queer spellings, the modern one of 'Zetland'—Earldom of the Dundas family in 1838, and Marquessate in 1892—is a simple curiosity. Zetland is a way of spelling 'Shetland.'

The Duke of Argyll is, among other things, 'Lord of the Isles;' but the English peerage has had two or three creations of Baron Lisle, which amounts to much the same thing. Thus, Lord Lisle (pronounced 'Leel,' as in French *l'isle*),

summoned to Parliament by writ in 1299, was referred to in the mingled French and Latin phraseology of those times as 'Johannes de Insula, de Wodeton'—that is to say, 'John of the Island, of Wootton,' the island being the Isle of Wight. It is interesting at this point to note that the French town of Lille, much mentioned in recent times, derives its name also from an island formed by two streams in the midst of what is now the city. On it stood the castle of the ancient seigneurs. 'Lisle thread' takes its name from Lille.

Perhaps the title of 'Albemarle' is the most curious of all. It was assumed by James Monck when created a duke by Charles II. The title became extinct with the death of his son; but in 1696, when William III. desired to honour his fellow-Dutchman, Keppel, by creating him an earl, the recipient of the honour took the title so recently vacant. The reasons for this selection do not emerge. The Keppels remain Earls of Albemarle to this day.

But where is 'Albemarle'? Gazetteers of England do not contain the name; nor, for that matter, do those of any other country. Whence, then, did it come? It derives from France, and is the same in its origin as the French title of the Duc d'Aumale. Aumale is situated in Normandy, and owes its name to the quality of the soil to be found there—a kind of whitish marl. The original Latin form 'Alba marla' became in Old French 'Aubemarle' and 'Albemalle,' and later 'Aumale.'

The title of Clarence, now extinct, last lapsed in the person of Prince Albert Victor, eldest son of Edward VII., who was created Duke of Clarence and Avondale in 1890, and died not long afterwards, 14th January 1892. This once-favourite title for sons or near relatives of royalty was first borne by Lionel, third son of Edward III. It had a curious derivation, coming, in fact, from the 'Honour of Clare,' in Suffolk, belonging to his wife. Earlier owners of those lands were the De Clares, who not only took their personal name from the place, but rose to be Earls of Clare, and in course of time, warring and conquering with the English in Ireland, gave their name to what has ever since been County Clare in that country. To return to the dukedom of Clarence—created for Prince Lionel in 1362, it became extinct on his death six years later. The second holder of the title, Henry IV.'s second son, Thomas, also died without issue. An evil fate befell the next Duke of Clarence, George, brother of Edward IV. In 1478 he was put to death (some say drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine) in the Tower of London, and his titles and estates were forfeited.

The title was revived in 1789 for Prince William, son of George III., who afterwards became William IV. The Duke of Albany, youngest son of Queen Victoria, had among his other titles that of Earl of Clarence. He died untimely in 1884. The 'Clarence' title has, therefore, unhappy associations which are likely to prevent its being revived.

Among curious titles must certainly be reckoned that of Lord Saye and Sele, which sounds like a firm determination to stand by what has been said, even to delivering a duly attested and sealed deed—an irrevocable 'what I have said, I have said,' in fact. But this odd double title has nothing to do with saying and sealing. It was in its origin the Barony by Writ of Say, created in 1313, and extinct or in abeyance by 1399. It was revived in 1447 in favour of a Fiennes of Hurstmonceaux, who took the additional title of 'Sele,' which comes from one of the Seals in Kent—perhaps the village of Seal, near Sevenoaks. The title of 'Say' was assumed by reason of a descent from that family through the new peer's grandmother.

Modern titles are fully as picturesque as the old, full of resonant sound, sometimes, too, a little uncouth. When the Rolls family was ennobled by the conferring of a barony, the recipient chose the title of 'Llangattock,' after one of the twenty or more Llangattock villages in the county of Monmouth, in which 'The Hendre,' the seat of that family, is situated. This title, scarcely a euphonious one, is already extinct. But it was not so bizarre a title as that of 'Magheramorne,' chosen by Sir James M'Garel Hogg when made a peer thirty-two years ago. A pleasant legend was current at that time, which told how the newly coroneted Sir James, attending a reception in London, where he had long been known and respected as Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, was announced by a footman (who either could not remember or could not pronounce the new title) as 'the late Sir James M'Garel Hogg'! The portly new peer, however, made a less ghostly entry than might have been expected from this terrific introduction.

The conventions to be observed in the assumption of titles are sometimes neglected, either accidentally or deliberately. It is hardly credible that two identical dignities should exist concurrently; but the history of the title 'Earl of Leicester' shows us that such indeed has been the case. Thomas William Coke of Holkham—that great 'Coke of Holkham' who was one of the most wonderful agriculturists England has produced—was the son of one Wenman Roberts, afterwards calling himself 'Coke,' whose mother was Anne Coke, sister of Thomas Coke, created Earl of Leicester in 1744. At his death, in 1759, this short-lived creation became extinct. The title was revived in 1784 in an entirely different family—the Townshends. The second Townshend, Earl of Leicester, succeeded in 1811, and also to the superior title of Marquess Townshend, and died in 1855, when that of 'Earl of Leicester' again lapsed.

Meanwhile 'Coke of Holkham' had in 1837,

at the age of eighty-three, been raised to the peerage as 'Viscount Coke and Earl of Leicester of Holkham,' an extraordinary title in itself, but additionally strange because the Townshend earldom was still in being. We have thus the remarkable phenomenon of two 'Earls of Leicester' existing side by side for a period of eighteen years.

SPORTS.

A STORY OF THE WILD.

By F. St Mars, Author of *Snapshots of the Wild, Pinion and Paw*, &c.

I.

'SOFTLY! softly! softly!' the snow seemed to whisper as it fell, as if adjuring the wind to rest and be still.

But the wind would not be still. It tore and gnashed; the only live thing, it seemed, upon 'our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed downs' that night.

But—ah!

What was that sound between the gusts? A terrier, surely? Yet no terrier ever barked with so guttural an ending, so lonely, so mournful, so utterly, desolately wild a note.

A dark shape detached itself from the furze, paused a moment upon the edge of an avalanche of moonlight, as if not relishing it, and, in the wake of a cloud-shadow, slid, scarcely perceptible, across.

In a cup-shaped hollow, full to the brim in summer with golden furze, clinging bramble, and age-old hoary elder, but now a cauldron of tossed foam petrified (*alias* snow), the fox checked in his tracks. For a full two minutes he stood there, carven, among the soft confusion. But there was nothing there—only the snow, falling, falling, falling, and the wind tearing over his head.

He was not there by chance, however, 'brer fox.' He knew his job—had to, or die. The hollow *should* have held rabbits by the score, as it always had done, but—not to-night, thank you! Their holes were all about, everywhere, gaping, wide-eyed, empty.

With a flourish of his fine, full brush, the fox flung about, half-petulantly, and—'froze' stiff, face to face with another beast, *not* a rabbit.

White as the wind-whipped snow was that other, but with a black 'paint-brush' on the end of his tail, and in his flat wedge of a head his cruel eyes burned *red*. He was long, low, sinister, and snaky—an ermine, which is a stoat painted white by winter.

There was no need to ask what that one wanted there—not the fox, for sure. Question was whether he was worth killing.

Master Ermine settled the problem, however, by taking a back-somersault—at least, it looked like it—into a rabbit's hole, and going out like a switched-off electric light. And perhaps the fox was rather relieved, for in the wild the stoat has a reputation for many things, but 'hands-upping' is not one of them.

Reynard removed, belly flat and 'slick,' to a furze-bush near the top of the hollow. More than once had he played pirate to the stoat's privateer, and pounced upon a rabbit as the stoat drove it out; but not to-night—to-night, for some inexplicable reason, there was nothing doing.

The moon came out from behind a cloud, as if to see what the shady couple were 'at,' and shone, and shone, coldly still, minute after dragging minute, but saw nothing.

Finally the stoat came out 'for keeps,' far across the hollow, sneezed thrice—dabbing his nose into the snow each time, because his legs were so short—and, with his very own sidelong gallop, vamoosed.

The fox got up, scratched himself dog fashion, and quitted also.

That was the very first time in a lifelong experience either of them had known that hollow to contain no rabbits.

The moon dodged back behind a cloud, as if tired of waiting.

The snow began to fall again.

II.

Reynard dropped his nose, flung up his brush, and started to make a cast round the hollow to see if the populace—his one certain dinner on such a night—had 'refugeed,' so to speak; which they had. And half-way round he halted, so suddenly that he had to sit down on his tail.

There was a slope, steep almost as the roof of a house; there was furze, old beyond memory, and elder as old as the furze, all gnarled and writhen; there were mouths of holes, huge and gaping, regular black caverns, almost large enough to admit a man; there were flints and chalk lumps, big and heavy and scattered, as if quarried by navvies; and the crawling roots of the trees were all polished in places, and all mucked up in others, where the diggers had rubbed their hide or wiped their muddy feet upon them, as fancy prompted. And in the middle of it all, bang in the eye of the 'cynical discomfortable moon,' a beast, heavy, squat, misshapen, uncouth, rugged, malevolent. It was like a scene trans-

ferred straight by magic from some bygone, prehistoric time, a picture of the Stone Age, a cast-back to the things that had been, a dream of the past.

The fox, however, was no dreamer, and it was he who, with the true dog's restlessness and impatience, broke the spell. He moved—put his forefoot down from where he had held it suspended 'twixt rise and fall, and the beast turned its long, black-and-white-slashed head, and—had at him! I am not sure, but think it did grunt. I *am* sure that its long claws gleamed in the greeny-white light. And it is quite certain, too, that everything marked it for a badger. But it was more than that. It was *the* badger, the old 'boar'—hoary with goodness alone knoweth how many years—owner, master, boss, patriarch, leader, chief, what you will, of the colony of badgers represented by those cavernous dug-outs all around.

That, however, was not the point. The fox knew that badger. Every downland fox—and there were more than enough—knew that badger (some had cause to). All respected him, but none looked for him on such a night. He ought to have been asleep deep down in the chalk, instead of up in the cold, looking as if he wanted somebody to 'strafe' as a sacrifice. And the fox—offering, as it were, a fair broadside—got it.

The rest was flying flints and parchment-stiff leaves, an avalanche of grunts and obscene chatterings—which I do not translate because unprintable—and many white fang-flash, over-shoulder threats at reprisals from the astounded fox, as he skated round crawling roots and poised boulders ere he scuttled himself clear. Perhaps some one had been trying to 'draw' Brock with dogs that day, and had upset his notorious temper. Reynard did not know, nor care.

III.

Came our fox then, after about half a mile of half-frozen loafing, to another sudden stop—even more sudden than any that had gone before; but this time he did not 'freeze.' He merely looked—quite casually—down between his neat black forepaws at—well, at nothing. Indeed, there was nothing there; at least, if you except the elemental moan of the Channel tide a few hundred feet below, and the squawk of a herring gull dreaming about his latest sin, somewhere on a four-inch ledge perpendicularly beneath, there was nothing there. Nothing? Nothing, I tell you, but the 'white cliffs of Old England,' and the fox had halted on the top of 'em in full stride, with an inch to spare 'twixt himself and oblivion. Verily, they have strange nerves, these wild-people.

Far down the shore, where the white surf churned with a ghostly glare in the dark, something yelped disconsolately from time to time, as it were, between waves. Our Reynard, however, did not answer, though it was a fox—canvassing the tide-line hungrily, no doubt, for anything old Ocean liked to fling him. It was a fox of the wrong sex to interest him, perhaps; or perhaps, to his mind, the downs were too full of *them* already. Not that he, at any rate, was unsociable, as some people think foxes are; but too much company meant too much competition, and in weather like this he was beginning to realise that there was not enough to go round. Prey, indeed—the teeming rabbits of the downs, the finicking hares, the creeping partridges, the rats about the great downland barns—everything that he depended upon for a living—appeared to have sauntered into Spookland and no more returned. He must live somehow.

Then all at once he stiffened, and quivered from head to heel. He had not moved, mind you; he was too experienced a hand for that. He was still peering down between his neat paws at the turmoil hundreds of feet below him in the sickening, empty dark; but it was nothing there that he saw.

Fact was, he had suddenly become conscious that something or some thing was watching him; eyes unseen were upon him in the dark. You may know that feeling; some do. In the wild, however, they are much more sensitive to it than we mere human beings are. It constitutes for the 'wildies'—most of them, at any rate—a sort of extra sense.

But the fox did not *show* what he felt. That was a simple maxim. Only, about the back of his neck, his hackles rose. Otherwise, he still stared down. He was waiting for the eyes to disclose. If they knew he knew, they might never do so—might attack before he could move.

Then, quick as thought, he whipped round, spun upon his haunches before you could blink, and—found himself face to face with another dog-fox.

For a very long minute the two remained facing one another with that deadly stillness they know in the wild alone.

The eyes of the other fox shone with a peculiarly metallic green in the moonlight.

Oddly enough, they were absurdly alike, those two foxes, in size, calibre, so to say, cut and rig, even in their very fine proportions, and in everything save one feature—colour. In colour they were quite different. Reynard's throat and belly were white, and the tip of his splendid brush was white also, but the other fox had a black tip to his tail, and his underparts were grayish-black, a most exceptional thing. Otherwise, both animals were of the same reddish-brown, of course.

Since they were within fighting range of each other, our own fox, Reynard, had no intention of disclosing his feelings. He had that at the back of him which precluded argument, and

could literally feel the emptiness of the void under his tail.

It was the other, however, who showed his hand. He crouched down on his forepaws like a puppy asking one to play. And he whined. His action was plainer than many a man's words. 'Be friends,' he said, as obviously as if Heaven had given him speech.

And they *were* friends. In three seconds they were 'mock pouncing' like puppies. In three seconds more they were trotting away together across the upflung slopes—two long, prick-eared silhouettes against the white, with full-fine 'fat' brushes trailing out behind.

Heaven help anybody in the wild world now who might find himself in the path of that alliance! One cunning head was bad enough. But two——!

IV.

Something, however, had gone wrong with the uplands that night. It was as if a spell had been cast upon those 'downs that swerve and aspire in change of heights that the dawn holds dear.'

They visited together the Roman camp—a sure 'find' generally.

The long ramps of cushioned turf showed only faintly as snowdrifts now.

And together they peered over the top—but the still white amphitheatre beyond lay utterly empty, uncannily still. Ordinarily, if stealthy enough, Reynard had known the 'camp' alive, as if in the dark night

> The downs are peopled then;
> Fugitive, low-browed men
> Start from the slopes around
> Over the murky ground.
> Crouching they run with rough wrought bow and spear;
> Now seen, now hid, they rise and disappear,
> Lost in the gloom again;

but 'twas only rabbits, rabbits of the downs, and perhaps a hare or two, broken in panic at the scent of him or another foe.

Later, however, when they had squirmed to a far corner, where began the sunken road by which the Roman legionaries could descend swiftly into the Weald unseen, it seemed really as if

> Soft on the dewfall damp
> Scarce sounds the measured tramp
> Of bronze-mailed sentinels,
> Dark on the darkened fells,
> Guarding the camp,

and for a moment both the foxes and the musing observer were deceived. But it was only a 'writhen thorn,' from whose burdened (and still berried) boughs the snow fell from time to time in the wind rushes, with soft and muffled flops.

Together the two encompassed one of the towering, isolated barns of the downs—loopholed for musketry—rearing aloft from its own inky shadow in the moonlight.

Here the rats had always swarmed. And here, ambushed beside the trough—frozen stiff, had they but thought about it—where 'the slow black oxen toiling through the day' were brought to drink, and where the rats must quench their corn-bred thirst, or die, the two foxes waited in vain. No rat showed itself—not so much as a whisker; and no rat made a sound, without or within—those vermin, who seem unable to 'carry on' without making sounds, sounds innumerable.

Together, too, the foxes most carefully crept up to windward of a 'dew-pond on the heights, unfed, that never fails.' But it failed them that night, for 'twas frozen; and of all the numerous hares of the downs who, like many of their lowland fellows, dearly love a drink as a rule, not one, nor any other living thing—as the untrodden virgin carpet showed—had been there.

Then the couple gave it up. For the first time, the downs, their home, had, as it were, locked them out; and they realised in the same moment, I think, that they must, if they would live and not freeze together—their steaming breath was forming in icicles in the triple-edged nor'-easter already—they must turn their red backs upon their beloved downs and hunt elsewhere.

A minute later you beheld them, long, lean, and lithe, galloping easily together, and openly, too, for they knew they had none to fear, adown the sheer northern white scarp of the downs that led to the lowlands, to civilisation, to food, they hoped; but perhaps—as they, of all beasts, well knew—to death.

V

The high outlying fields they passed, all aglimmer and agleam in the snow, their stunted hedges scarcely discernible, but no living thing they saw.

The hedges grew, and the fields got smaller. Trees began; and once a hill-road, and once a chalk-stream, by a bridge, they crossed.

The trees thickened.

The hedges closed in and shut out the view; and suddenly, in a secluded gateway, Reynard stopped—so suddenly that his companion, the 'black' fox, almost trod on his brush.

Reynard's head was down. Reynard whimpered like an excited puppy, and in a second his companion followed suit. In two senses of the term, their tails went up. And well they might, too, for here, plain to see in that placid, frozen glare, leading all one way, downwards, were the unmistakable quadruple tracks—hind-feet always outside and in front—of rabbits galore, and here the larger trail of the hare, and there, again, the odd, miniature bear-like impressions of a stoat, and, not far off, the still more

tiny ursine marks of a weasel. The chain-like trail of an otter was there, too; and the 'broad arrow' of more than one moorhen; and here, there, and everywhere, small but plain, marked with a groove where the tail had been applied as brake, going down into the hedge-ditch, the peculiar intricate foot 'seal' of the rats. They were all here, all going one way, all converging upon—upon what?

Both clever canine heads went up, and stared downhill, and—they saw. Ahead, the moon all aglow on its snow-covered roofs—house and buildings and stacks—the grouped trees and orchard shrouding black around it, lay the big downland farm. *There* were the rubbish-heaps for the otter; there the mangold and the potato-cave, and the kitchen-garden for hare and rabbit; there the corn-bin, the pig-sty, and the wheat-stack for the rats; and rat, hare, and rabbit for stoat and weasel. And here, the two foxes knew, must be their destination.

Till then, you will admit, both young foxes had nobly kept their heads; but from that moment, I think, they were a little bit above themselves—not drunk exactly, but 'a wee bit jolly' with the smells they had scented in the gateway. Perhaps it was that they had—the snow had lasted a week—been debarred from good hunting so long. Perhaps it was the time of year, but—no odds!

They put up a hare in the swede-field, and coursed her, greyhound fashion, whimpering like dogs, neck and neck. But she beat them on the upgrade, and they, remembering the gateway, and being disinclined for a long, uncertain, stern chase, turned back.

They tracked a rabbit into a spinney no bigger than a cottage-garden, and Reynard went in to turn him out, while the 'black' fox waited without. Three times Reynard nobly brought him up to the edge of covert, but each time bunny's heart misgave him. At last, however, he ran for it—all a-bobbing in the moonlight—both foxes only ten yards behind. Across the field he ran a fine race; and through the hedge into the road; and then—nowhere!

The two foxes shot, breathless, into the middle of the road, and stopped.

Then they started.

Two eyes, green and glinting, coldly staring, regarded them fixedly from the inky brambles in the opposite hedge. And in the same moment both foxes, out of the corner of their eyes, were aware of two shapes that leapt into the road farther down, and cantered lithely towards the farm. There was no need to tell *them* what those were. Trust a 'nut' to recognise a 'flapper.' Trust a young fox to spot a young vixen.

Next instant the owner of the eyes was in the middle of the road, barring their path—their *obvious* path.

He was a dog-fox, old, scarred, and hard-bitten, and so patently gray that he almost shone silver in the moonlight.

For one brief, stiffened pause, he measured them. Bent, yellow-fanged, and snarling, he weighed cunning against agility, experience against youth. Then, working on the principle, evidently, that sudden attack is the surest defence, he sprang at both.

But Reynard sprang to meet him. They scarcely seemed to touch, truly, yet there was a flick of gray fur flying upwards, and three crimson beads, growing, all in a row, on Reynard's flank, as he pivoted, quick as light, two yards beyond.

Both leapt at the old fox then, one from each side. There was an explosion of snarls, and a whirl of snow, and how that old gray reprobate managed to get himself clear of that mix-up is a knock-out. A leering, evil grin of lifted upper-lip, and a villainous snarl, he gave them as he jerked himself off. Then, still with an insolent flourish of the old gray brush, he left them.

He may not have known it, of course—and they certainly did not—but those two young foxes were half-brothers. And I have very good reason to believe—it was jolly hard lines, no doubt—he was the father of both.

VI.

What followed after that is best left to—well, the night. Certain it is, however, that a hare by the garden cabbage-patch found herself chased by one fox and cornered by three more; a rabbit, chipping bark in the orchard, ran four ways when frightened suddenly, and found the jaws of a fox or a vixen at the end of each; the rats round the stackyard got, for ten minutes, the fright of their lives; and the farm cat, coming round the barn-corner, innocently enough, so nearly exploded with scandalised horror that people found her on the roof in the morning, unable to climb down. But—but—— W-e-l-l, look here, what happened in the fowlhouse is best left unsaid. It ended in a gun, anyhow, and barking dogs, a double gleam of flame, reports, and a double shrieking hail of pellets.

Then, as the dawn broke, and the redwings began weeping, and the fieldfares started to laugh at them, four foxes—two vixens and two dog-foxes—sore, but full-fed and happy, climbed up to, and vanished into, one of the great, age-old, jungle-like brakes of giant furze that here and there relieve the monotony of the downs.

And what happened after that is—the property of the M.F.H. But I can tell you this—since he makes no secret of it—though hounds, drawing that same furze-brake that same day, began by hunting two young foxes, a 'white' and a 'black,' they ended up eventually by killing an ancient rogue, so old that he was nearly silver. The youngsters must have fouled their scent

with the old boy's somewhere after the beginning, and, if I may so put it, left dear papa to face the music alone. Heigh-ho! but it's the old yarn—like the battleship captain being torpedoed by his own submarine son at manœuvres. What's that? 'Survival of the fittest'? Yes, I suppose so. Nature's bloomin' game all the time. W-e-l-l?

A FORTNIGHT IN BORNEO.

I.

THERE was a pleasant thrill of excitement aboard when the Chinese look-out in the crow's-nest reported land. Seen from the deck, it was merely a thin blue haze on the horizon; but as morning advanced it took shape, and soon we could distinguish mountain-tops and deep valleys. It was our first view of south-eastern Borneo, the 'island of wild men.'

Late in the afternoon we made the small light-vessel that marks the entrance to the channel to B——. Our arrival was reported to the harbour-master, and shortly afterwards we were boarded by the Dutch pilot and customs officer. The customs officer at once required the wireless aerial to be lowered. We had hoped that he might allow it to remain in commission, so that we could receive Singapore's nightly press bulletin, but he would not acquiesce. Rather, he ordered the wires to be lowered immediately and the wireless cabin to be sealed. This done, we proceeded at half-speed, winding in and out up the shallow, silted river-mouth. On both sides the country was densely wooded. Great forests, stretching without a break, clothed plains and lowlands in browns and greens and yellows, until the colour merged indistinguishable in the blue haze of distant hills and darkening valleys. Soon, over on the starboard bow, we made out the little town of B——, the red and white of the houses peeping pleasantly from among the green palms.

We put alongside the petroleum-wharf, a rather slimly built wooden jetty running some hundred yards into the river, and carrying six or eight heavy oil-pipe lines. A footway ran alongside. On a dark night it was advisable to walk warily there, for the path was narrow, ill-lit, and without a hand-rail. Innocent-looking holes and loose logs added to the danger, but a suggestive gurgle in the dark water below effectively incited to caution.

As we neared the jetty we saw two figures, gorgeously apparelled, sitting awaiting our arrival. At first we thought they must be native dignitaries, but they proved to be Malay barbers. As soon as a gangway was run ashore they came aboard. They wore kilts of comparatively sober hue, but their blouses and turbans were of great brilliance. Heavy rings dangled from their ears. In their hands they each carried a little folding-stool, while over one shoulder was slung a box containing the implements of their calling. Stolidly, perfectly indifferent to our battery of cameras, they walked aft to the shaded deck beside the galley door, where they sat themselves down and waited custom. Ere long a steady snip, snip of the scissors bespoke a brisk trade among our shaggy Chinese sailors.

A squad of scantily clad Malays under a native foreman was soon busy with the oil-pipes. Though slimly built, these men were strong, and showed much ingenuity in the handling of the heavy line. They worked to the rhythm of a monotonous chant. When the connecting-line from ship to shore was rigged, the loading of the cargo commenced. The petroleum, or benzine, was stored in huge whitewashed cisterns near the end of the wharf. It was pumped aboard at the rate of eighty to one hundred tons per hour.

Benzine gives off a highly inflammable gas. No fire of any description is allowed aboard a vessel loading. Even the fire down below in the stokehold must be drawn. Smoking is forbidden, and to see that this regulation is enforced several native policemen are stationed on the ship with plenary powers. All cooking is done ashore. A very comfortable bungalow was at our disposal, and there we took all our meals. Sleeping accommodation was also provided, but we preferred to sleep aboard, even though morning found us half-gassed with the heavy benzine fumes. Our Chinese crew had quarters across the road from ours, but they spent most of their time among their compatriots up-town. There was plenty of opium to be had, so with them sleep and food became very minor considerations.

B—— is purely a petroleum-station. The wells, which are extraordinarily rich, are situated some twenty miles inland. Big pipes lead the oil down to the station, where it is refined, and by-products, such as wax and vaseline, are manufactured. The Dutch who own and manage the station number some three hundred souls. Half-a-dozen Britishers and a few Germans and Scandinavians make up the rest of the European population. The remaining twelve thousand inhabitants are of many nationalities. The majority are Malays, but there are also large numbers of Chinese and Indians, with a sprinkling of Dyaks and Arabs and others whom we did not recognise. The Chinese are a very prominent element in the community. They hold important clerical posts in the station, and one of their number is station doctor. But it is as traders they excel. They make admirable merchants. Their capacity for work and for taking pains is

enormous. In bargain-driving the most stony-hearted son of Abraham would bow his head in shame at their cuteness. They run the laundry and the large general store at B——. Here can be had a truly marvellous assortment of goods, ranging from the most fashionable American cosmetics and toilet accessories to fancy biscuits made in London. The Chinese manager speaks excellent English. I was anxious to obtain some curious beaten silver buttons that I had seen worn in B——. His reply savoured of Bond Street rather than of Borneo. 'I am sorry we have none in stock at present, but I will put it on order if you like.' An angel could not have smiled more innocently as he handed me an elegant box of the vilest cigars I have ever tasted in exchange for a roll of guilders. From the local factory we got some very good soda-water. The old Arab proprietor was extraordinarily courteous and extraordinarily fat. Would that he had been a little cleaner! To make sure that our glasses were clean, he rubbed them diligently on his dirty, greasy apron. At parting he bowed alarmingly low for one of his girth, and begged, in broken English, that we might again honour his humble house with our illustrious presence

II.

The town of B—— stretches some three miles along the river-front. It comprises three distinct quarters. Farthest up the river, about half a mile from the station and in no way connected with it, is the native Malay village. This is a mass of huddled bamboo huts built on piles over the river-edge. On the landward side it is surrounded by an impenetrable mosquito-infested swamp. From the sea it requires a native to thread a way through the labyrinth of fishing nets and stakes. Fishing is the main local occupation. The waters teem with fish, and in the market these can be bought for a trifle. Every morning early we saw the natives making for the station, their sanpans deep laden with fish and vegetables. The majority of these sanpans are burned and hollowed out from logs of tremendous hardness; we saw a few made of laths. To drive them a small diamond-shaped paddle is used, assisted by a very cumbersome sail, like a bulging rectangle some twelve feet by four, rigged by means of a long bamboo pole. In fair weather the sail ensures a very good speed, but a puff of wind will capsize a boat, unless it has outriggers. In the use of the paddle the natives are very expert. Such is their dexterity that, going at full speed, the paddles are absolutely noiseless save for a gentle drip, drip of water falling from the raised blades.

The boats used for coasting are stouter than these light river sanpans. We saw one about fifteen feet long. Amidships was roofed by a close network of woven bamboo; fore and aft were unsheltered. On board lived the owner, his wife, and three children. Knowing no other home, they passed their days coasting from river-mouth to river-mouth, landing here and there to gather fruit to stock their scanty larder or to cut bamboo for household requirements. I tried to photograph a small sanpan that came under our lee one day. For the moment our great bulk had taken the wind from its sail, and the set of the current was drifting it towards us. Immediately I took out my camera, however, the occupants hauled down the now useless sail, seized their blades, and paddled desperately down the river like scared water-fowl, casting fearful glances over their shoulders the while. In the market-place the children showed no fear of the camera; but their elders, Chinese and Malay, viewed it with much mistrust. Even our Chinese crew were averse to being photographed.

The European quarter, consisting of large and splendidly appointed bungalows, each in its own beautiful palm-shaded garden, is built on the slopes of the hill overlooking the works. This quarter, but for the exotic beauty and luxuriance of the vegetation, might well be on the outskirts of a big European city, instead of tucked away in the forests of Borneo. Here are all the conveniences of modern civilisation—telephone, electric light, club, tennis-court, the familiar red pillar-box, fire-alarm stations, splendid roads, luxurious motors, and petrol for the trouble of taking. Passing along of an evening—and who shall tell the unspeakable glory of these soft, starlit, tropical nights?—one never failed to hear the merry music of piano, violin, flute, or gramophone. Wafted on the cool, fragrant, night-air, it seemed to lose all mechanical harshness and become

> Such a soft floating witchery of sound
> As twilight elfins make, when they at eve
> Voyage on gentle gales from Fairyland.

The third quarter consists of enormous bungalows built on piles along the river-front. Here reside the heterogeneous workmen of the station, grouped as far as possible according to nationality. Several families are housed under one roof. Without exception, the bungalows looked clean and tidy. All refuse was conveniently dumped from the front-door into the river. Before one of them I saw a Malay woman pounding rice in a big hollow log. Her husband leaned against the doorway, watching the operation. Every now and then the woman paused from her work to chase away some fowls that boldly pecked among the rice. But while she chased and scolded one lot, another lot were ravenously gobbling the rice. The husband looked on in stolid indifference, never offering to help his distracted spouse. With a Malay the less work he does, the finer gentleman he is.

III.

The Dutch have laid a splendid road through the station, with branches inland to the oil-wells

and down the river to the wireless station. Coco-nut palms, heavy with fruit, line the way-side; while all around are clumps of bananas, gorgeous fan and sago palms, and many aromatic trees and shrubs whose names we did not know. A feature of B—— is the number of bicycles one sees. Nearly everybody, man, woman, and child, white, yellow, and brown, possesses a bicycle and an umbrella. These appeared to be the two essentials of Bornean society. The cyclists we saw rode very leisurely, seldom abreast, usually in a long file. Though the road was wide, they invariably crowded into the far side, and their approach was always announced by a constant ringing of bells, commencing as soon as they came into sight, and reluctantly ceasing when they were well past. The Chinese laundryman boasted a decrepit Ford, that rattled and jingled merrily on the smooth roadway. There was a combined tramcar and railway line through the station. The tram made some six journeys only per day at hours likely to suit Dutch officials. A miniature non-stop train ran more frequently. On this the natives used to crowd and jostle with great good-humour. The train was easy to mount, for half-a-dozen hands were always eager to pull you aboard, but in descending you had to trust to luck to land on your feet.

In addition to the principal store, there were two native bazaars where groceries, domestic utensils, cloth, and fruit could be purchased. The booth-proprietors sat cross-legged among their wares or sprawled at their ease on the ground. Fruit was very cheap. For sixpence our Chinese boy brought us three monster pine-apples, half-a-dozen coco-nuts, and a small tree of bananas. But then the Chinese are the most faithful shoppers in the world. They will bargain for an hour over a single banana. A penetrating odour of putrescent fish (a very esteemed Chinese delicacy) pervaded both bazaars, and effectively banished all desire to sample the many sweetmeats displayed. We saw a Malay vending a confection that looked very much like ice-cream. One Chinaman was extremely anxious to sell us a little monkey. He wanted eight guilders (about fifteen shillings) for it, but it looked very sickly, so we did not purchase. Beneath the piles of the bazaar booths were the barbers' saloons. To gain admission you had to crawl on hands and knees. Inside there were neither chairs nor stools. You had your choice of squatting tailorwise or sitting on the ground. To stand upright was impossible, as the roof at its highest was less than four feet high. In shaving, the barbers do not use soap or lather of any kind. They merely dip their thumb in cold water, rub vigorously the hair they want to remove, and then scrape with a razor till it is clean.

In the native quarter the children were many and of many races. For the most part they looked healthy and well-cared-for. Kite-flying and diving among the piles were their greatest pastimes. Little children who could scarcely toddle crowed and chirruped fearlessly in the water. At kite-flying they were very expert. Some of the kites were dragon-shaped, with enormous tails, curiously ornamented and inscribed. Quite a number of the boys played marbles. They do not propel the marble from between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand as we do, however. They hold it between the forefinger and thumb of the left hand, and shoot it with the forefinger of the right. Once we came upon a band of young Malays playing a vigorous game of football along the road.

As regards amusements, the white population have a fine club with tennis-court attached. Tennis in Borneo sounds rather a warm proposition, but, despite its equatorial situation, B—— has a remarkably tempered climate. Even at midday the heat was not oppressive; whilst punctually at three o'clock we had an afternoon shower of about twenty minutes' duration that cooled the air and made it fragrant with perfume from shrub and creeper. The short-lived evenings —it was dark by seven o'clock—were delightfully cool, and tennis was comfortably possible. Twice a week there was an open-air cinema show for the natives. Sometimes as many as four thousand gathered, and the pictures never failed to please. A more quiet, interested, and appreciative audience could not be desired.

IV.

The only really 'wild men' we saw during our stay were our own Chinese crew. On the voyage out they had been gambling heavily. When the captain advanced them some pay at B——, those who had money owing them thought this a good time to square accounts. Those who owed money thought it peculiarly unseasonable. They were in the right mood for trouble, their opium excesses in B—— having nicely primed them. From words it came to blows, and in two seconds the crew's bungalow was a swaying mass of howling, blood-thirsty Chinamen. We looked on, helpless to intervene. Our revolvers were aboard ship, and without them it was distinctly inadvisable to interfere in the private quarrels of forty opium-maddened Celestials. At the outset of the trouble the mate telephoned to police headquarters. Meantime chairs, veranda-railings, uptorn flooring, table-knives, crockery, feet, hands, head, teeth—anything that could be used offensively or defensively—were requisitioned and vigorously plied. No. 3 greaser seemed to be having a particularly rough time. His head was split open, his hand pinned to the wall by a knife, and his feet badly crushed.

From a gambling quarrel it became a racial battle. Some one raised the battle-cry of North

China, the South replied, and under their respective slogans they re-formed themselves. In their fury they frothed and howled with the savagery of wild beasts. The cook provided an interlude. He appeared from the kitchen below brandishing his carving-knife, pausing now and then to whet it on his steel, and uttering a horrible wailing chant at each pass. He looked fiendish. His whole body quivered with passion. The dread 'amok' fever was upon him. At sight of him several of the combatants fled, for in his ecstasy he would know neither friend nor enemy, only the rich red of running human blood. Realising the danger, the second engineer vaulted the veranda, and, running up, threw the cook to the ground. The fall stunned him, and he was easily disarmed.

A moment later a little Malay policeman arrived. A loaded revolver and a Malay policeman—these are the only two things under the sun that will bring a 'Chink' sailor to reason. This one little barefooted Malay scared forty erstwhile raging Celestials as meek as little lambs. Attired in blue uniform, three rings of heavy gold braid, a cowboy straw hat, a sword and a baton, he stepped crisply up to the mate and saluted. The little fire-eater could speak no English, and to our attempts at Dutch and Malay he shook his head, but his hand fingered his sword-hilt as though that were all the language needed. Shortly afterwards half-a-dozen more policemen hurried up. The situation was explained, but the mate would not allow any arrests to be made. Our crew slunk off in two batches; nor did we see much of them until the day the ship sailed, when the police had to ferret some of them out of the opium-dens. Though small in stature, these Malays are dangerous when roused. They are armed with a sword and a bludgeon; a few attain to the dignity of a revolver. They take their calling seriously. At the slightest signs of trouble their weapons are out—to kill. Otherwise they are a very peaceable, orderly body. They look very smart in their blue uniforms, though four rings of heavy gold braid on the arm and no shoes on the feet make a bit of a contrast. Shortly after we sailed, the carpenter confided to the mate that he had made over two hundred and fifty pounds by gambling on that one voyage. 'All one time me makee play fair,' he protested, with suspicious vehemence.

During our stay in B—— there were repeated rumours of strained relations between Holland and Britain. One evening it was reported that war had actually been declared, and that we were to be interned. The captain and other officers, with the exception of the third officer and myself, were up-town at the time. Things looked serious. Neither of us could see the fun in handing over a fine British oil-tank to a few 'square-headed Dutchmen.' But our cargo was only half-loaded; the ship was gas-bound; steam could not be available under twelve hours; and our crew were we knew not where. The third officer unsheathed our sporting-rifles and vowed to shoot any —— son of a Dutchman that came near. However, the rumour of war proved false. Later we learned that the Dutch authorities had held up a telegram ordering our immediate recall. Had our wireless been in commission we should have picked up Singapore's warning to all British ships to leave Dutch ports immediately. Though we were in nowise molested during our stay, the tension still remained, and our company's representative earnestly dissuaded us from going on any of the shooting-trips we had projected.

In these circumstances we were not sorry when the day of sailing came. A fortnight ashore in one port, even though that port be in such a delightful and interesting land as Borneo, is a week too long for a sailor. And when our old steam-whistle woke the echoes in that quiet spot with her three blasts of farewell, we moved briskly about our work, knowing that soon again we should be out on the open sea, that changing, changeless road of marvel and of mystery.

THE DREAMER.

SHE sits and sees the passing ships
  Where the long tides ebb and flow;
With longing eyes and parted lips
  She sees them come and go—
The fleets of brown-sailed fisher-boats,
  And, rolling homeward bound,
The dingy freighters wearily
Dipping their davits to the sea,
  That girds the great earth round.

Morning and evening, day by day,
  She hears the ship-bells ring,
And the brigs put out across the bay
  With canvas bellying;
And when the summer days draw in
  Across the level plain,
The long gray cruisers grimly glide,
Stemming the swiftly ebbing tide,
  Back into port again.

About the lighthouse far at sea
  The long lone roads converge,
Into the pulsing artery
  Of tempest, fog, and surge;
And when the autumn daylight fails
  In the fierce Atlantic squall,
Sudden the stately mail-boats loom
Beyond the headlands in the gloom,
  Triumphant over all.

Her soul goes out from her and strays
  Beyond the horizon's round,
Along the ocean's trackless ways,
  By gulf and bay and sound;
Visions of all that England is
  The eye of faith can see—
Mother of nations yet to come
To greater destinies than Rome
  In centuries to be.

M. M. HALDANE.

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CRUMPLED ROSE-LEAVES.

By Lady Skerrington.

ALL of us know, more or less intimately, some of that large class who spend much time and energy hunting for crumpled rose-leaves under their feather-beds. People belonging to this genus, like the princess in the fairy story, manage to attract a good deal of sympathy from casual acquaintances. Like the princess, they are credited with being 'so sensitive;' and their sympathisers will remark that it is really tragic to notice how ill-luck seems to dog their footsteps. Should a friend who happens to know them more intimately suggest, with exasperated and brutal frankness, that if people are always looking for ill-luck it would be strange if they did not sometimes find it, he is looked upon as utterly callous and heartless.

Most young mothers must have met the elderly friend or relation who listens gloomily to eulogies of the baby's blooming health, and remarks with a scarcely suppressed groan, 'Ah yes, my dear; but you must not expect this appearance of health to last. He will soon be cutting his eye-teeth, and at that time children are specially liable to have convulsions.'

If the child is fat and rosy, she will point out that children of that type are peculiarly susceptible to inflammatory diseases. If, on the contrary, it is slight and pale, an early death from decline is predicted. It is useless to argue that some children *do* live to grow up, in spite of belonging to one or other category, because such a suggestion is instantly met by the rejoinder, 'You must allow that I have had more experience of life than you, and when you are *my* age I am sure you will think just as I do.' Such an argument being, in the nature of things, unanswerable, the conversation comes to an end.

The vagaries of the weather provide crushed rose-leaves in abundance. If the day is hot and sunny, it is stigmatised as 'very exhausting, and such a horrid glare!' If it is cold and frosty, then the pronouncement is that 'ours is the worst climate in the world.' If it is dry, the English language contains no words strong enough to describe the dust; and if it is wet, ruined crops are foretold, and the collapse of the farming industry. A mere ordinary mortal, who is not sufficiently sensitive to feel a crumpled rose-leaf, even though it is covered by only one feather-bed, is sometimes inclined to wonder what variety of weather *is* deserving of praise; but it is judicious to avoid arguments.

It would seem as if rationing had been invented for the express benefit of these rose-leaf hunters; it opens for them such a new and wide field of action. From the moment when such a system was first suggested, they were keenly on the alert, and conversations of this kind were of frequent occurrence:

'I cannot think how *you* will feed your household when rationing is compulsory. I understand from a most reliable source—almost official, only I must not mention names—that we shall only be allowed enough meat for *one* good meal in the week.'

'Like the snakes at the Zoo,' is murmured by the frivolous listener.

'No!' is the indignant response when the interpolation is overheard; 'for the snakes have as much to eat as they *want*, whereas *we* shall have just an ordinary good meal, such as we have been accustomed to have *every* day.'

At every hour of every day food was the one subject of conversation, till the unfortunate listeners, unless they chanced to be like-minded, felt that they would gladly never see a meal again! If they ventured to remark that they saw no use in making themselves miserable by forecasting the horrors of rationing before it was an accomplished fact, they were told it was pusillanimous not to face at once a difficult situation.

The powers that be are good to these rose-leaf hunters, for by the time the subject of food rationing was losing its pristine novelty, the rumour went abroad that fuel was also to be rationed. On hearing this they snorted like war-horses that scent the battle from afar, and their predictions would have chilled the marrow of even an Arctic explorer.

'We shall rarely be able to have a fire anywhere,' they proclaimed, 'and as it will be quite out of the question to use a kitchen-range, we shall have to accustom ourselves to live on nuts, and fruits, and things of that sort that require no cooking.'

'Dear me, how nice! It will be quite like old days, won't it?' would be flippantly rejoined. 'We shall be quite happy, knowing that we are following the example of our arboreal ancestors, and

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I shall watch with interest to see if you show signs of reverting to the original type. For myself, neither my teeth nor my digestion will permit of such experiments. And as I hate cold, I think I shall remain permanently in bed. There, at any rate, I shall be warm, and I can turn over and go to sleep when it gets dark. Of course, we shall have to give up baths, but I understand the Esquimaux get on nicely without them, so why not we?'

As prophets of gloom seldom have a very pronounced sense of humour, such remarks would be received with a gasp of horror.

'*I* shall bathe in cold water, and I shall enjoy feeling I am being patriotic when I do it. And how can you do war-work if you stay in bed?'

'I sha'n't do any! I shall read novels, and try to forget how unpleasant life is under present circumstances.'

Any one who could speak lightly of WAR-WORK was anathema, but it might be felt that a few words in season should be addressed to the offender.

It would be tactless to inquire if these admonitions were original. They generally ran very much like this—some people may think they have heard them before—'How will *you* feel when the war is over, and you are asked how you did your bit?'

War-time, of course, provided many new varieties of crumpled rose-leaves, and those who loved gloom could simply wallow in it. In the tragic days following the retreat from Mons these rose-leaf hunters revelled in predictions that in a few months Great Britain would become a German province, ruled over by German officials. If the prophet possessed a lively imagination, the horrors that must supervene would be described with unsparing detail!

If the war news was bad, it was accepted at once. What else could one expect with such a rotten Government, and when neither the commanders of the army nor those of the navy understood the A B C of their profession?

If the news chanced to be good, it would be as promptly discredited. 'We are never told the truth about anything that happens, and good news is reported one day just to be contradicted the next.'

When, by the progress of the Allies, this firm attitude of disbelief was rendered untenable, a rapid *volte face* was effected. 'I really think that I am more disturbed now, wondering what will happen when the war is over, than I was when the war news was at its worst. We sit and talk and talk over the various possibilities till I am almost too depressed to do anything.' And probably the listener is, if possible, even a little more depressed!

We are told that people who are always poring over things that are close at hand gradually become short-sighted, and lose the power of seeing distant objects. So those who are always delving in dark places seem to acquire an amazingly narrow outlook on life. They cannot realise that any subject can be looked at from more than one point of view—the one point of view being, necessarily, their own! Consequently they take not the slightest interest in hearing the opinions of other people, which they look upon as worthless. Those who differ from them are classed as 'fools' or 'knaves,' and they find the very slightest contradiction intolerable. Any discussion is, therefore, impossible, and there never is any opportunity for these unfortunates to revise their standards, so as to realise that some people in the world may be right besides themselves. In Biblical history the Pharisee who stood afar off, and thanked God that he was not as other men, is not represented as a very desirable example; yet in the present day he seems to be the model upon which many try to mould themselves. They do not seem to see that when they arraign their fellow-creatures before the bar of their judgment, they also arraign the wisdom of God, who has chosen to make His creatures after divers patterns, and to permit them to view life from different standpoints. Gloom pervades their religious beliefs, and they delight to dwell upon a God who, according to them, is both vindictive and relentless, and must, like the gods of the heathen, be propitiated by prayers, and ceremonies, and sacrifices. Just as they regard with gloom everything in the world about them, so they see only the worst in their fellow-creatures, and are apt to read a wrong motive into the simplest words and actions. This is doubly unfortunate, as it reacts upon those about them, few things having a worse effect upon people's characters than the knowledge that they are living in a perpetual atmosphere of doubt and distrust.

Of course, we cannot blink the fact that in all lives there are plenty of shadows. But if we keep a gay and gallant heart, we shall endure them more easily than if we had wept over the prospect in advance. And we must always cling to the certainty that whatever happens *must* be for the best, though our finite intelligence cannot always detect the reason for it, and though our undisciplined wills rebel against pain and sorrow. If we strive to lighten other people's burdens, it is a better occupation than weeping over our own; and, in any case, what advantage do we gain if for those about us we make this world a sadder and more dreary place than it need be? Our religion should not consist merely in a succession of forms and ceremonies that weary ourselves and depress our neighbours, but should be something that helps us to make life happier and better, and that gives us a fuller sympathy with others.

No doubt all extremes are bad, and determined optimists can be nearly as annoying to their friends as are these pessimists; but the optimists, at any rate, manage to extract for themselves a great deal more satisfaction out of

life. If the good things they forecast, and love to dwell upon, prove to be merely beautiful mirages, they still have snatched something from the hand of fate. For the pleasure they have enjoyed in anticipation cannot be wrenched from them, whereas the pessimists suffer all their woes twice over.

Those who revel in gloom should remember that our pathway in life does not always meander through dark places, and that the occasional shadows probably help us to appreciate more fully the spells of brightness when they come; for monotony is abhorrent to all of us. Those who have indulged in long walks will remember the aching sense of fatigue they felt when they saw stretching before them, apparently for miles, a long, perfectly straight road. There was nothing to stimulate the imagination, nothing to do but to tramp drearily on to a goal that was always in view; whereas, when the pathway, though rough and narrow, wound carelessly over hills and into dales, the imagination was pleasantly titillated by wonder as to what the next turning might disclose.

There is always a best to be found if people will look for it, instead of diligently hunting for the worst. Even when our path does lead through gloomy valleys where the sunbeams never penetrate, it is surely better, instead of straining our eyes trying to pierce into the shadows, to recall the days when we wandered over breezy uplands where the sunshine streamed gaily, and the grouse called from the heather. And, above all, let us keep our faith that sometime, somewhere—if not in this world, then in one that is fairer and happier—we shall once more, in God's good time, tread just such another joyous pathway again.

KAVANAGH'S LUCKY BEAN.

CHAPTER III.—TRACKED AND TRACKER.

DENNIS KAVANAGH returned to his work at his usual hour, despite the fact that the visit of the small, gray man had wrecked his belief in the stability of things, and appeared to have rendered his past life futile. He managed to perform his accustomed tasks, but after a vague, preoccupied fashion that elicited a sharp word of reproof from the foreman.

When the hour of release came he went back to his lodgings, and tried to think out the new element that menaced his freedom of action. Failing to get a clear perspective of things within the confines of his dingy little room, Dennis decided to go for a long walk, in the hope of adjusting his focus to the new prospect.

As he was leaving the house he brushed up against a man who was lounging at the entrance to the close. He was a stranger; but even in his mental disturbance Dennis noticed that he had a flat, white face.

When he had left the city and reached quiet thoroughfares, the cloud seemed to lift from Kavanagh's brain. He saw the madness of holding himself bound to commit murder to order because of an insane boyish pledge that had been given in a moment of great spiritual distress. Under the starlit sky he planned how to disappear so that even the Society of Silent Workers would find it impossible to trace him. Various confused plans of escape suggested themselves—amongst others, the idea of signing on as a stoker in the brown man's ship, which was on the point of leaving the Clyde; or even, if he failed to get employment on her, of trying to get on board as a stowaway. He felt sure his Lascar friend would help him. But when he turned abruptly to go back, and begin putting some scheme of escape into action, a ray from a street lamp showed him that the man he had brushed against on leaving home had followed him, and was close on his heels.

Baffled, Dennis walked stolidly back to Apsley Place. Before entering the house he looked round for his shadower. He was not in sight, but Dennis had a conviction that he must be lurking somewhere near.

Having lain down without undressing, Kavanagh rose in the night, and taking only a few things in a bag, slipped stealthily, on stockinged feet, down the first stair. But as he turned the angle of the second the dim light of a flickering gas-jet revealed a white, apathetic face looking up at him from beneath. Remounting the stair, and letting himself in with his latch-key, Dennis crept noiselessly back to his wall-bed, feeling like a rabbit who knows that a ferret is waiting at the mouth of his burrow.

The way of escape was already closed, he realised. There was nothing he could do but appear to obey, in the desperate hope that something might intervene to render unnecessary the service demanded of him by the Society of Silent Workers. The thought that he was powerless to control his fate gave him a fatalistic comfort; and the knowledge that the man upon whom vengeance was to be wreaked was his childhood's enemy, Quigley, offered a certain grim satisfaction. Undressing, he went to bed, and slept heavily till morning.

There was an odd exhilaration in the awakening realisation that for him monotonous labour was ended, and that henceforward his life, whatever dangers it might hold, would never again be a dreary round of sameness. A sense of coming adventure warmed his blood and quickened his brain. Passing his position under

rapid review, Dennis saw that the disposal of his worldly possessions would be easily accomplished. When his mother died, he had sold their few sticks of furniture to help to pay the rent. Ever since he had lived in lodgings, and he had never been a gear-gatherer. His big, unwieldy carpet-bag would hold those of his garments he wished to retain. The remainder he decided to give to the thrifty wife of an ailing fellow-workman who had a large brood of children.

Having explained his leisure and his gala-dress to Mrs Knox on the ground that he was taking a holiday, Dennis breakfasted, and then, with some trepidation, visited a large clothing warehouse in quest of the outfit that the gray man had recommended him to get.

Once he had acquainted a deferential salesman with the nature of his requirements, diffidence vanished, and Dennis found himself entering into the transaction with the interest that the purchase of goods for one's own use rarely fails to arouse.

Somehow the salesman gathered the notion that his customer was bound for Australia —an impression which that customer did not seek to correct. The shopman proved sympathetic, almost fraternal, in his desire to help. He knew exactly what would be 'absolutely necessary' for a voyage to the other side of the world—under which category came such articles as a cabin-trunk ('Regulation size, sir, for going under your berth'), heavy clothes for the cold weather, lighter garments for the hot, a good waterproof, canvas deck-shoes, a steamer-chair, and a travelling-rug.

He suggested, tentatively, articles which *might* be required, such as evening-dress, white duck suits for the tropics, and a field-glass. Dennis wisely decided to confine his purchases to those items deemed 'absolutely necessary,' and to leave the 'might-be-required' list altogether out of his calculations.

To avoid any suspicion of mystery, Dennis called at the works before closing-time and gave warning of his leaving, on the plea of having heard of better-paid work in Liverpool. Then he visited one or two friends, to whom he promised to send his new address when he got settled. The past hours had been so crowded with excitement that he found it almost impossible to believe that it was only at noon on the previous day that the visit of the small, gray man had turned his little world topsy-turvy.

On Thursday morning, when Mrs Knox took in his breakfast, she found her lodger with his bag packed, ready to start on a journey. She received his notice to quit and accepted the defrayment of his small debt with her customary taciturnity, listening in silence to his story of having got a better job in Liverpool.

'Was it yon man that gave ye the job?' she asked suddenly.

'What man?'

'The wee man that came the day before yesterday, and pit ye past your denner.'

'That's the chap,' Dennis admitted.

'Imphm!' nodded Mrs Knox, and relapsed again into silence; but she continued to linger by the table, and Dennis caught a twitch of her thin lips and a hint of moisture in her cold eyes.

'Woman, dear! an' are ye sorry I'm leavin' ye?' he blurted out, amazed at these signs of feeling in one who had always seemed so void of sentiment.

''Deed, and I'm all that,' she admitted, and leaving the room, straightway shut herself into the kitchen, and did not reappear until he had left the house.

'It's her that'll get the queer surprise when she hears that I'm a murderer,' Dennis thought as he carried his heavy bag down the stairs to the cab he had been to fetch.

The cab was just driving away from the close, when the driver, in answer to a summons, pulled up with a jerk, and Mrs Knox's nubbly hand thrust a clumsily-tied-up parcel through the window.

'Here, take this. It's jist a wheen scones and cheese for the journey, and two pair o' good thick socks. They were Knox's best, but he never had them on. Take care o' yersel'. It's a long way to Liverpool,' she said in a breath, and before he had an opportunity of thanking her she had turned sharply and disappeared into the gaping cavern of a close that led to the smoky aerie where her widowed days were spent.

At the Central Station Dennis redeemed his new steamer-trunk from the parcels-office, and got his luggage labelled for London. As he went on to the platform he had a notion that his shadower of the night when he had meditated escape was somewhere near; but as he had now abandoned all intention of running away, the idea failed to trouble him. It was not until he was comfortably seated in the railway-carriage, his pipe in his mouth, a comic paper in his hand, that the thought flashed to him that possibly his white-faced shadower was the agent told off to kill *him*, should he fail to execute his task. Kavanagh was not a coward, but he felt his flesh creep at the notion.

The Remenham Hotel, he found, was one of a row of tall, narrow houses in the Euston Road, quite near the station. His arrival had been anticipated, for a room was reserved in his name. The expected communication that awaited him enclosed a ticket for a second-saloon passage to Auckland by the s.s. *Taurana*, and a bewildering assortment of luggage-labels. A laconic note instructed him to join the ship by the special boat-train that would leave Fenchurch Street Station for the docks at ten o'clock next morning.

After supping off tea and cold boiled ham,

and slices of very new bread from a loaf of unfamiliar shape, Dennis went to bed. Worn out by stress of unwonted impressions and rapidly jostling emotions, he slept at once, in spite of strange surroundings and the unaccustomed sounds of the great city, and awoke refreshed to the new day. He had often fancied himself leaving Britain to seek his fortune in some new land. Now that he was actually on the way, he would hardly have been human had he not experienced a sense of exhilaration, of quickened vitality, in the knowledge that at last he had cut adrift from the sordid environs and restrictions of the past.

During the drive to the station the traffic of the London streets engrossed and perplexed him. More than once his cab was held up, blocked by a mass of vehicles so densely packed together that Dennis wondered how they ever would be set free. It was an amazement to him to see how, when the way in front was momentarily cleared, the stream flowed forward again without check or confusion.

The platform at Fenchurch Street Station was crowded with intending passengers by the *Taurana* and the friends who had come to see them off. There was a long wait before the special train came in, and Dennis found himself speculating whether any one of the men near him could be Nathan Quigley. It was quite seventeen years since he had seen Quigley, and he remembered him only vaguely as a big, red-haired man with a thin beard. Still, he thought he could hardly fail to recognise him.

When at length the special train drew up at the platform there was a rush for seats. Encumbered with hand-baggage, Dennis had some difficulty before securing a place in a well-filled smoking compartment. Fascinated by the novelty of his surroundings, he so completely forgot his mission that it was not until the train had passed through a suburb that seemed a forest of chimney-cans, and had reached a district where the masts of shipping pierced the sky, and the flagstaffs erected in the gardens of the little houses denoted the homes of retired sea-captains, that he awoke with a start to fresh consciousness of his position.

The people in the carriage with him were all busy with each other, and Dennis was free to observe them critically. Only one, he decided, bore even the most remote resemblance to Quigley as he remembered him, and this man was speaking in a low voice to a sulky-looking youth, giving him good advice in a Yorkshire accent that at once dispelled any probability of his being the victim Dennis so reluctantly sought.

Just as Kavanagh had arrived at this conclusion, the train stopped at a huge shed crammed with merchandise awaiting shipment, and the passengers streamed through to the gangways leading to the deck of the great liner. On board, a steward relieved Dennis of his hand-luggage, and showed him the upper berth that had been secured for him in a cabin accommodating three travellers. Dennis was interested to find that one of his room-mates was Robson, the lad who had been receiving the parental advice. He was going to Christchurch, it appeared, and his father had journeyed from the north of England to see him off.

'I like your face,' the father said, seizing the opportunity when his son had gone to look for a missing suit-case, 'and I'm taking the liberty of asking if you'll give an eye to my boy here on the voyage. He's a good lad enough, but lately he's been led away a bit, and I'm thinking to give him a fresh chance by sending him out to my brother that's a sheep-farmer in the South Island. Maybe I've brought him up a bit too strict. . . . But if you'll only try to be a good influence to him, I'll pray God for you every day of my'——

'Don't be askin' me!' Dennis broke in, turning fiercely upon old Robson. 'Sure, an' it's Himself that knows I'm nobody to depend on.'

A bell rang clamorously, bringing protracted farewells to an abrupt conclusion; friends left for the shore; the gangways were withdrawn; and Dennis experienced a curious sense of elation in the hope that a mistake had been made, and that in all probability Nathan Quigley was not on board.

As the water widened between the ship's side and the quay, he caught sight of the small, gray man standing unobtrusively back behind a group of frantically waving friends. It was only a glimpse, but the glimpse of that ominous presence was enough to oppress Dennis with a sense of the weight of the shackles that were riveted upon him.

The man he had set out deliberately to murder *was* on board, and his task was to find him out, and to take his life.

CHAPTER IV.—'UNDER THE NAME OF BROWN.'

THE clamour of a luncheon-gong breaking in upon his thoughts, Dennis went down to a meal that, to this unspoiled traveller, seemed the last word in luxury.

Dennis was tall. From his seat at one of the three long tables he had a comprehensive view of the dining-saloon and of his fellow-voyagers. There was the customary medley of second-class passengers—some whom acquirement of unwonted funds had enabled to rise in the social scale, others whom temporary lack of coin had forced to descend. Sundry New Zealanders were returning home after a protracted holiday. A small theatrical company was taking a London comedy on a Colonial tour. Several girls were going out to marry old sweethearts. Young men were crossing the ocean to take up posts or to seek fortune. There were commercial

travellers who spent half their lives traversing the great waters. There were men leaving their native land from choice, and others leaving it under compulsion. But not even by the closest scrutiny could Dennis detect any one bearing the vaguest resemblance to Nathan Quigley.

A babel of tongues, the unfamiliar note of strange accents, gave Dennis the impression of being in unknown territory. Already he felt an alien. The unfamiliar table appointments puzzled and worried him. Confronted with a staggering array of crystal and cutlery, he almost longed for the black-handled knives and forks of Mrs Knox. He felt out of his element, and wished his passage had been taken steerage.

When his table-steward offered him the menu, and he had to make a choice of foods whose very names were strange to him, he got out of the difficulty of selection by listening to the orders given by a loud-voiced bagman who sat near, and echoing them in a lower tone.

Dennis felt relieved when he noticed that a party of fellow-passengers, placed just opposite him, were even more awkward and bewildered than himself. The little group consisted of three women, one old and ugly, another elderly and plain, and the third young and pretty. In the confusion attendant on the first meal of the voyage the table-stewards were necessarily hurried, and the wants of these hesitating, unsophisticated travellers ran a good chance of being overlooked had not Dennis, touched by the sight of their empty plates, completely forgotten his own difficulties and come to their rescue.

'Here! Serve them ladies, quick. You've kep' them waitin' long enough,' he admonished their neglectful steward, in a peremptory tone that earned him the flurried thanks of the older women, and a grateful look from the blue eyes of the pretty girl.

'It's them as well as me that would have been happier in the steerage,' Dennis told himself, his heart, as always, warming to those requiring help. To witness the nervousness of others invariably strengthens our own self-possession. With the knowledge of their shyness his diffidence vanished, and he secretly installed himself champion of the trio of distressed dames, resolving to watch that they were not 'put upon' or overlooked.

The printed list of first and second cabin passengers lay before his place at table. Taking it up, Dennis studied it eagerly. His own name —entered as Mr D. Cavanagh—was there. Quigley's was not. Common-sense curtailed his momentary relief by reminding him that, whatever name Quigley elected to travel under, it would assuredly not be his own.

The remainder of the afternoon he spent in carefully examining his fellow-voyagers for any resemblance to the man he sought. Though he had been a mere boy when Quigley kept the store at Ballymacrana, Dennis was convinced that he would not fail to recognise him. The informer had prominent discoloured teeth, red hair, and reddish-brown eyes. He remembered the tint of the eyes distinctly, for his mother had often alluded to the 'cruel red eyes of Nat Quigley.'

'He's sure to have took the beard off him, an' I'll be lookin' for a clean-shaven man. But the red eyes'll be on him till the day he dies,' Dennis counselled himself as he moved about, or stood against the rail smoking his pipe, and quietly watching the passengers. So far as he could ascertain, Quigley was not on the ship.

Hearing that on the following day the *Taurana* would stop at Plymouth to take on mails and passengers, Dennis conceived a swift idea that the man he sought would be likely to take that opportunity of trying to embark unobserved, and resolved to look out for him there. Should he see Quigley come on board, Dennis decided he would try to slip off, come what might.

In addition to Robson, the young man with the anxious father, Dennis found he had another cabin-mate—Mr Million. Mr Million was a sprightly, dressy old gentleman who prided himself on the number of times he had sailed round the world. Dennis wondered how he would have felt if, instead of this old beau, he had discovered Quigley to be the occupant of the berth beneath his own.

After a comfortable night in his unaccustomed quarters, Dennis awoke refreshed to the interesting bustle of ship-life. The voyage had begun auspiciously. The sun shone; the air was crisp and vital. Everybody was on deck, and in high spirits. The exhilarating influence of the gay scene went to Dennis's head like wine. His care fled. Long before the liner reached Plymouth he had decided that luck was with him, and that Quigley, probably suspecting that his intention to sail on the *Taurana* had become known, had thought it healthier to remain in Britain, and trust to the Government protection he enjoyed. 'An' if the villain does not come on board, devil a foot ashore I go,' resolved Dennis.

Still, there was a chance that Quigley might join the ship at Plymouth; and when they reached the busy harbour, and the liner lay out, awaiting the arrival of the packet-boat, Dennis's heart beat furiously.

To his relief, the only additional passengers who embarked were a member of the New Zealand House of Representatives and his wife and family. When with surprising speed the mails had been transferred to the *Taurana*, and she was again in motion, bound for the other side of the world, Dennis felt as though a burden had been lifted from his soul.

He had an answer now for the Society of Secret Workers. No one could kill a man who was not there to be killed.

Lighter in heart than he had ever expected to feel again, Kavanagh climbed that night

to his upper berth. As he laid down his head his cheek encountered something unexpected. Starting up, he found a note pinned to his pillow, where the shadow of the curtain had prevented his seeing it.

Inside the blank envelope was a sheet of the ship's note-paper. It contained only a few unsigned words. But these words were sufficient to give the recipient a sleepless night.

'*He is on board, travelling under the name of Brown.*'

(*Continued on page 725.*)

SOME MEMORIES, CHIEFLY LITERARY, OF PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH.

THESE memories, chiefly of the first half of last century, which we propose to recall, have to do mainly with publishers and booksellers, literary people, and literature, with whom and with which Princes Street has many more associations than most people imagine. From 1822 to 1826 the *Edinburgh Review* and the works of Sir Walter Scott and others were published in Princes Street. Princes Street was the birthplace of *Blackwood's Magazine* and its Radical compatriot *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, and saw the last days of the quarterly *North British Review*; and the early beginnings of *Chambers's Journal* are associated with that continuation of the street eastward known as Waterloo Place.

While it is now a great street to look back upon for big things in life and literature, Princes Street is also an unsurpassed esplanade to look away from for picturesque effects which charm the last gaze no less than the first. Alexander Smith believed the finest view from the interior of Edinburgh was that obtained from the corner of St Andrew Street looking west towards the Mound, with the Academy buildings in the foreground, and beyond to where 'the Castle lifts, from grassy slopes and billows of summer foliage, its weather-stained towers and fortifications. What a poem is that Princes Street! The puppets of the busy, many-coloured hour move about on its pavement, while across the ravine Time has piled up the Old Town, ridge on ridge, gray as a rocky coast, washed and worn.' Within the past hundred years the street has been transformed from end to end, widened; and that original uniformity which Ruskin girded at in neighbouring streets has been somewhat counteracted. It is now a street of shops and hotels; new buildings, new shop-fronts, and the removal of sunk areas have changed the exterior of what was once a more residential street. A huge hotel at either end is a sign of the times, while the edges of the Gardens to the south have become, after a sort, Edinburgh's Westminster Abbey. The towering Gothic pile to Sir Walter Scott has statues of Adam Black and John Wilson ('Christopher North') on one side, and of Dr Livingstone on the other. The series is continued westwards by those of Allan Ramsay, Dr Guthrie, and Sir James Young Simpson. Around St John's and St Cuthbert's Churches at the 'West End' rests the dust of the mother of Sir Walter Scott, of Raeburn the painter, of the Skenes, of that celebrated preacher Dr Andrew Thomson, of De Quincey, and many other notables. What a revolution since the waste land along the Lang Gate was a haunt of highway robbers, saw General Leslie's army march towards Corstorphine, watched Bonnie Dundee ride off to the help of King James, and witnessed the 'Canter of Coltbrig'! Francis Sempill pictures the man oppressed by poverty who, having baited thrice at Linlithgow on a Scots groat, came

> In at night to Edinburgh town.
> He held the Lang-gate to Leith Wynd,
> Where poorest purses used to be;
> And in the Caltoun lodged syne,
> Fit quarters for such companie.

Archibald Constable, of A. Constable & Co., publishers of the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, of Scott's novels and many other important works, came from 255 High Street in 1822 to No. 10, the first house in Princes Street. This house was built for Neale the silk-mercer, father-in-law of Constable. The warerooms were entered from the street, over a broad flagstone, like a drawbridge, above a sunk area. The upper rooms were occupied by a hotel—one of five in the street then. Archibald Constable would have made a great name in the publishing world even had he never met Sir Walter. He had raised the standard of publishing in Scotland by his liberality to authors. Born at Carnbee, Fifeshire, in 1774, he died at Park Place, Edinburgh, in 1827, at the early age of fifty-three. Lockhart describes this most important member of the book-trade as good-looking, very fat in person, 'but with a face with good lines, and a fine healthy complexion. He is one of the most jolly-looking members of the trade I ever saw; and, moreover, one of the most pleasing and courtly in address.' Before he lost confidence in his publisher, Scott thought him 'as good a pilot in these rough seas as ever man put faith in.' This opinion he modified by saying that Constable without his partner Cadell was the clock without the pendulum, the one having the ingenuity, the other the caution, of the business. An earlier partner than Cadell in the High Street business left, after seven years in the concern, enriched by twenty-one thousand pounds. This shows that A. Constable & Co. were at one

time doing a sound and profitable business. According to Cadell, the gross profits of the firm were sometimes ten thousand pounds a year, and Constable's personal drawings were about four thousand pounds a year.

Thomas Constable, in the three volumes dedicated to his father's working life, blames Scott for privately and so extensively embarking on bookselling and printing transactions, and for the continual need of money for land purchase at Abbotsford, which led up to 'an unholy alliance that soon resulted in a series of bills and counterbills which eventually ruined all concerned.' The end of 1825 and the beginning of 1826 was a gloomy time for Scott, Constable, and the Ballantynes. Constable, who had helped to tide over the affairs of the printers in 1814, had expressed his uneasiness about the condition of affairs in 1823; but now a worse crisis had come. Cadell felt that Hurst & Robinson in London, Ballantyne, and his own firm were 'wading—we have all too much existence by wind capital.' Scott said, 'Do Hurst & Robinson what they like, the Princes Street establishment will be destroyed root and branch.' A bad speculation in hops outside the legitimate business of Hurst & Robinson is believed to have precipitated the ruin of the circle. At first when faced with absolute ruin Scott wondered if they would let him quit the Court of Session, or go abroad and leave his bones far from the Tweed! How nobly Scott shouldered a heavy load of debt of some one hundred and thirty thousand pounds all the world knows. Robert Cadell at 31 St Andrew Square farmed the old and the new works by the author of *Waverley* so that the creditors got their own eventually, and the publisher a handsome fortune. 'Why,' said William Laidlaw, 'apart from all this, cannot they set up Constable again? He has likewise been a real benefactor to his country.' Sir James Gibson-Craig did help Constable to launch his scheme for a *Miscellany* of cheap volumes, for which Scott was writing on Napoleon, and Lockhart on Burns. But 'Napoleon,' and also *Woodstock*, then in progress, went to Cadell, and realised many thousands of pounds for the creditors.

One who saw Constable in his Princes Street warehouse on 25th January 1826 said, 'He seemed in low spirits.' Sir Walter came in, and 'really looked miserable.' We get the reason when we glance at what happened in the home of James Skene of Rubislaw, at No. 126; and before at 39 Castle Street, when Sir Walter shook the hand of his friend, saying, 'Skene, this is the hand of a beggar.' Scott had seen Constable and the Ballantynes, and learned that all hope of reconstruction was gone. On 23rd January, after writing manuscript equal to ten or twelve pages of print, he walked in West Princes Street Gardens with Skene, 'the only one among my numerous friends who can properly be termed *amicus curarum mearum*, others being too busy or too gay, and several being estranged by habit.' The great man talked of his power to rebuild his shattered fortunes, with some mistrust of his vigour, for the best of his energies were already expended. Still, he seemed to experience a sort of determined pleasure in confronting the worst aspect of this sudden reverse. Felicia Skene tells us he came to 126 for quiet and refuge, where he was as free as in his own house. He seemed unequal to any society save that of young people, and once he expressed himself willing to listen to any fairy story if she had one to tell him. She had, and made him laugh heartily in spite of the prevailing gloom. It is touching to notice how the proud laird would sometimes come home by the Castle Hill and through West Princes Street Gardens to avoid curious eyes. Every head used to be turned to gaze at him as he limped along Princes Street.

No. 15 had associations with a defunct publishing firm of religious books, Messrs Johnston and Hunter, who issued in weekly numbers at the price of one penny, and in monthly parts for fivepence, the *Christian Treasury*, which they called 'the cheapest periodical issued.' There were good books in their 'Christian's Fireside Library,' including the Letters of Blaise Pascal. Messrs Shepherd & Elliot were afterwards at No. 15, and published a posthumous volume by Hugh Miller. The name of one of these booksellers, Mr Andrew Elliot, has been associated with No. 17 for over sixty years as bookseller and publisher of guides, sermons, memoirs, and the first booklet by R. L. Stevenson. This shop has its strongest claim to notice as having been the lounge of the Tory *literati* after William Blackwood came thither in 1816, from a shop opposite the University, and issued thence *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1817. The three-volume work dedicated to the rise and after-history of the house of Blackwood, by Mrs Oliphant and Mrs Porter, records the migration of the firm in 1829 to 45 George Street. The then rent of No. 17 was two hundred and twenty pounds a year, and for a warehouse twenty pounds. Lockhart describes the founder of the famous magazine, who previously had been a notable second-hand bookseller, as a nimble, active-looking man, 'with a complexion very sanguineous. Nothing can be more sagacious than the expression of his whole physiognomy, the gray eyes and eyebrows full of locomotion.' Along with John Murray, whose Scottish agent he was for a time, Blackwood had his name as publisher on one of the Waverley Novels. Blackwood offended Scott, however, by criticisms on the proofs of the *Black Dwarf*, while the business methods of Constable and the Ballantynes did not commend themselves to either Blackwood or Murray, so that, apart from some papers in the magazine, what might have been a fruitful connection with the great author never developed.

John Menzies has given his name to the largest wholesale house dealing with literature in Scotland—the Smith & Sons of the North. In 1838 he was issuing guide-books and views of Scottish scenery from 61 Princes Street, where he began in 1834. A removal was made to 2 Hanover Street in 1859 (above what had been William Tait's shop in Princes Street), where the wholesale side of the business of literature was developed, and the agency for *Punch* and many London periodicals was secured. Just about this time there was great activity shown in the issue of new magazines—*Cornhill*, *Good Words*, *Macmillan's Magazine*, and others—for the dissemination of which amongst booksellers the agency of a middleman was invaluable. Practically every book published in the United Kingdom or abroad could be had through this great agency by the booksellers. Year by year the products of the London publishing houses became more familiar in Scotland, either directly or through the agency of John Menzies and Co. The small newsagents wanted the *London Journal* or the *Family Herald;* and there were numberless other serials, from houses such as Cassell, which came later, so that customers were found in every town and considerable village in Scotland. Then the railway book-stalls were inaugurated and the most prosperous of all connections made for the supply of the latest books and periodicals to the travelling public. As the premises became too small, a 'flitting' took place to 12 Hanover Street, and later to Hanover Buildings, Rose Street. An important house has also been established in Glasgow, and one in Aberdeen.

William Tait, the bookseller and publisher of *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* (1832–1846), was first in 78 Princes Street, at the west corner of Hanover Street, and afterwards at 107. Tait's magazine was as Radical in politics as Blackwood's, issued from No. 17, was Tory. The publisher of *Blackwood's* remarked that *Tait's* was intended 'to put down my magazine completely: so far from doing us the least harm, it has done us a great deal of good.' This Radical literary and political magazine, at first priced at half-a-crown, was reduced in 1834 to one shilling. It had considerable influence in its day, and a good list of contributors, including De Quincey, Mrs Gore, Mary Howitt, Sir T. Dick Lauder, J. S. Blackie, W. E. Aytoun, J. Hill Burton, and Theodore Martin. Cobden and Bright were also on Tait's list. At first Tait seems to have been his own editor, but after 1834 he had the co-operation of Mrs Christina Isobel Johnstone, author of the *Edinburgh Tales* and various novels. Tait got to know Alexander Russel when reading-boy in Peter Brown's, where his magazine was printed, and was the means, along with Mrs Johnstone, of introducing him to provincial journalism. He later introduced Russel to Charles Maclaren of the *Scotsman*, where afterwards as editor he made a great reputation. When Tait started in business he had as partner his brother, Charles Bertram Tait, who left to found an auctioneer's business in Hanover Street. One of his most successful authors was Patrick Fraser Tytler, whose *History of Scotland*, undertaken at the suggestion of Sir Walter Scott, was published here. The son of Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee, he was born at 108 Princes Street, then numbered 65. It is said that Carlyle and Scott just missed meeting one another in Tait's shop. This publisher issued, amongst other works, Carlyle's translations from German Romance, Bentham's works, and Brown's *Philosophy of the Human Mind*. When he retired in 1848 Tait purchased the mansion of Priorbank, Melrose, which at his death in 1864 passed into the hands of his brother-in-law, Mr Adam Black, M.P. It was Black who converted Tait from Toryism to Whiggery, in which he went further than his mentor, spending four days in jail for non-payment of annuity-tax. His brother-in-law declined to join him in driving publicly round the town when released from jail. 'Few men,' remarked Black, 'have acquired the glory of martyrdom at a cheaper rate.'

At first, under the designation of Edmonston and Douglas, at No. 88, and afterwards as David Douglas, at 10 Castle Street, another publisher issued a series of high-class literary, historical, and antiquarian books, including works by Dr John Brown, Principal J. C. Shairp, Professor Knight, W. F. Skene, and many others. Between 1863 and 1870 Douglas was both editor and publisher of the *North British Review* (which ceased in 1871), and edited and published Sir Walter Scott's *Letters* and *Journal*, portions only of which were utilised in Lockhart's biography. The editing meant a careful and adequate series of notes. Douglas, who died at the great age of ninety-two, began business in 1847 by the purchase of that of Charles Smith, bookseller and librarian; the firm of Edmonston & Douglas was founded, with S. Edmonston, to be dissolved after 1877. Besides M'Gibbon and Ross's *Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland*, Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, and Dorothy Wordsworth's *Tour in Scotland in 1803*, edited by J. C. Shairp, this firm issued a dainty series of American authors, including books by Burroughs, Cable, Stockton, Aldrich, and O. W. Holmes.

Tennyson wrote his poem 'The Daisy' in an Edinburgh hotel, whether in Princes Street or elsewhere we do not know. Charles Dickens, when in town in June 1841, had rooms in the Royal Hotel, Princes Street. He had a public dinner as welcome, and the freedom of the town was conferred upon him. For reading or speaking to, he regarded an Edinburgh audience as perfect, with a quicker sense of humour and more genial than that of Boston, U.S.A.,

where he recognised a curious similarity of tone. On 8th December 1868 Dickens was sitting at a side-window in Kennedy's Hotel looking up the length of Princes Street, watching the mist change over the Castle, and murdering Nancy by turns. A letter written to Mrs Lehmann on a Sunday descants sarcastically on the gaiety and brightness of the town! The Scott Monument he pronounced a failure. To him it seemed like the spire of a Gothic church taken off and stuck in the ground. With his usual patriotism, Professor Masson regarded it as the finest monument ever erected to a man of genius here or anywhere else.

Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, friend and correspondent of Sir Walter Scott, collector of portraits, relics, and ballads, lived with his mother for twenty years at No. 93 Princes Street. Like Scott, he furnished Robert Chambers with some material for his *Traditions of Edinburgh*. Chambers describes him as a thin, effeminate figure, 'his attire a long, blue frock-coat, black trousers, rather wide below, and sweeping over white stockings and neat shoes; something like a web of white cambric round his neck; and a brown wig coming down to his eyebrows.' In the middle of last century Sharpe had an established reputation as an Edinburgh character. Sharpe designed the old tankard presented to Scott when the freedom of the city was conferred upon him in 1814. He drew up a petition from the inhabitants of the west end of Princes Street on the subject of the encroachments of the Mound, and wrote a piece on a possible extension on both sides, that people when drunk might not fall into the Nor' Loch, or that if a hat was blown off the North Bridge it might be easily recovered. Sharpe also suggested that the smoke from the many low buildings to be erected would enable the inhabitants of Princes Street 'to dry their neats' tongues thoroughly by hanging them out of their windows.'

From a house at the west end of Princes Street Mrs Grant of Laggan in 1826 removed to Brae House, on the site of the present Caledonian Station. James Donaldson, publisher of the *Edinburgh Advertiser*, whose name survives in Donaldson's Hospital, was once resident at No. 53. Principal John Cairns was in youth family tutor in the home of John Donaldson, W.S., at No. 124. The queen's printer for Scotland, Mr Tyndall Bruce of Falkland, occupied No. 81; Professor Munro was at No. 109, Professor Gregory at No. 114, Sir Henry Jardine at No. 123, and Lady Foulis at No. 124. No. 84 was occupied in 1811 by Henry Mackenzie, comptroller of taxes, who dabbled in literature to some purpose, and who came next after James Sibbald, the bookseller, in his welcome in print to the rising star of the poet Burns. These are but a few of the literary memories of this noble promenade, the admiration of pilgrims from the ends of the earth, and the pride of all patriotic Edinburgh citizens.

R. C.

THE BLONDE GENTLEMAN.

By Frederick Tilsley, Author of *Cheerio*.

I.

PRIVATE ROGAN was 'fed up.'

He lay on a stretcher in the reception-room of No. — C.C.S. His head was aching and throbbing, and his throat was sore. Occasionally he coughed, a shrill insistent cough that racked every bone in his body. He closed his eyes because they pained him when open, and then opened them again because he could not bear them closed. He was covered with two doubtful-looking blankets. His pillow was a gorgeous Dorothy bag, bulging with his own private property, and from between his tightly compressed lips projected one inch of clinical thermometer.

A pallid R.A.M.C. man, bristling with indelible pencils, approached Private Rogan, removed the thermometer neatly, glanced at it, and then shook the mercury down with a professional flourish.

'What's the matter with me, chum?' asked the patient thickly.

'New flu, I suppose,' answered the R.A.M.C. man concisely. 'Nothing to get the wind up about. Very few die of it—considering.'

'Will it keep me out of them trenches for a bit?'

'Sure thing.' (Several Americans had recently been admitted into No. — C.C.S.)

There was a moment of silence.

Private Rogan gazed listlessly up at the canvas roof above him. The R.A.M.C. man produced one of his innumerable pencils and made mysterious marks on a field medical card.

'Hell!' said Private Rogan with sudden violence. 'I am fed up. Four years of it I've had; and out of that four years I've been to Blighty four times—three leaves, and when I got one on the head. . . . *Gosh, but I am fed up!*'

The other smiled mirthlessly, for he had troubles of his own. 'So 'm I,' he answered, and added, a trifle more brightly, 'so 's Fritz.'

Private Rogan rose suddenly on his elbow. The effort set him coughing gustily, and he fell back again. When the fit was over he pointed a shaking finger at the R.A.M.C. man. 'I 'm

going to swing the lead while I'm here,' he declared jerkily. 'I don't mind telling you, chum, that I'm not going back to them trenches for some time, see? I've done me bit if I never see 'em again, and when they've cured me of this 'ere flu, I'm going to have pains in me legs or something. Anyway, I'm not going back to them there trenches for some time yet; and don't you forget it.'

The R.A.M.C. man heard all this without emotion. Private Rogan's statement neither amazed nor disgusted him. He knew, in spite of anything the perfervid papers might say to the contrary, that men who are seriously ill seldom clamour to get back to the trenches.

'Will they put me in a proper bed?'

'They will; and when you've been in it a few days—just long enough to feel your feet again—you'll be getting into trouble with the sister and the orderlies for sneaking out of the ward without your medicine. I know you soldiers.'

'If I once get into a real bed,' declared Private Rogan solemnly, 'it'll take dynamite to get me out again.'

'I know what soldiers are,' said the R.A.M.C. man. 'I meet plenty of 'em on this job. They're all the same—restless, especially the old soldiers. I'll bet you anything you like you don't stay in bed more than a week.'

'What a hope you've got!' answered Private Rogan in the strange language of his calling.

II.

They put Private Rogan in a real bed, with clean, white sheets, a futurist counterpane, and pillows that were reasonably soft. They washed, and fed, and encouraged him for two days and nights, and then he began to improve. On the morning of his third day in hospital he awoke from a deep sleep, feeling very much like the Private James Rogan he used to know. He badly wanted to ask a number of questions and use his eyes a great deal. It seemed to him that this desire, vague and half-formed, had been troubling him for a long, long time. A voice had spoken to him often during the past forty-eight hours—a sweet, clear voice which had brought peace to his fever-ridden brain, and put to flight the black phantoms of Hell-begotten dreams. A hand had touched his brow—a soft, cool hand that had conjured blessed sleep out of the tortured blackness from which there had been no escape.

In his weakness he had believed that the owner of the voice and the hand must be an angel; now in his strength he knew that something more substantial than an angel had spoken to him and touched him. 'It was a woman,' said Private Rogan to himself, and began to feel rather sorry for angels. Another voice, which he dimly remembered having heard before, wished him 'Good-morning!'

'Morning,' answered Private Rogan, weakly cheerful; and then, struck by a sudden afterthought, he added, 'Are you Charlie?'

'That's me,' answered the other. ''Ow did yer know, Joe?'

He was a short, elderly youth, with solemn, wrinkled countenance and very false teeth. He wore a shiny navy-blue waistcoat, a tattered remnant of better days, over his gray army shirt, and his every movement was accompanied by a musical jingle from a small but complete set of scissors which dangled from his waist-belt.

Charlie was the ward orderly. He had once been in charge of the officers' ward, but was removed with considerable suddenness owing to his incurable habit of addressing everybody as 'Joe.'

''Ow did yer know, Joe?' he repeated.

Private Rogan frowned thoughtfully.

'Don't know—not exactly,' he answered; 'but I seem to have heard that name pretty often while I've been here—sorter in me sleep, if you understand me.'

'That's right, Joe,' said Charlie, nodding delightedly. 'It's the fellers they all call me Charlie, even the two Fritzes, and the sister too—when nobody's about, and me married at that.' His solemn mouth twisted into a grin with startling rapidity.

'Where is the sister?' asked Private Rogan.

Charlie's grin took flight as suddenly as it had appeared.

'Oh, 'er; she's not on duty yet,' he answered scornfully. 'She don't 'ave to go on no bloomin' parade every mornin', an' 'ave a bloomin' sergeant-major after 'er if she's a few minutes late. Not that I care, mind yer; I can manage this ward very nicely without 'er—better without 'er than with 'er, in fact.'

'Is she hard to get on with?' inquired Private Rogan.

'Oh no; she's right enough in 'er own way—always pleasant an' smilin'; but what do a lot of women wanter go messin' about at wars for? That's what I'd like to know.'

'It never did seem to me to be the place for women,' admitted Private Rogan. 'I reckon it's pretty plucky of 'em meself.'

Charlie snorted, and then grinned again.

''Ave yer noticed our two Fritzes yet?' he inquired irrelevantly. 'There they are, right opposite yer. Same complaint as you, too. Beauties—aren't they?—an' quite 'armless.'

Private Rogan raised himself on his elbows, and glowered fiercely in turn at the occupants of the two beds opposite. One was a kindly-looking man, with soft, brown eyes and a soft, pointed beard. Catching the Englishman's look, he smiled at him with a certain pathetic wistfulness, but finding only distrust in the keen gray eyes of the other, he averted his face with a sigh. The second prisoner was a different type. His face was thin and pale, and his brow was the high, white brow of a scholar.

His long, delicate nose was hooked, but not with the gross predatory curve of the Jew. His chin was square and firm, though not aggressive. His lips were thin, but suggested kindness rather than cruelty. His big, steadfast, blue eyes, set wide apart, met the disgusted glance of Private Rogan without either defiance or fear.

Private Rogan was the first to look away. He laughed a trifle uncomfortably. 'Good-looking fellow that,' he said grudgingly. 'I've seen faces like his on bits of coloured glass out of churches.'

'Sister thinks so too,' said Charlie dryly. 'She calls 'im "the Blonde Gentleman," owin' to his bein' so good-mannered.'

'I shouldn't think a woman—not an English woman—would be interested enough in a square-headed Fritz to call him a name like that,' remarked Private Rogan.

'Then you don't know 'em, Joe,' answered Charlie cynically. 'A woman would forgive a man with a face like that worse things than bein' a German.'

III.

Private Rogan glanced again at the handsome prisoner, and decided that he hated him. His hatred grew more bitter with every moment that passed; and then the sister, white, self-possessed, and pretty, appeared in the ward. Quite suddenly Private Rogan forgot he hated the German, that he was sick and in hospital. He forgot everything but the fact that a pretty English girl, with the reddest of red hair and wonderful eyes, was coming along the centre of the ward, and that she would stop at his bed and speak to him. He felt quite certain of this, and he was right.

'Good-morning, Rogan,' murmured the sister. 'And how are you feeling now?'

Private Rogan blushed gloriously, choked, and then mumbled something inarticulate.

She smiled. 'You have been quite ill, you know.'

'Ye-es,' mumbled the patient apologetically.

'But you find life interesting again this morning, don't you, now?'

'Ye-es, miss—sister.'

'Splendid!'

Suddenly she laughed, a little tinkling laugh of sheer enjoyment.

'You poor old thing!' she bubbled, 'you can't have shaved for a week. I know how you boys dislike being unable to shave. If you want a brush or some soap, let me know, and I'll see that you get it.' She smiled and nodded, and then turned to the bed of the handsome German.

Private Rogan's hands clenched convulsively when he saw the quick sparkle in the steadfast blue eyes and the tell-tale flush on the high cheek-bones of the prisoner. Certainly at that moment it would have been very easy to mistake the blonde beast for a very upright gentleman. But Private Rogan was an old soldier, and distrusted the breed instinctively; and to this natural distrust was now added an equally natural, if somewhat illogical, jealousy.

Your 'old soldier' is a primitive person, not much given to introspection. His weaknesses are usually lovable and his virtues often harsh. On those rare occasions when he has anything to give away he gives it magnificently, with both hands, whether the gift be beer or merely his life. He gives his friendship and his love in the same whole-hearted manner. Private Rogan had fallen completely, madly, and impossibly in love with the pretty, red-headed sister. He had fallen in love with pretty girls before, and would in all probability do so again, but even constant repetition cannot make this being in love a less disturbing business while it lasts.

The sister greeted the Germans pleasantly enough. The bearded one muttered something unintelligible, but the Blonde Gentleman spoke English much more correctly and musically than did Private Rogan, and so, naturally enough, the sister confined her studied commonplaces to him. She felt rather sorry for the Blonde Gentleman. After all, there must be a few good Germans somewhere. Practically everybody admitted as much. She had heard soldiers say, for instance, that the Saxons were not too bad, that the Saxons had some of the instincts of gentlemen. At the best, the lot of the prisoner of war is an unenviable one, and the sister was by nature a sensitive, kind-hearted girl. To make those two men as comfortable as possible while they were in hospital seemed to her to be a duty. It was also rather interesting.

The moment she had finished her morning greetings and retired to that holy of holies known as the 'bunk,' Charlie sidled up to Private Rogan's bed, and glancing cautiously around to make sure no third person was listening, said in a portentous whisper, 'Did yer 'ear 'er, Joe?'

'Hear her what?' queried Private Rogan sourly.

Charlie grinned, and then blushed. 'Call me "Charlie"—"Mornin', Charlie," she said, just like that.'

'Have you such a thing as a barber in this hospital?' asked Private Rogan.

IV.

The following morning the sister approached Private Rogan's bed, humming a little tune and thinking of a handsome young flying-officer who had been one of a number of guests entertained in the sisters' mess the previous evening.

'Good-morning, sister,' said Private Rogan.

She started slightly, and then gave a little laugh of recognition. The patient was no longer a sick and dishevelled man. He was well washed, carefully shaved, and, in his own downright British fashion, quite as handsome as the

Blonde Gentleman. The sister eyed him with new interest.

'You are quite yourself again already,' she said. 'A tribute to our nursing.'

'That's old Charlie,' answered Private Rogan, with a grin that showed to perfection two rows of strong, white teeth. 'He looks after me like a mother.'

'Now, isn't Charlie just too wonderful for words?' she answered seriously. 'I don't know what I should do without him. Do you require any writing material? Your people will be anxious about you.'

Private Rogan laughed harshly. 'My people, sister! I have no people. Nobody cares whether I live or die. Suppose I'd died in this bed instead of getting better, d'you think any one would have gone into mourning over it? Not likely. Nobody cares what happens to me.' Private Rogan laughed again, but this time his laugh had a pathetic little catch in it.

Sister's eyes were moist. She sighed. The patient also sighed. Your 'old soldier' is above everything a sentimentalist, and the rôle of picturesque orphan, which public and press alike have forced upon him, suits him admirably.

'Never mind, laddie,' she said softly; 'you can't possibly go through life without meeting somebody who will care for you.' She broke into that sudden tinkling laugh which was characteristic of her. 'Cheer up, Rogan; you are suffering from that horrible depression which invariably follows your complaint. In a day you will be just as much in love with life as ever you were.' Giving him a swift smile, she tripped down the ward to her 'bunk.'

'Aren't men just big babies?' she said to the two other sisters who were waiting to fortify themselves with tea before doing their rounds with their respective medical officers. 'Aren't they, now?'

'Especially the nice, big, manly ones,' replied the elder of the other two.

'And don't they think they are clever?' remarked the third, with good-natured contempt. 'So horribly confident, and masterful, and practical, until'——

V.

'How much longer will it be, Charlie, before I have to get up?' asked Private Rogan in a whisper as the doctor appeared at the entrance of the ward.

'I expect he'll mark you "up" to-day,' answered Charlie; 'also the two Fritzes.'

'We'll see,' answered Private Rogan grimly.

The doctor was a tall man, with a flowing black moustache and a jerky but sympathetic manner.

'And how are you this morning, my boy, hey? How are you?' he barked when he reached Private Rogan's bed.

'Pretty bad this morning, sir. Legs ache like —like anything, sir—rheumatism, or something, sir.'

'Hah, rheumatism! Now, how d'you know it's rheumatism, hey? Lemme see your tongue; put it out—right out. That's right.—Has he any temperature, sister? Hey! has he? Normal —hum!—I'll see your legs now, my boy!' The doctor was interrupted by the faint tapping of anti-aircraft guns. The sound irritated him. He blew his nose violently, gave the sister a despairing glance, and moved on to the next bed. In this way Private Rogan's stay in hospital was assured for one more day at least.

'I could keep it up for weeks, if me conscience would let me,' he boasted later to Charlie.

'D'you want us to lose the war, Joe?' inquired Charlie indignantly. 'Think of poor ole 'Aig doin' his best to stagger along without yer.'

'I only want a few days' rest,' explained the other apologetically. 'Think sister would let me write to her?'

'They all do, Joe,' answered Charlie; 'some of 'em twice.'

'Does she answer 'em?'

'You 'd better ask 'er that.'

'I will,' declared Private Rogan with determination.

VI.

On the sixth day of Private Rogan's stay in hospital, the doctor asked him if he felt well enough to use his legs a little. The patient eyed him speculatively for a moment, and then his eyes wandered to the sister.

'No, sir,' he said firmly. 'If I was to try and stand up now, I should—I should—er—fall down again.'

The doctor shook his head and sighed. He was a kind-hearted man.

'All right'—he nodded briefly to the sister—'we'll give him another day or two.'

When the round was finished the doctor washed his hands at the little table in the centre of the ward, and went away without noticing that he had left his stethoscope behind. Some moments later the sister passed Private Rogan's bed on her way to the kitchen. The Blonde Gentleman, who had been marked 'up' that morning, watched her narrowly. There was a light in his eyes that caused Private Rogan to clench his fists. A few minutes elapsed, and then the sister reappeared. Her gait was slow and her expression pensive; there was a letter from the young flying-officer in her pocket. As she reached the foot of the Blonde Gentleman's bed he said something very quietly to his friend, and they both laughed. The girl glanced at the pair sharply. The man had spoken in his own language, and she knew hardly a word of German, but an angry flush which she could not have accounted for to save her life mounted to her eyes. At that moment the doctor, seeking his stethoscope, re-entered the

ward. So great was her sense of relief at seeing him that she almost ran to meet him.

Now, as the reader is already aware, Private Rogan had, in the early days of the war, received a head-wound which had sent him to England. By way of convalescent training he had been given guard duties in a concentration camp. These duties lasted for nearly three months, and during that period he had, with that faculty so characteristic of the 'old soldier,' picked up much of the language. He understood the Blonde Gentleman's remark perfectly. It is quite possible that the remark would not have been considered offensive in Germany. In all probability a German *Schwester* would have looked upon the Blonde Gentleman's words as light-hearted banter, and would have answered in the same spirit; but Private Rogan was a crude, uncultured Briton, one of the original 'Contemptibles,' and was, therefore, quite incapable of appreciating that peculiar type of humour which appeals so strongly to the German mind. With an agility truly remarkable, considering that his feet had not touched the ground for almost a week, he swung himself out of bed, and stood for a moment, swaying slightly, a huge figure of shapeliness, which even sensible pink-and-white-striped hospital pyjamas could not entirely disguise. Then, his gray eyes gleaming coldly, and his mouth set like a trap, he crossed to the Blonde Gentleman's bed, seized the occupant by his wavy golden hair, and dragged him out of bed. The handsome prisoner was game enough. He rose to his feet, swearing gutturally. In a trice Private Rogan's fist crashed into his face, and the Blonde Gentleman collapsed untidily.

When the doctor had seen the sister safely out of the way, he approached Private Rogan, who was seated on the edge of his bed watching, with an air of gloomy detachment, Charlie's efforts to resuscitate the victim. It was obvious from the doctor's expression that Private Rogan's visit to the No. — C.C.S. was concluded.

'Why did you strike him, hey?'

'Never mind why, sir,' answered Private Rogan sullenly. 'He knows.'

'Well, back you go up the line first thing to-morrow morning.'

'I've been up the line before, sir, and I can go again; but'—Private Rogan drew a deep breath and reached for the Dorothy bag containing his personal property—'I've got sisters of me own, sir, and I've got some respect for women.' . . .

'Perhaps,' reflected the doctor some time later, 'I ought to have sent him to the mental ward, after all.'

VII.

As Private Rogan, complete with pack, rifle, and iron rations, awaited orders in the reception-room the following morning, a pallid R.A.M.C. man, bristling with indelible pencils, looked up from the table at which he was writing, and grinned.

'A week I gave you, and here you are.' The R.A.M.C. man shook his head sadly. 'I *know* you soldiers. You're all the same—restless.'

INDIAN HEMP DRUGS.

I.

THE hemp-plant (*Cannabis sativa*) yields at least three distinct products, or, rather, groups of products — viz. (1) a bast fibre, largely employed in the manufacture of cordage, ropes, and coarse textiles; (2) an edible seed, from which a useful fatty oil is expressed; (3) the narcotic hemp drugs appearing in trade in three chief forms, known as *bhang*, *charas*, and *ganja*. The habitat of *Cannabis sativa*, in India, lies along the North-Western Himalayas and in the Sub-Himalayan zone. In a wild or spontaneous state it is a plant of waysides and waste places, in appearance and choice of situation somewhat akin to the familiar nettle of the homeland. The wild growth is very abundant in certain localities, where soil and climatic conditions are favourable. For the manufacture of fibre or drug the wild plant is said to be useless, or nearly so. From time immemorial the plant has been cultivated, for the production of fibre, along the slopes of the warm, temperate Himalayas—in Garhwal, Kumaon, Nepal, Simla, Kangra, and Kashmir. It can be completely acclimatised over the greater part of the plains; but the results of experiments hitherto have proved unfavourable, so far as the production of fibre is concerned. On the plains hemp is cultivated for the narcotic products mostly, and a short study of the place occupied by these in the fiscal system of India is the main purpose of this article.

The narcotic principle of the hemp-plant begins to form in the early stages of growth, and reaches its greatest abundance about the time the flowers appear. It gradually diminishes as the leaves pass maturity, and is entirely absent, or nearly so, from leaves allowed to turn yellow.

Bhang consists of the specially dried leaves and flowering shoots of the male or the female plant (or of both together), whether wild or cultivated. When prepared for ordinary consumption, *bhang* is ground to a paste, of which an emulsion is made, and drunk in that simple form, or flavoured with sugar, spices, cardamom, melon-seeds, or milk. *Majun* is a sweetmeat made from the emulsion; it is extensively eaten all over India. Occasionally musk and

other perfumes are added to disguise the objectionable smell; while to make the beverage more intoxicating and poisonous, opium, *dhatura* seeds, arsenic, strychnine, aconite, oleander-root, and the seeds of black henbane are sometimes used. Of all forms of Indian hemp, *bhang* is the least harmful. It is the beer or refreshing drink — the occasional indulgence or luxury—of all classes. A large percentage of the people use it, and apparently with less injurious consequences than result from the similar consumption of alcohol in Europe. In the Report of the Hemp Drugs Commission, to be referred to later, mention is made by witnesses of places where the beverage was given daily to all applicants free of charge. Its use in certain religious observances is considered essential by a large section of the community. *Bhang* is also smoked, in Arabic being called *hashish*.

Ganja is the dried flowering-tops of the cultivated female plants, which become coated with a resinous exudation in consequence of being deprived of the opportunity of setting seed. To secure this result, the male plants are deliberately removed from the field at an early stage by an expert known as the *poddar*. Every male plant is uprooted after one or two visits have been paid by him. As the female plants begin to form *ganja*, all the large leaves on their stems and branches are removed, and the manufactured article is valued very largely by its freedom from leaf. Colour and smell are also features of merit. The chief centres of hemp cultivation for *ganja* are North Bengal and the Central Provinces—the drug produced in the former being known in the trade as *baluchar*, and in the latter *pathar*. Several varieties of the drug are recognised, according to the method of manufacture. To prepare flat *ganja*, the stems are cut with a sickle about six inches above-ground, tied together by their ends, and carried to the selected place of manufacture. The inflorescences are then placed on the ground one by one, and trodden underfoot so as to cause the agglutinated flower-tops and smaller leaves to become compacted into flat masses. Where round *ganja* is required, the heads are rolled underfoot so that they are less firmly compacted, and assume the form of rounded or sausage-shaped masses. Broken fragments, or flower-tops detached from the twigs, whether of flat or round *ganja*, are called *chur*. The refuse from the manufacture of *ganja* is often sold as *bhang*. The use of *ganja* is not nearly so universal as that of *bhang*; its price confines its purchasers to the well-to-do classes. *Ganja* is smoked by its devotees.

Charas is defined as a resinous substance that appears spontaneously on the leaves, stems, inflorescences, and fruits of the hemp-plant when cultivated in cold and dry countries. It is practically the active principle, and consequently a more powerful drug than either *bhang* or *ganja*. The resin appears shortly before the flowers begin to form, and is present over a larger proportion of the plant than is the case with *ganja*. *Charas* is a greenish-brown, moist, resinous mass possessing the peculiar odour of the hemp-plant. When kept for some time it hardens, becoming friable and brownish-gray in colour. The drug is not produced in India. Supplies come from Yarkand, Central Asia, *viâ* Kashmir and Kulu—the only two routes of import sanctioned by Government. The name *charas* is said to mean a 'bag' or 'skin,' and has doubtless some allusion to the skin packages in which it is imported from Central Asia. *Charas* is almost exclusively used for smoking, though some of the finer qualities are employed for medicinal purposes. It is admitted on all hands to be a more pernicious drug than either *bhang* or *ganja*.

II.

Prior to 1893 little was known in regard to the consumption of hemp drugs. In March of that year the Secretary of State for India directed the appointment of a Commission to inquire fully into the cultivation of the hemp-plant in India, and the manufacture and consumption of its narcotic products. The Commission's Report, issued in August 1894, was reviewed by the Government of India in March 1895; and in March 1896 an Act was passed giving effect to the Commission's conclusions, which, in the main, were accepted by Government.

The action of the drugs in causing insanity has, according to the Report, been greatly overstated. The moderate use of them is attended by no evil physical effects. Excessive use of hemp drugs in any form, however, indicates and intensifies mental instability. It tends to weaken the mental power, and may even lead to insanity. But in the year of the Commission's investigations, only in the case of 7·3 per cent. of lunatics admitted to all asylums in India could hemp reasonably be regarded as having been a factor of importance. Moreover, the insanity produced gives way, as a rule, to treatment, and since the drug creates no craving, its discontinuance is possible, and the restoration of the mental faculties is almost instant. It would seem satisfactorily proved that no form of Indian hemp possesses the property of establishing a craving for its continued and extensive use. Total prohibition, even were that possible, would be strongly opposed by the majority of the people, though the fiscal control established by Government as a result of the Commission's Report meets with general approval.

The general conclusions arrived at by the Commission were as follows: (1) that the total prohibition of the cultivation of the hemp-plant

for narcotics, and of the manufacture, sale, or use of the drugs derived from it, was neither necessary nor expedient; (2) that the policy to be adopted should be one of control and restriction, aiming at suppressing excessive use, and keeping moderate consumption within due limits. The means recommended for the attainment of these objects were: (1) adequate taxation of the drugs by combination of a direct duty and fees levied for the right of sale; (2) prohibition of the cultivation of the hemp-plant, except under licence, and the centralisation of such cultivation; (3) limitation of the number of shops for the retail sale of hemp drugs; (4) limitation of the extent of the legal possession of the drugs. The Commissioners recommended that the methods adopted to attain these ends should be systematic, so far as possible uniform for the whole of British India, and that their adoption by certain native states should also be suggested.

Having provided the necessary legislation to carry the Commission's recommendations into effect, the Government of India, in April 1896, enunciated the general lines of policy which the provincial Governments should bear in mind in adapting the local excise systems to carry the legislation into effect. In regard to *ganja* and *charas*, it was laid down (1) that cultivation of the hemp-plant for these drugs should be restricted as much as possible, the production of *ganja* and the import of *charas* being, however, permitted under proper control and restriction; (2) that all *ganja* and *charas* should, on production in or import into any province, be liable to a direct quantitative duty —such duty being realised by means of a system of bonded warehouses, where the drugs would be stored, but would remain the property of the cultivators, the dealers, or the importers; and (3) that the drugs should be freely carried, under suitable restrictions, but without payment of duty, from the place of production or import to a bonded warehouse, or from one bonded warehouse to another, either within the same or in another province, duty being realised thereon on issue from a warehouse for sale in the province of consumption.

As regards *bhang*, it was considered that no effort should be made to extirpate the spontaneous growth of the hemp-plant, and that no restriction should be placed on the use of the wild plants or on their manipulation for the manufacture of fibre. Government declared that if (*a*) the cultivation of hemp for the production of *bhang* were prohibited or made subject to the payment of an acreage duty, (*b*) the collection of *bhang* from wild or self-sown plants by licensed wholesale and retail venders for the purpose of sale were only permitted under licences, and (*c*) the transport of *bhang* so collected were carefully regulated and restricted, it would be possible to exercise adequate control over the consumption of the drug, and to subject it to a moderate quantitative duty in addition to the tax levied, in the form of fees, for the privilege of vend.

In accordance with this policy, the hemp drugs arrangements of each province were carefully considered and revised, with results which may be summed up as follows. The cultivation of the hemp-plant is absolutely prohibited in Burma, Assam, Baluchistan, Coorg, Ajmere-Merwara, and Berar. In other provinces it is permitted only in limited areas and subject to careful restrictions. Adequate quantitative duties are levied on *ganja* and *charas*, and, in most provinces, on *bhang*. Storage of the drugs in Government bonded warehouses, prior to issue to licensed venders on payment of duty, has been enforced. The rules regulating the manufacture, import, export, transport, sale, and possession of hemp drugs have been revised in all provinces in the direction of greater stringency. These measures of control have also affected the native states which derive their supplies from British territory.

In the financial year 1912-13 the hemp drugs revenue of British India totalled, roughly, 120 lakhs of rupees, or, say, £800,000. The average consumption of hemp drugs per 1000 of the population in the same year amounted in Madras (the lowest consuming province) to 0·65, and in Bombay (the highest consuming province) to 4·6, pounds. The average taxation per pound, raised from duty and vend fees, varied from 2·8 rupees in Ajmere-Merwara to 10·1 in Bengal and Assam, equivalent, approximately, to 3s. 9d. and 13s. 6d. respectively. The average revenue per head derived from hemp drugs amounted to a trifle under one penny. The weapon of taxation as a curb on consumption is wielded with no uncertain hand by local Governments when consumption shows signs of getting out of hand.

HEARTS COURAGEOUS.

I CANNOT hear the murmur of the brook,
That from the hill pursues its onward way,
For Heaven demanded, and stern warfare took
All sound divine from out each glorious day
Yet, gentle stream, thy voice through mem'ry's book
Runnest alway.

Mine eyes are sealed; I cannot view the hills,
Those wind-swept spaces where the flocks abide;
But calm is here, a blessedness that fills
My darkness with the peace of eventide.
O flower-sweet land! thou op'st, with hand that thrills,
A gateway wide.

I have no voice wherewith to give my meed
Of thankfulness for things exceeding fair,
Yet at love's call angelic minstrels speed;
My lips are mute, but birds sing everywhere.
Yea, oh my God, o'er all the world's deep need
Broods Thy dear care.

GILBERT RAE.

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SEVENTH SERIES

HITTING THE BEACH AT TOGOLAND.

By Captain MONAHAN.

PART I.

I.

THERE is no more vexed question in the navy than that of boats. Especially abroad, one's ship is nearly always anchored in the roadstead of the sea, and officers and men are at the mercy of whatever whims and fancies the commander may have on the subject of boat-routine.

Nowhere is it a more burning question than on the West Coast of Africa. The natural harbours of this portion of the Dark Continent are few in number, considering the length of the treacherous coast-line. Going ashore means running the gauntlet of what is often the wildest surf in the world. All the same, junior officers call the West Coast 'Commander's Paradise,' because there his pets lie where he likes to see them—on the boat-deck. The ship's steam-pinnace, cutters, and other small service craft are unsuitable for entering this noisy, foamy terminus of the Atlantic. The breaking waves, to say nothing of a probably violent contact with the beach, would soon make short work of their square sterns. To ride such bolshevik seas in safety a boat having a pronounced sheer at each end is needed. Then the impinging waves have an uplifting instead of a swamping effect; and when the vessel grounds with a rush, as it usually does, no damage occurs. The official surf-boat of the West African coast fulfils these requirements, is manned by hefty natives, and loses no time in making its way alongside a man-o'-war. The accommodation, however, is extremely limited.

'Will there be any chance of going ashore?' was on the tip of everybody's tongue when H.M.S. *Blastus* arrived off Lome, Togoland.

It is not every day of the year one has an opportunity of visiting a conquered German colony. Apart from the natural curiosity felt on such an occasion, there is always the call of the fleshpots. The victualling situation on the West Coast is a very serious one indeed. Even when fresh meat can be readily obtained, the cold-storage facilities of the old cruisers (known as 'punishment ships'!) on that station are of the most meagre description. A day or two out, and the swine-cask is almost certain to be broached. Salt pork then takes its place on the menu three times a day. It is surprising how warmly the pinkish-looking stuff is acclaimed by some of the seasoned ones. Staff-Paymaster de Carteret (who revered anything in the shape of an old service custom) usually went into smacking ecstasies whenever it appeared on the table. Not so Temporary-Surgeon Newcome, the stormy petrel of the mess. He abhorred the stuff, and resented its advent with a hatred that apparently had its inception in the early days of childhood.

'I can quite appreciate your pretended pleasure,' was apt to be the doctor's sarcastic rejoinder to the 'Pay;' 'it saves your department ever so much trouble. Under this cast-iron system of yours, the ship's company are supplied with only the bare necessities of life—bread, tea, meat, and potatoes; and even at that, whenever you 're unable to procure supplies as conveniently as you would from a naval victualling-yard, you 're only too ready to force this vile pig on us. There seems to be no elasticity about your arrangements. Here in Africa you wouldn't dream of giving the men chicken, or taking on a live bullock for a sea-trip, as the French do. Indeed, it 's hard enough squeezing enough lime-juice out of you to keep scurvy down.'

At which De Carteret would rant about the insolence of temporary-surgeons and their appalling lack of knowledge regarding 'service' customs. Did Newcome want the ship turned into a food emporium? Was not the *Blastus*, after all, a fighting-ship?

Newcome then further incensed the irascible paymaster by asking cynically what could she fight? Was it not true that any modern torpedo-destroyer, with high-velocity, mid-line four-inch guns, could easily outrange her and put her out of action without even running the risk of being hit? . . . .

Nevertheless, salt pork continued to occupy a prominent place on the menu.

II.

Aside from the stopping of the propellers, and the rattling of the cable-chains as the anchor seeks a gripping-place on the bed of the sea, there is another constant phenomenon which is particularly significant of any one of H.M. ships fetching up anywhere. The officer-of-the-watch comes down from his lofty perch on the fore-

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bridge. Telescope under his arm, and sword-belt round his waist, he begins strutting up and down the quarter-deck, keeping one eye on the shore and another on the port and starboard gangways, which have been lowered by this time. Quartermasters, corporals-of-the-gangway, messengers, and side-boys await his orders, which are likely to flow fast and furious in a foreign port where all sorts of dignitaries come aboard, from the king of the Bunga-Bungas to a consul-general, every one of them extremely sensitive on the subject of receiving the salute to which his rank entitles him.

The *Blastus* had barely performed the last rites of the cable-deck, and scarcely a shadow was to be seen anywhere on deck—the sun being almost directly overhead—when a signal-rating came up to the officer-of-the-watch and reported, 'Two surf-boats pulling in the direction of the ship, sir.'

'You're wrong, my lad,' the duty officer rejoined, focusing his glass. 'They're using the paddles of this coast; and a thumping good speed the first boat's making.—She's got an army bloke in her,' he added, turning to Surgeon Newcome, who had his reasons for standing by and watching the approach of the boat with the greatest of interest.

It was a pretty sight seeing the jumper-clad natives dipping their paddles to the crooning rhythm of an African boat-song. Instead of having ordinary seats for passengers, each boat contained what is known as a 'mammy-chair,' so called because the Elder-Dempster people use it for transferring women and children to and from their ships. It reminds one of a switch-back railway compartment.

As soon as the surf-boat containing the officer neared the starboard gangway, the quartermaster blew his whistle in the peculiar long-drawn-out fashion that has been in vogue from time immemorial, stopping before the boat actually touched the gangway. The side-boy waited at the bottom of the steps with a salute; and the quartermaster again intervened, this time piping the army gentleman over the side (as the expression goes), everybody of course standing to attention, and the officers saluting the moment the stranger stepped on the quarter-deck. 'My name's Manners, and I've come to call on your captain,' the ruddy-faced khaki-clad visitor announced. The commander, who received him, explained that the skipper of the *Blastus* was suffering from a touch of malaria, but would be pleased to see him in his cabin.

'He's the Governor's aide-de-camp,' the commander informed the officer-of-the-watch as soon as he returned from seeing Manners safely below. It was not long either before the captain sent word that the Governor of Togoland requested the pleasure of the company of six officers to lunch, and would those who wished to accept hand their names in to the commander?

Newcome lost no time in going up to the senior officer in question, and asking the time-honoured question, 'May I go ashore, sir?' 'Please,' was the answer, his name being put down first on the list. The surgeon was not taking any chances this time, because he had been done in the eye on several former occasions. One has to be on the top line in the navy when there are free lunches to be snapped up for the asking!

The six lucky officers did not take long in getting into their 'No. 1' tropical uniforms. Helmeted and in spotless 'whites,' they seemed to emerge simultaneously from the companion-way. The party consisted of the navigating officer, the paymaster, the chaplain, the captain of marines, the surgeon, and Lieutenant Macmurdo, R.N.R. Poor Mac! A short time afterwards he went hunting submarines in H.M. Mystery-Ship *Bomballa*. Coincidently with his new appointment the two U-boats made their famous descent upon the West Coast, and the *Bomballa*, unable to compete with their superior guns, was sunk by shell-fire, Macmurdo being killed on the bridge early in the action.

As soon as the aide-de-camp joined them, they disposed themselves in the two boats, the mess-man and the canteen manager also being given a passage in order to purchase supplies. Several hundred eyes watched them push off from the ship's side. That is where the trying part of such a cruise comes in. The ship's company have so few opportunities of *hitting the beach*, as going ashore is called. On the other hand, whatever trips happen to be on are usually very agreeable ones, with every detail arranged, so that all one has to do is to sit back, so to speak, and enjoy one's self.

July is not the most salubrious month in the year to be on any African station, but riding the Atlantic swell that morning in a surf-boat was about as perfect a sensation as one could desire. Hot, of course; but Sierra Leone had prepared the party for that. They had never seen anything finer than the startling purity of the sky; and as for the sea's blueness—well, as the pilot remarked, it was about as Prussian as the Kaiser had been able to get it!

Instead of swaying in unison with the paddle-dips of the men, the coxswain chipped in an alto every now and then on top of their boating-song, and they went ahead with a swing. They were no beauties, those men of Togoland. Black as ebony they were; their noses were depressed, cheek-bones prominent; and as for their foreheads, they did not so much appear receding as gave one the impression of having been struck a smacking good blow, a sort of ledge being left overhanging the eyes. Nevertheless, the ugliness of these racial marks is more than neutralised by their amiable smiles, and the comical raillery which seems to be their natural way of communing with each other. The West Coast natives make splendid sailors, accustomed as they are to going to sea not in the big ships of Europeans,

but in frail 'dug-outs,' which they hollow out of the trunks of suitable trees. A dug-out and a fishing-line are usually a native's sole capital. They have little use for money, regarding it with amusement inasmuch as the daily 'catch' of fish enables them to exist, providing a commodity they can exchange for whatever else they require.

III.

The Lome front appeared far more symmetrical than anything hitherto observed on the coast. The town was more or less equally disposed to right and left of a pier which jutted out far beyond the surf. A row of palms all along the beach made a splendid background for the silvery surf breaking on the yellow sand. Behind them stood immaculate white houses with red roofs. So far as one could make out, the prominent buildings were of the square limestone variety so common in the tropics. Arched windows opened on to wide verandas, which spread themselves round the rooms within.

The fascinating feature about African towns is that the transition from houses to dense bush is usually quite abrupt. 'What brave fellows must live beyond that pale!' Newcome had often thought on cyclonic nights—and there are many such during the rainy season. Off Liberia, for instance, the thunder sometimes crashed and boomed continuously several nights in succession, and from the deck of the *Blastus* there was visible a play of lightning such as is never seen in England. These fierce storms terrify the imagination. One fancies the black man in his grass-hut, and the 'four-footed beasts of the earth, and creeping things, and fowls of the air,' trembling like aspen leaves as the colossal conflict of the elements goes on around them. What are the thoughts and the fears of these natives? Do their immature brains save them from the apprehension of being struck lifeless any moment? Do they sink down on their knees and invoke the protection of their newly-found God? . . .

'You see, we don't need to go through the surf,' Manners said, as the boat was hove-to off the end of the pier, the only one of its kind on the coast. The swinging-arm of a small steam-crane was manœuvred over them by the pier people, a wire-line hitched on to the cupola of their 'mammy-chair,' and the contrivance lifted out of the bobbing surf-boat. Before ushering his charges into the waiting cars (all of them of German make, left behind by the departed enemy!), the aide-de-camp called attention to the pier's structure. It had as supports a series of inverted tripods the apices of which rested on heavy iron balls in the stone abutment. The idea of this arrangement, of course, was that the upper works (which were easily replaceable) could be washed away, say during a tornado, without the stability of the foundations being affected.

The cars turned off to the left, driving over a road as smooth as many an English one. The solid character of the former Deutsch-Westafrikanische Bank building was an eloquent reminder of what the Germans had been attempting to do on the coast. None of the native quarter was observed on this part of the journey. Newcome understood it to be fairly well separated from the white; which is as it ought to be. The doctor recollected with some sadness the conditions obtaining in Sierra Leone. There he had seen native huts in the middle of the town. Now the immediate proximity of such huts must be regarded as an infected area, because black people have the malarial parasite in their blood practically from birth. Any one bitten by mosquitoes hovering near native habitations is almost certain to contract malaria. Thanks to this and to the lack of protective netting (such as they have at Panamá), British soldiers and sailors in Sierra Leone are infected on a vast scale; and there is frequently a heavy sick-list on board H.M. ships from this disease. The gravity of the thing lies in the fact that the parasite often becomes a lifelong companion; and malaria is being gradually introduced into Kent and other English counties favourable to the development of the parasite-bearing mosquito.

The cars were in the outskirts of Lome now, traversing an extensive wood that almost reminded one of the New Forest. The trees were as large as beeches or chestnuts, and ever so many bright flowers were to be seen, many of them perennial, Captain Manners said. The wonderful sensitive plant, the puzzle of botanical philosophers, flourished by the wayside. Humming-birds darted in and out, and creatures flew past with plumage that seemed to reflect all the colours of the rainbow. Nevertheless, the visitors missed the lively song of the skylark. The pilot said that bird was afraid to rise on account of the danger of being sun-struck! Indeed, the twitterings of the feathery tribe in general were somewhat disappointing. On such a morning their English cousins could scarcely have held themselves back; they would assuredly have broken forth into pæans of chirping delight. Every degree nearer the equator apparently exacts its penalty in point of using up that reservoir of something or other which expresses itself in spontaneous outbursts of poetry or the really deep throb of song. The simple native mind may go as far as crooning a boat-song, or a Gregorian chant of sorts, but truly noble carolling is indigenous to the temperate zones. The tropics, then, for fierce emotions; the lack-lustre lands for sentiment, which is, after all, behind the great achievements of life.

Newcome noticed one thing. The natives were extremely polite. Everybody went out of his way to salute, salaam, or doff his cap. 'I hope we don't spoil them,' Captain Manners said as the car drew up before the broad steps of what used to be the Wohnung des Kaiserlichen Gouverneurs von Togo.

(*Continued on page 743.*)

GERMAN TRADE WITH LATIN-AMERICA.

By M. C. Beverley.

THERE are said to be 500,000 Germans in Brazil, which would mean that about one-fiftieth of the total population of that enormous and exceedingly fertile republic is composed of Teutons.

I am not aware of the actual number of Germans in other South American states, but the totals must be very high; and there is not the slightest doubt that the Germans are much liked and highly respected by the Spanish-Americans.

Nearly all of these Germans are banded together by the 'German Society,' to which no would-be member is admitted until the most searching inquiries have been made as to his record, standing, and nationality. In addition to this bond of union, there are musical, literary, and sub-military societies, which are conducted with a view to the genuine improvement of the Teuton, and which cannot—and do not—fail to impress the Spaniards most favourably.

While we Britons have neglected Spanish as an all but obsolete language, and have grievously offended a proud European Power by most tactless references to her as a 'dying nation,' the Germans have assiduously set themselves to cultivate a great and valuable friendship with all Spaniards, especially with the transatlantic descendants of the Conquistadors.

Spaniards are ceremonious, generous, and deeply religious; and the German man of business—after a thorough training in the Spanish language and Spanish ethics—adopts ceremony, generosity, and, above all, religion, as a good basis for trade dealings with the Spaniard. It goes without saying that nearly all the correspondence between Germans and Spanish-Americans is carried on in Spanish—and perfect Spanish, too. No ceremony is neglected, and no order, however small, from a Spanish-American is overlooked or carelessly acknowledged. The German who receives a small order for a few dozen buttons, or a like number of cups and saucers, duly 'kisses the hands' of the minor Spanish tradesman, and is as civil and obliging in carrying out the order as if it were for a boatload of crockery or a shopful of haberdashery. There is no undue pressing for the payment of accounts, no threat of 'legal proceedings,' so beloved of the British tradesman; and a polite, reasonable, and patient tone is adopted throughout. Sometimes a suggestion is made that when the sheep have been shorn, or such and such a crop has been harvested, the Spanish *estancia* holder will perhaps please remember the German creditor. This forbearing attitude has done much, and will do much more in the future, to secure foreign trade for the German.

All Christian festivals, to say nothing of birthdays, Independence Days, and other anniversaries, are punctiliously observed by the Teuton, who thereby endears himself to the fastidious Spaniard; and one old German of whom I wot is wont to have his Christmas or Easter greetings inserted in red type, while the body of the trade letter is in violet ink. 'Glory to God in the Highest! Peace and Goodwill on Earth to Men!' has a very fine effect as a scarlet line across a page of violet typing; while such exclamations as 'Thanks to God!' 'God with us!' &c., make their mark with a race whose religion is part of their daily life.

When the balance-sheet has been received in Germany, the American agent—whether German or Spanish—is never forgotten. He has his due share of the profits, and is not left to grumble and solicit in vain. This commendable conduct on the part of the Teuton might well be copied by firms in the British Empire, where shabby treatment of subordinates is going far to bring disaffection and resentment to a head.

Not only do Germans print the catalogues destined for South America in Spanish, as stated by Mr Henry Leach in the July number of *Chambers's Journal*, but one enterprising firm had thousands of copies of a pamphlet entitled *The History of the Baralong* printed in both Spanish and Dutch, and distributed all over Spanish-America and the Dutch East Indies. That Baralong tract (written in masterly style) had, and will have, far-reaching effects; and one can only wonder that we could not, or cannot, do likewise with a pamphlet recounting the barbarous treatment of that brave man, Captain Fryatt.

The homely festivals of the Germans resident in Spanish-America—their Christmas-trees, their decorated and beflagged busts of the Kaiser on his birthday—have appealed greatly to the Spaniards, who delight in anniversaries and respect tradition; whereas the English cult of the latest 'comic' song, the latest and most vulgar buffoon, and dancing all day long will produce only contempt among the educated classes, and do harm among the rank and file of the population—should we contemplate taking the Germans' place in South American trade.

The writer has seen many photographs of German family and business groups taken in Latin-America, and has been struck by the frequent presence of Indian or Spanish-Indian servants in these groups. Such dependents sit amongst their employers, apparently happy and on the best of terms with them; and the impression received is very pleasing. Very graceful gifts are exchanged between Spaniard and

German; and when a German business man has lived some years in a South American city he will be presented with a valuable token of his fellow-citizens' esteem—a beautiful bronze, or something of the kind, and countless charming bouquets of flowers.

All these ties between the Latin and the Teuton are not likely to be severed in a hurry, and certainly not by traders who know nothing of, and care less for, Spanish manners and traditions, and who do not even trouble to learn the Spanish language.

But apart from the amenities of life, the Germans have thought out and studied the question of post-war trade with Spanish-America with real thoroughness, and have prepared large quantities of goods ready for immediate shipment when practicable. Some of the everyday wants of the South Americans are as follows, and the Germans are said to have the necessary stocks in great abundance: chinaware and crockery; pins, needles, safety-pins, hairpins, &c.; hosiery—especially black and navy-blue stockings for women and children; buttons and beads; lace goods (of Plauen type); hops; butter and cheese (both of which are exceedingly bad in South America); essences and liqueurs.

In these lines the Potteries, Birmingham, Nottingham, and Kent might very well furnish enormous quantities of superior and desirable goods. But the question is—Do they supply them? Do they intend to supply them?

In conclusion, I may state from actual knowledge that in a great part of Spanish-America, especially in Bolivia, Peru, and Chili, the natives are so illiterate that they can hardly write their own names; consequently *all* clerical work *has* to be done by foreigners. Of these foreign clerks the majority are German. And, to quote from the *Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister to inquire into the Position of Modern Languages in the Educational System of Great Britain*, 'we are told that the Latin races of America are unwilling to learn English or any other foreign language.'

What an opening for the British man or woman willing to learn Spanish!

KAVANAGH'S LUCKY BEAN.

CHAPTER V.—THE RED EYES OF QUIGLEY.

AFTER many perturbed hours Kavanagh fell into a troubled slumber. From a nightmare, in which, giddily hanging head downwards from his upper berth, he was trying to strangle Nathan Quigley, who occupied the berth beneath, he awoke to find the sensation of vertigo remain after the illusion had fled. The *Taurana* was in the Bay of Biscay, and the vessel was already reeling in a way disconcerting to all except the best of sailors.

On attempting to dress, a spasm of nausea drove Dennis back to his berth, where he lay torpid, suffering little so long as he remained prostrate. The altered weather conditions left Robson unscathed; but Mr Million had lost all his jauntiness, and lay supine, a feeble, toothless wreck.

Remembering the information conveyed in the laconic note that he had discovered pinned to his pillow, Dennis—at the expense of an attack of sickness—secured the passenger list, which was in his coat-pocket, and, when he again felt composed, studied it under a new light.

A confusing number of Browns appeared to be on board. There were Lady Brown, daughter, and maid; Colonel Machieson Brown; Mr and Mrs Cadogan Browne, infant, and nurse; Mr Andrew Todd Brown; Mr and Miss Brown; and Mr Isaac Brown.

The first three lots, Dennis concluded, must be first-saloon passengers. He was already acquainted with Mr Isaac Brown, who called himself a mining expert, and who, even thus early in the voyage, had shown himself persuasively active in cajoling his fellow-voyagers into playing cards in the smoking-room. There still remained Mr Andrew Todd Brown, and the Mr Brown who was travelling with Miss Brown.

As he lay listening to the groans of Mr Million, and the occasional crash of crockery in a pantry near by, Dennis cursed the physical weakness that held him prisoner, and determined that, well or sick, he would be out of his berth next day.

By noon the following day the *Taurana* was either in somewhat smoother water or Dennis was becoming more accustomed to her motion, for he managed to stagger to the half-deserted deck and lie in his deck-chair, muffled in his rug. The fresh salt air proved the best of remedies. The tumbler of whisky-and-soda and the dry biscuits suggested by his steward completed his cure. And in the afternoon, when the pretty girl ventured on deck, looking pale, but distinctly alluring in a scarlet cloak, from beneath whose hood her dark hair curled softly about her face, he was able to help her to her chair, and offer her the use of his rug. Under the influence of his kindness she lost her shyness, and became almost communicative, and Dennis found his impressionable heart thrill to the music of her Irish accent.

In reply to his inquiry, the pretty girl admitted that the motion had 'come over' her a bit, but not for long; though her cabin-mates, Mrs and Miss Younger, were very bad still.

'But it's my father that's the sick man. It's the storm that fair put the terrors on him, the creature! He thinks every minit' the ship's sinkin' to the bottom!'

In the night the wind fell. Next morning saw the *Taurana* steaming along on an even keel. The air was mild, the sun shone, and most of the deck-chairs were occupied by pallid passengers who were congratulating themselves, and each other, that the worst of the voyage was already over.

Free now from physical handicap, Dennis resumed his task of fitting the names to the different Browns on board. Andrew Todd Brown, he discovered, was a bank clerk from Aberdeen, who was going out to an appointment at Dunedin. To his surprise, the pretty Irish girl with the blue eyes and the accent that touched his heart-strings was Miss Nora Brown; and her father, who, being a wretched sailor, had remained in his cabin since the *Taurana* left the Thames, was the only unrevealed Brown on board. Though Dennis agreed with himself that it was most unlikely that any relation of so nice a girl could be guilty of vile treachery, he yet felt that he could not rest until he had seen Nora's father and satisfied himself that he was not Nathan Quigley.

When Dennis went awkwardly up to bid her good-morning, Nora Brown looked up from her lace-work with a shy smile of welcome. Mrs Younger, already repenting her precipitance in having quitted the immutable town of Montrose for an unstable ocean, was huddled in her chair. Opening a jaundiced eye, she glanced up at Dennis, and shut it with a groan significant of disgust with the whole universe.

'It's yourself that's the fine sailor entirely,' Dennis accosted Nora admiringly. 'An' how might your father be keepin' to-day?'

'He says he is a bit easier now, an' he's thinkin' of comin' up on deck. It was the ship's doctor that was tellin' him he would best rise up to once, for he'd never get right lyin' down there. I was to go down and fetch him up in two or three minutes. Now's the time he'll be requirin' me.'

Rolling her lace-work in a clean handkerchief, Nora put it carefully away in the pocket of her chair before hastening off; and, drawing back a little, Dennis watched anxiously for her reappearance with her father.

As he waited Dennis recalled the last time he had spoken with Quigley. It was on the evening of the day on which they had received news of his father's death in the jail infirmary. Passing down the one street of the little village at the darkening, Dennis had seen Quigley standing at the door of his shop. Inviting the boy inside, Quigley had surprised him by giving him a bag of sweets for himself, and a handful of silver for his mother. 'Tell her a well-wisher sent it,' he had said, as he pressed the coins into the boy's hand. Running swiftly home on his shoeless feet, Dennis had burst through the women sympathisers who crowded the kitchen, and reaching his mother, who sat by the turf-fire, her face buried in her hands, he put the money and the bag of sweets on her lap.

'See, mother!' he had said excitedly. 'See what I've brought ye!' Uncovering her face, the widow had looked in a dazed way at the shining coins. 'It's *money*. It's big money, mother! An' it's a well-wisher sent it. Nat Quigley told me to tell ye that.'

'Quigley—Nat Quigley? Holy Mother! was't Quigley that gave ye the money?'

He remembered the sudden flame in her tear-red eyes, the shrill anger in her grief-hoarse voice, and the manner in which, clutching at the coins and the bag, she had rushed from the house into the rain; and how she hastened along the wet road until she reached Quigley's shop.

Following close upon his mother's heels, Dennis had been a dumb spectator of the scene that ensued. The flickering light from the solitary candle set on the counter had cast weird shadows on the dark interior, and lit up Quigley's startled face. Mrs Kavanagh was a tall woman. Drawn up to her full height as she stood on the threshold, she might have been some outraged queen. Dennis had felt as though this transformed mother was a stranger to him.

For a long moment she had stood, silent, confronting her 'well-wisher.' The counter had formed a barricade between them, but Dennis saw Quigley shrink back against the shelves that were laden with canisters and bottles of sugar-sticks, as though he feared a blow.

Then, raising her hand, Mrs Kavanagh had thrown the money full in his face. 'There's yer blood-money back to ye!' she had said in a tone of concentrated bitterness, and, without another word, had turned and left the shop. As for Dennis's bag of sweets, it lay where she had unconsciously dropped it outside the cottage door. In time the rain washed away the paper, and the sweets remained a sodden mass in the gutter. Sweets were rare and precious delights to the boy, but he had never touched those. In common with the money, to him they were accursed. That was many years ago. And now he was waiting impatiently for the first public appearance on board of the man Brown, who, he told himself, might be Quigley.

But when at last Nora came on deck, the invalid she supported with daughterly solicitude proved to be a short, elderly man with white hair and trembling limbs. In all respects he seemed the very antithesis of the informer, and Dennis experienced a sudden relief in that his fears had proved without foundation.

Mr Brown revealed himself as rather a difficult parent for so sweet a daughter to please. He was

querulous and fidgety, thought the deck draughty, regretted he had allowed himself to be persuaded to leave his snug cabin, insisted on having his deck-chair moved into the shadow, on the plea that the glare from the sun and the sea hurt his eyes, for whose weakness he wore tinted spectacles.

Seeing Nora struggling with the clumsy chair, Dennis hastened forward and helped her to place it in the desired position. Then, when Mr Brown had been finally settled in it, with a cushion at his back and a shawl over his knees, Dennis slipped away, and returned bearing a glass of brandy-and-soda for the invalid—a timely attention which Mr Brown accepted without demur, and Nora acknowledged with a radiant smile.

'Thank ye kindly, sir,' Mr Brown said. 'By the light that shines! it's the thirsty man I am this day. My little girl here was tellin' me she's been indebted to ye durin' my indisposition, an' I'm thankin' ye for that too.'

As the spirit sent a tinge of colour into his pallid cheeks and new life through his veins the old invalid became loquacious, and expressed admiration for the scene before him. 'What a marvellous sight this is! Ay, truly, "they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep,"' he repeated unctuously, his thin lips caressing the brim of the tumbler. Taking a biscuit, with the remark that neither bite nor sup had crossed his lips that day, he nibbled at it with teeth that were remarkably white and even for a man of his years.

Rapidly recovering, Mr Brown evinced a healthy natural interest in the affairs of his new friend—an interest so strong as almost to entrench upon curiosity. He was pleased to hear that Dennis had been brought up in Scotland, and cordially approved his intention of settling in New Zealand. 'It's a good land, is that same. An' a fine country in which to be earnin' your bread by the sweat of your face, as the Book says. A big, strappin' young fellow like yourself'll be makin' a fortune off the land in no time at all. No, there's not much chance for an old chap like me, that the grasshopper's becomin' a burden to. But I'm wantin' to give my Nora there a better opportunity nor ever I had. It's herself that'll be makin' the splendid marriage out there.'

To Dennis's disappointment, Nora's father proved to be a sanctimonious individual, much given to quoting Scripture in season and, more frequently, out of season, and sadly prone to show extreme economy, even niggardliness, regarding the minor expenses of the voyage. As the days wore on it became more and more evident that to be 'out there' was undoubtedly the climax of Mr Brown's feverish desires. His one craving was to hasten on the end of the voyage. The weather continued fine; the ship was making record runs; but no progress was good enough to satisfy Mr Brown.

'I don't know what ails the man at all, at all,' said Nora one day to Dennis. 'But it's easy to see that, if he could, he'd get out and push the ship.'

The hours might lag to Mr Brown, but to Nora and Dennis they seemed to fly. Halcyon days they were, passed on an enchanted ship that sailed an enchanted ocean. Dennis had not told Nora that he loved her. He felt that to do so would not be fair until he was more sure of what lay in wait for him. But there are things that women know instinctively, and Nora hardly required to be told.

Meanwhile the entertainments committee had organised well. Competitions in deck games, bridge tournaments, concerts, and informal dances succeeded in swift rotation. From most of these gaieties Dennis and Nora held aloof. A feeling of not being to the manner born made them more kin to each other. Though, yielding to the persuasion of one of the actresses, Nora had appeared at the costume-dance as Little Red-riding-hood, wearing a white frock with her scarlet cloak, and carrying a fancy basket containing the historic cake and jar of honey. She had the happy excitement of winning the second prize; and Dennis, who thought she was the loveliest thing alive, shared in her triumph.

During those sparkling days Dennis almost forgot the elusive traitor he had set out to murder, and thought only of Nora, and of the new land to which they were speeding. The firm conviction that Nathan Quigley was not on board had relieved him of all sense of responsibility.

They were beginning to count the lessening number of days to the end of the voyage—Brown with a kind of stifled exultation, the young people with growing regret—when one morning Nora appeared at breakfast alone. Her father was not so well; he was keeping his berth, she explained. No, he was not complaining of any special ailment; and he refused to see the doctor.

When the second day came, and Brown was still invisible, Dennis saw that Nora seemed troubled. In a quiet corner of the deck he asked her the reason.

'It's my father that's botherin' me,' she confessed. 'The creature's not like himself at all.'

'Sure, an' the doctor'll set him right in a jiffy. Will I tell him your father'ud like to see him?'

Nora shook her head. He could see that the blue eyes fringed with the black lashes were full of tears. 'It's the mind of him that's bad, an' not the body. He was like this afore ever we came on the ship, but he's been better lately. An' now the spirits of him is down again. He keeps wakin' nights, an' has the awful dreams.

An' last night he says he never closed an eye. There 's something troublin' his mind, an' I don't know what to do with him at all, at all.'

'Faith, but I'd be the proud man to be helpin' ye,' Dennis said tenderly. 'If I was to see him, now. . . . But I wouldn't like to be intrudin'.'

'More like it would do my father good to see ye. It 'ud cheer him up a bit. I'll run down an' ask him,' Nora said, hurrying off.

In a few minutes she reappeared on deck, and Dennis was glad to note that her step was lighter. She nodded assent from a distance.

'Yes, he says you can come.' Taking him to the end of the long passage, Nora indicated the door of the double-berth cabin of which her father was the sole occupant, then retired, leaving Dennis to usher himself in.

To his surprise, the door seemed to be fastened from within, for, after knocking, he heard the sound of a bolt being drawn, and of a scurry inside. Then Brown's voice said, 'Come in. Come in.' And Dennis entered, to find the invalid hunched up in bed with a big Bible propped up against his knees. A faint spirituous essence tinctured the close air of the cabin. At the back of the berth, partly concealed by the bed-clothes, Dennis saw a black leather bag that was Brown's inseparable companion.

'Shut the door. Are ye sure it 's fast?' Brown asked nervously. Then, recovering something of his customary ingratiating manner, he thanked his visitor for coming, and invited him to sit on the couch.

'Sure, an' it 's vexed I am to see ye in this predicament,' Dennis said with sincere sympathy, for he was genuinely distressed to know that Nora's father was suffering. 'Is there anything I can be doin' to help ye? Will ye not be for seein' the doctor? They say it 's the rale clever man he is.'

The cordial commiseration in his friend's tone appealed to the invalid. For a moment he seemed to tremble on the verge of a confidence; then, in a hesitating voice—a voice full of genuine self-pity—he began to unburden himself.

'Man alive! there 's no doctor on earth, let alone this boat, that can cure my trouble. It 's the world that has always misjudged me. Like the Psalmist, it 's myself has been surrounded by evil speakers and ill-wishers. An' me the honest man with the heart of a patriot in me! An' all I was askin' was peace to lead a quiet life.' As Brown waxed excited by the recital of his woes his brogue became more pronounced, but Dennis did not notice it. He was trying unsuccessfully to think of something suitable to say.

'It 's the wicked imaginings of my enemies that has driven me out of the Ould Country. Like King David when he was oppressed, I said, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest."'

Concluding that Brown's sufferings were purely mental, and therefore groundless, as his daughter had hinted they were, Dennis yet felt sorry for him. He knew that imaginary ailments were by far the most difficult to cure, and the pity that filled his kind heart was revealed in his face.

'There 's a verse here that shows how David endured the sting of malicious tongues and contumely the same as me,' said Brown, fumbling with the leaves of the Bible, and then taking off his glasses the better to find the place. 'See, here it is.'

He pointed out the passage that was to reveal the affinity between his sad case and that of the royal Psalmist. But what the verse said Dennis never knew; for, as Brown met his gaze, Dennis found himself looking down into the red eyes of Quigley—those eyes whose tell-tale hue the tinted glasses had so successfully concealed.

How the remainder of the interview passed Dennis never remembered. His purely mechanical replies must have pleased the invalid, for he left the cabin with Brown's invitation to return soon echoing dully in his brain.

CHAPTER VI.—THE PASSENGER WHO PLAYED PATIENCE.

STUNNED by the discovery that the man he was pledged to murder was the father of the girl he loved, Dennis could not face Nora, though he knew she was anxiously waiting to receive his report on the condition of the invalid.

What he craved was a quiet place in which to formulate his thoughts. But never had the ship seemed so crowded. Stewards were setting the tables for luncheon in the dining-saloon. In the usually deserted music-room the rehearsal for an impending concert was in progress. Noisy groups, busy with bull-board and deck-quoits, usurped most of the deck-space. It appeared to Dennis as though the feeling of horror he experienced must be clearly branded on his features, but all were engrossed with their own pursuits, and his perturbation passed unnoticed, except by an indistinctive man who sat at a little table playing one of the seemingly interminable games of patience that occupied most of his leisure every day during the voyage. When Dennis strode past him, looking as though he had seen a ghost, the solitary player, leaving his game uncompleted, quietly gathered up his cards, and having put them carefully into their case, folded up his table and went below.

Descending to his cabin, which he confidently expected would be untenanted at that hour, Dennis was annoyed to find fate still against him. Before the mirror Mr Million was trying the rival effects of half-a-dozen new neckties. When the aged beau had made a tardy decision and left the cabin, Robson flung open the door

and entered in a vile temper. Dragging out his steamer-trunk from under his berth, he began routing among its contents to find money to pay his card losses to Mr Isaac Brown, who was an exigent creditor. It seemed to Dennis as though there was not a corner in that floating world where he could be alone.

When Robson had gone, and at last he was free to think, Dennis found that the capacity for consecutive thought had temporarily abandoned him. His usually clear mind was a medley of broken ideas. He felt dazed, inclined to argue that the situation was impossible.

Then, as his brain gradually began to steady itself, he became amazed at his own blindness in not having earlier discovered the identity of Nora's father. After having been warned that Quigley was on board the *Taurana*, travelling under the assumed name of Brown, how he had failed to recognise the informer at once was a puzzle to him now.

The only possible explanation was that his boyish recollection of Quigley as a big, red-headed man had confused his more mature vision. He had forgotten that the man who had towered in height and breadth over a boy of ten might look small and thin to a stalwart man of twenty-seven. He had failed to remember that in the passing of seventeen years Quigley's auburn hair might have become thin and white, and his ugly tusks have given place to teeth that were white and even. The Nat Quigley he had known had a wife and a baby. He had never considered the possibility of the wife having died, and of that infant daughter having grown up into Nora.

And there it was that his soul revolted most bitterly against destiny. But for the existence of Nora, with the ingrained memory of his father's ignominious death, and of his mother's long-drawn-out agony, to goad him on, he might have stooped to rid the world of a Quigley. But for Nora. . . . How could he kill the father that he knew she loved? The contemptible informer had evidently been an affectionate parent to her. To murder Quigley now in cold blood, as he had set sail to do, might purge the universe of the meanest scoundrel, but it would leave Nora defenceless and alone, in a strange land where she had not a single friend. How could he meet Nora again without revealing the sudden difference in his attitude towards her? Dennis wondered. Only a few hours earlier, full of his affection for her, and assured that the absence of Quigley had rendered his task void, he had determined that Nora, and none other, should become his wife. That blissful dream had been abruptly dissolved. Existence had once again become a state haunted with dread certainties.

The sound of a gong called to luncheon, and Dennis mechanically obeyed its summons. At the door of the dining-saloon Nora was waiting to intercept him. Her pretty colour had faded; her eyes were wide with dismay.

Drawing him aside, she spoke in a low voice. 'It's troublin' you again that I am,' she said apologetically, 'but it's my father. . . . He says will you speak to him?'

'What's he wantin'?' Despite himself, Dennis spoke roughly. Quigley was the last person he desired to encounter at that moment.

'Ah, the dear only knows!' she sighed. 'He's come over that queer again.' Then, coming closer to breathe the thought that had been torturing her, she whispered, 'You don't think it's his mind that's goin', do you—that his senses is leavin' him? He keeps imaginin' things—an' there's nothing! Och, then, it's jist heart-breakin' to see him!'

'He'd best be up on deck,' Dennis counselled, remembering the whisky-tainted atmosphere of the small cabin. 'It's the clean air would do him good.'

'An' it's the true word you've spoken, an' never a lie came near it,' Nora said gratefully; 'an' it's yourself's the one to persuade him, if any mortal can.'

'Well, I'll see if I can get him to come up for a bit,' Dennis promised unwillingly. 'I'll be after askin' him now.'

When he had forced himself to re-enter Quigley's cabin, Dennis was sensible that a lamentable change had taken place in the occupant during the short time that had elapsed since his former visit. Then Quigley had been apprehensive and vaguely alarmed. Now he was in a state of abject terror. His face was ashen; his upper lip trembled irrepressibly. The Bible lay neglected. He had ceased to plume himself upon the similarity of his situation to that of the persecuted Psalmist.

'Put the catch in the door, an' come close,' he gasped in a scarce audible voice. 'Are ye sure it's shut?' He was clutching at Dennis with hands that shook. 'I told ye I had enemies, but I didn't tell ye the whole. They threatened to murder me, but I thought I had jinked them. I never guessed they could have done it; but they've got me trapped here.' Leaning forward, he hissed into Kavanagh's ear, 'There's a man aboard come special to kill me!'

Dennis started back. 'What makes ye think that?' he asked jerkily, finding it incumbent on himself to say something, and scarcely recognising his own voice. Being deeply engrossed by his own affairs, Quigley failed to notice any change in the demeanour of his visitor.

'I guessed they'd try it on me. I knew they'd never be willin' to let me slip; but I thought I'd been too clever for them. . . . Till this very day, when I saw him.'

'Ye saw him!' Dennis was puzzled. 'Who did ye see?'

'The man that's to kill me. Isn't it that same I'm tellin' ye? Ye hadn't been more than ten minutes gone out of here, an' I was lyin' quiet-like, when the tail of my eye caught the

door openin' a crack—I 'd forgotten to bolt it—an' the evil face of him looked in.'

'What did he say?'

'Not wan word came out of the sneerin' mouth of him, but there was bloody murder in his eye.'

Convinced that the pitiful wretch before him was the victim of his own bad conscience, Dennis tried to make light of his fears. 'It would jist be the steward come to see if he could clean the cabin.'

'Devil a steward about him! I knew him. It was yon man that takes up with nobody, an' jist sits playin' himself with them bits of cards. I know what he 's after. He 's jist watchin' his opportunity, an' when he gets me off my guard he 'll kill me.'

'An' what makes ye think it 's that man?' Dennis asked, knowing all too well the real man who had been detailed to commit the crime. 'Did ye know him afore?'

''Deed, then, an' I did not.'

'Then what for would ye be thinkin' ill of him?'

Hereupon the old man fell into a frenzy of terror, giving no reason for his conviction, but imploring Dennis to save him, and insisting that, could he only get safe to land, he would escape the dangers that threatened him on ship-board. And Dennis found himself soothing him, telling him that his fears were groundless, and assuring him that, so long as he was there to protect him, neither that man nor any other would do him any harm.

Having succeeded in partly convincing Quigley that he was the victim of imagination, and having induced him to swallow a sleeping-draught that he fetched from the doctor, Dennis went on deck.

Luncheon was over, and the people were beginning their afternoon amusements. The patience-player had already arranged the cards for one of the interminable games that occupied so much of his time.

As Dennis passed his table the man raised his head and looked up at him. The glance was but a momentary one, but as their eyes met a thought flashed to Dennis that drove the blood from his heart. This, then, was the agent appointed by the small, gray man to see that he, Dennis, fulfilled his mission. If he failed, by some means or other, to compass the death of Quigley before the *Taurana* reached Auckland, this man would kill him, Dennis.

So that was his tracker. It required no special gift of prescience to convince Dennis that if he failed to execute his task and let Quigley escape, there was no escape for himself. 'And he 'd do it proper, too,' Dennis told himself. 'He 's not the one to bungle the job.' Something about the watchful quiescence of this outwardly indistinctive being made Dennis think of the unobtrusive, yet unremitting, vigilance with which a spider lies in wait for his prey. This man's part of the bargain would be carried out unflinchingly. He looked as though his work would be neatly and methodically done, without leaving any trace likely to bring guilt home to the agent.

As Dennis pondered over Quigley's story, light gradually dawned upon him. He saw that this man, whose business it was to keep them both under observation, had probably known when he was closeted with Quigley in his cabin, and that, noting Dennis's agitated demeanour when he reappeared on deck, he might have concluded that Dennis had killed Quigley, and have peeped into the cabin to see if the deed had been accomplished. It was probably the patience-player, too, who had pinned the note on his pillow—the note warning him that Quigley was travelling under the name of Brown.

Urged thereto by a species of mental desperation, Dennis decided that no power on earth would induce him to kill Nora's blackguard father. A certain kind of heroic recklessness rendered him indifferent to the shadow that menaced his own life. But with the knowledge of that ghastly overhanging fate he found it impossible to resume his former happy light-hearted relations with Nora.

'I should take shame to myself for the way I 'm treatin' her, and so I should,' he thought one night, after he had seen the blue eyes fill with tears at what she believed his coldness. 'But it 's not for me to be makin' up to her, an' maybe leavin' her a widow before ever she 's been a wife.' So, at the cost of real self-denial, he resolutely kept love out of their conversation; and Nora, realising the change in his attitude towards her, and fearing it was owing to some shortcoming of her own, was almost broken-hearted.

(Continued on page 741.)

HUMOURS OF THE CONSULAR SERVICE.

By a Retired Consul.

CONSULS are, as a rule, a much-maligned class, and it is indeed to their credit that, except in isolated cases, they manage to keep on good terms with their nationals in the various ports or districts to which their Government consigns them. It is but seldom that a Consular officer vacates a post except with regret on both sides. Consuls are, too, a misunderstood set. The actual regulations confine Consuls' duties to protection in general of British

commercial interests and to aiding their nationals in a general manner, and they are told that even a letter of introduction from the Foreign Office in no wise entails the entertainment of the individual so armed. Yet, whilst many commercial houses at home regard a Consul as a universal information bureau and a species of unpaid agent supplied by a beneficent and all-wise Government, the British travelling public seem to look on him and his Consulate as a *poste restante*, lost-luggage office, money-changer's bureau, ticket-office and tourists' agency, and pose travel problems sometimes which would stagger even a Cook or a Gaze employee. His private abode is to them a kind of free hotel and restaurant—open day and night.

In fact, there is nothing under the sun which the unfortunate Consul is not called on at times to do. I have on divers occasions and at various ports been asked to advance money in large sums on no security whatever to undoubted wastrels—'I'll get my people to send it you when I get home;' to find and engage a suitable nurse in England, and bring her out at Government expense; to trace relatives of obscure natives of the land in which my post happened to be who had emigrated to America or Canada, with no more information than the missing one's name; to sell cheques on various countries and towns; to bear false witness against all kinds of persons' neighbours. On one occasion I was asked to christen a baby. 'You marries us and you buries us; then I don't see why you shouldn't christen us!' exclaimed the applicant, the wife of a workman, thereby raising a moot point for the consideration of the Foreign Office.

Once a stout lady, in the regulation green tourist veil and other garments, having settled herself in an arm-chair in my Consulate (at most she required a *visa* to her passport), brought out a little book, asked me to note in the margin the correct pronunciation of words and sentences in the language of the country, and departed, a tower of indignation, on my hinting that neither my time nor my inclination allowed of my doing this. 'I shall let the Foreign Office know, and get you removed,' was her parting shot.

Foreigners in general, too, pay British Consulates the undesirable compliment of coming to them where no Consul of their own country is resident—and often where one is. Americans, especially, are prone to this habit, which after all, in their case, is not to be wondered at. The writer one morning, when going early into his office to fetch a book left there, encountered a stout individual in a peculiarly checked suit, his nigh scarlet face pierced by a long cigar, and was assailed with (no 'Good-morning'), 'Say, I am John Y. Short of Minnesota. Have yew any mail for me?' On my denying the imputation, he continued: 'Well, then, I waant yew to tell me how many of these francs go to an American dollar.' He seemed utterly surprised when I explained that I was nothing of a banking expert, and that my duties were confined to the needs of my fellow-subjects only. Equally without any greeting, he left, but flipped a cigar on to my table as he turned to the door—I presume as a form of remuneration for services rendered. I gave it, I remember, to my office-boy, who stayed at home two days recovering from its dire effects!

The marriage question is always a great grievance with girls resident abroad, whom it is extremely difficult to make understand that, whilst a male British subject can be married at a British Consulate to a female of foreign nationality, a woman of British nationality cannot similarly espouse a foreigner. 'But I want to be married so as to remain a British subject,' is the usual cry. One English girl, about to be united in wedlock with a native of another country, asked me, when going through the formality of the civil marriage at the local tribunal, whether the problematical children would be British subjects if the two names, Snooks-Lacroix, for example, were joined with a hyphen in registering! She went sorrowful away when she found that she would in no wise remain English. In a short time she returned to know what would happen if her husband settled in England and became naturalised, and appeared still more mystified when I told her she would naturally become once again a British subject.

The troubles of English nurses and governesses in families abroad are the cause of much premature baldness among Consuls, who, although the regulations tell one in such cases only to recommend a good local lawyer, must for pity's sake often act as mediator or arbiter between employers and their nationals. The old saying of six of one and half-a-dozen of the other gives the odds in most cases. Some of the complaints with which such people come are most ridiculous. A very usual one is not getting strong tea at breakfast, to say nothing of eggs and bacon, &c., in countries where coffee is the only morning tipple.

The brother of a would-be governess in a family at Galatz, Roumania, wrote to a colleague of mine there (it must have been from Yorkshire), asking information as to the family's respectability, and whether there was a good golf club, and would his sister get some decent hunting!

Most awkward are the questions sometimes put to one. A governess, newly arrived, came to me complaining of having to bath a boy of nine. She herself must have been fifty-five, if a day! I was helped from a most embarrassing situation by the military attaché, who had called in for a chat, and who proposed that the lady should wear blue glasses! She fled immediately, and I never saw her again.

It was the native servant of a colleague at a Balkanic port who, meaning, doubtless, to pay a delicate compliment to her master, got the Consular flag off the post and went to a cheap mask-ball draped in it—whether as Britannia

or as symbolical of the Board of Trade, one was never able to ascertain, as she left the Consul's service next day.

Ports, with their attendant tramp skippers—I beg pardon, master mariners—and sailor-men are responsible for much matter of a humorous nature. I well remember the look of wonder on the face of a ship captain at my laughing at his statement: 'Well, Mr Consul, it's that steward of mine. He asked leave to go ashore for half-an-hour a Toosday afternoon to stretch his legs a bit, an' now it's Friday!' A visit to the port lock-up quickly discovered the gentleman in question, with a black eye, and clothed, except for remorse, in only a greyback and breeches, he having drunk the rest.

We are (very unjustly, I consider) looked on as a nation relatively poor in linguistic knowledge. This no doubt accounts for the following. Going home late one night, from a mild game of bridge, I came on three deck-hands in a very parlous state in the hands of the local 'bobbies.' I inquired the reason, and was told that they, the sailors, after drinking deeply at a wine-shop, had tried, in mercantile parlance, to 'rush it'—that is, to bolt without paying. The attempt had failed miserably, with the result as I found it. In a tactful talk with the police and the keeper of the house of entertainment I arranged for their liberation on the bill, and the damage to waiters' eyes and noses, being made good. The two less drunk of the sailor-men agreed; but the third, who put the tearing of his sanguinary cap far above all else, could not be brought by me to see the extreme fairness of the arrangement.

'Now, take the advice of a Britisher. Pay up your share and get aboard, otherwise it will probably end in your being locked up and getting a larruping with a ramrod!'

'You ain't no countryman of mine!'

'Yes, I am. What makes you think I am not?'

'If you're English, 'ow the h— could you talk to them —— policemen?'

One incident always shines bright amongst all others in connection with ports and sea-lawyers. It was a Sunday afternoon, and my man called me from a favourite pipe and a thrilling Tauchnitz to the yard of the house, where, as lightly clothed as the steward above mentioned, except for shabby crimson slippers, stood an individual whom I at once decided must be a ship's fireman. 'Now then, what do you want?' I snapped angrily, annoyed at this interruption out of Consular hours.

'Are you the British Council?' (We are all 'Councils' with sailor-men.)

'Yes, I am.'

'Well then, I demand financial 'elp to enable me to get to my ship.'

I could easily see the masts of the shipping from my yard. 'Now, you get quickly out of this, otherwise you'll get yourself into trouble.'

'Ah, you're the sort o' —— the likes of us pays income-tax to keep in soft jobs, are yer?'

'Ease it, Bill!' came with vapours of spirits, wafted on the air.

I then perceived another at the gate, clearly a disciple of the first, but a waverer. 'If you're not out of this at once, I shall have you put out.'

A string of quite unprintable language, interlarded with occasional 'Ease it, Bills!' from the Greek chorus at the gate.

I turned to my man and told him in the vernacular to go out the back-way and fetch a policeman.

'You ought to be re-moved—yes, re-moved. That's what ought to be done with the likes o' you. Council!'—witheringly. 'I'd make a better Council than you out o' wild tiger.' (I believe this to be the fo'c'stle term for salt pork.)

'Ease it!' here suddenly disappeared, his place being taken by a native policeman, who, good lad, taking in the situation at a glance, walked quietly and quite unobserved up behind the man of fire and gave him a 'killing rabbits' on the back of the neck. Before he could recover from the effects of the unexpected rear attack, the fiery one was being hauled down the yard and into the street. But he managed to shout out as he clung a moment to the gate-post, 'All right, cocky, you're top dog now; but I knows a place in Shields where I can get 'and-bills printed at threppence a 'underd. I'll 'ave a thousand done about you, and leave some in every blighted port I comes to.'

The best person at dealing with such characters was a certain Consul, formerly in the army, now of the great majority. He was most benevolent-looking, and was known to some of his friends as the 'Jolly Bishop,' which sobriquet described him exactly. He would lead complainers on with 'Indeed, my man?' 'Dear, dear!' &c., until the sea-lawyer, carried away, would forget himself and drop into his usual style of conversation, which, of course, included swear-words. At the first of these the 'Bishop' would jump up, seize a mighty malacca stick, and with a 'How dare you use such language in Her Majesty's Consulate?' attack the offender, hip and thigh; whereupon the visitor would meekly transport himself back to his ship.

Once, when a man had deserted his ship and came to me complaining that he was starving, I told him that, in any case, he was smelling strongly of spirits.

'Well, Mr Council, you see, people will pay for drink for any one, but will not pay for food'—which is unfortunately true in most cases, and says little for our vaunted civilisation.

I spoke above of the various functions which the public think a Consul should discharge. A jockey, who was to be married at the Consulate, was asked by the Consul at what time he would like the formality to take place. 'Oh, it's as you like, sir; just before the breakfast.'

'Well, what time is that?'

'Just what time suits you, sir.'

'But it has nothing to do with me,' replied the Consul, much afraid of being invited to the festivity.

'How not, sir? I thought you supplied all that.'

I have called this paper 'Humours of the Consular Service.' One must not think from this that it is in general a sprightly profession. There is much hard work attached to it, and a great deal of extremely monotonous routine, apart from the loneliness of very many ports, and these are really but poorly requited by the salary.

CONSCIOUSNESS.

By Bart Kennedy.

IT is as a small light in a vast, dark place.

The mind is a world of strangeness and dreams and inscrutable shadows and fathomless abysses. It holds within it all things. It holds all our memories, and the memories of those who held the small light of consciousness before us, and the memories of those who held it back even to the time, profoundly far away, that we call the Beginning. And as the mind holds what went before, so must it hold what will come after, even as the future of the world is held in the world of this very actual time that we call the present. Ay, the future of man must be held within this magical domain, the mind, that man inherits from man.

But the small light of consciousness has but the power to illume feebly the past and the present. It cannot show us the future that is contained within the vast mind-domain. Wonder not at this, for it is so. It is there. It will surely emerge into the radius of the light of consciousness. Ay, it is there, but we cannot make it out with this feeble light. We can make out only the things we have touched—the past and the present. Indeed, to be truly exact, we can make out only the present. For the past we see but in little part and in a confused way. And the past that is from us a profound reach of time we see not at all, even though it is exactly registered within this magical mind-domain that we have inherited. We know it is there at times—when we stumble against it.

Consciousness is but a feeble thing.

Even is it as a pilot that understands not the ship he is steering, nor the direction in which he is going. And at times the helm refuses to obey him. Monstrous rocks suddenly rise up before him. He is going through a calm, fair sea, and all at once his ship is in the grasp of a mighty whirlpool. He, the pilot, Consciousness, is confronted with all manner of obstacles that it is impossible for him either to foresee or to deal with when he sees them. He is sailing over an ocean that is uncharted. He has neither map nor compass. He may take no observations that he may absolutely depend upon. There is no firmament with fixed stars by which he may plan out a direction.

He sails on in the midst of darkness and shadows and change. At times there appear bright lights, but they suddenly go.

He is forced to guide the ship as best he may through vagueness.

And still, though Consciousness be but a feeble guide, it is the only guide that there is in this mind-domain of shadows and abysses and inconceivable distances. It has evolved from out this mysterious and wondrous domain. Though its sceptre be composed of shadow, and though a breath may disenthrone it or thrust it aside, it is still king.

When it lays down its sceptre there come the fantasies of dreams. It is still Consciousness, but a fugitive Consciousness that has lost all power of governing. It wanders, irresponsibly, through its dominions. It beholds unbelievable things. And it possesses a prescience that it possesses not when it grasps the sceptre of reigning. It understands the unknowable. It surmounts the impossible. Laid bare before it are the secrets that lie in the inconceivable distances. It discovers in its domain heavens that it knows not of when it reigns. It discovers hells strange and terrible. It passes at will through solid substances. It performs miracles. Though it governs not, though it be but as a slave, it is possessed of a power unimaginable. It is the master of all the elements, and the solver of all the mysteries. It pierces down into ocean depths; it soars through the upper air. Nay, it goes out to the stars. There is nothing to hold it, nothing to stay it. It explores inconceivably strange worlds. Past, present, and future are to it but words. It possesses the secret of binding them together. It raises the dead into vivid life. It casts the living into the tomb. It commits terrible crimes. It performs noble and virtuous acts. Its power is infinite——

When it lays down its sceptre in dreams.

These realms that Consciousness may not explore when it grasps the sceptre of reigning!

Whence did they come? What are the secrets that lie within their unreachable recesses? Consciousness knows that these realms exist, for in dreams it passes into them. It explores their lone and strange and silent places.

Within them are held mystical secrets that lie behind veils that are enclosed within veils.

Herein is held the secret of the unition of the life of the past and the present and the future. Herein is held the secret of the power that holds in place the stars. Herein is held the secret of what lies before and behind the fire of life. All, all is contained within this glorious and infinite domain—the mind: the mind that existed before that puny measure-concept which man calls Time, and that will exist when man no longer needs to use it. Let it not be forgotten. The mind in its vastness is God. It is of all the worlds and all the stars.

Truly is Consciousness but a feeble and shadowy king.

Save in dreams.

Save in glorious, splendid, magical, limitless dreams.

Then indeed is Consciousness, though but as a fugitive, though but as a slave, a king of a power and a might transcendent. His weak and shadowy sceptre is transformed into a wand crowned with a jewel of dazzling, piercing light. The darkness of the realms is gone. The light from the wand of dreams illumes the manifolded tortuousness of secret labyrinths. It shines into the faces of demons terrible and strange. It falls upon the celestial brows of angels. It illumes eternal depths. It reveals to Consciousness the secret and ultimate wisdom that it is not given it to behold in the waking darkness.

Wand of dreams!

You give to the disenthroned king a power that is of God. Though he rules not, you are to him as the sceptre of all-reigning. Though he sees not, you give to his eyes the vision that beholds all things, that pierces into all things.

The mind is woven from the woof of dreams. And the waking state, wherein Consciousness grasps his shadowy, insecure sceptre, is but as a dream, dark and dim, that is held within a dream of glorious light.

In this dim, waking dream Consciousness is but as a light in a vast, dark place. It reveals not what lies in the surrounding, resplendent light of the great dream that encloses it.

It is the guide; it is the pilot; it is the king. But its power, in the dim, waking dream, is feeble. It knows not where it is, nor whither it is going. No sure knowledge has it of its wide and vast domain. It understands not the powers and the mysteries that surround it.

Save in the vast dream that lies outside the dim dream in which it is king.

When it lays aside its sceptre, there is given to it the full vision of the might and the power and the glory and the wonder of God.

THE COMING OF THE CURLEWS.

By H. Mortimer Batten.

I.

SINCE the old man who kept his chickens on the mountain-side could remember, a pair of curlews had bred annually in the patch of sheltered swamp in the corner of Black Allotment. No one knew the wild-life of the mountain-side better than this old man. For years he had jotted down the arrival of the migrants, the date when he first saw trout heading up the tiny brooks, and so on; but this year he was a little worried. The curlews, his favourite birds, were a fortnight later than ever before.

For many days the river, that recognised highway of the migrants, had been apulse with life. The first redshanks had passed ten days ago; he had seen an oyster-catcher and golden plovers galore; while the lower slopes were already alive with the cheery 'Kee-wit' of the lapwings. But the curlews—where were they?

It was a matter of some importance, for to the old man spring-time was impossible till he heard the first call-note of these birds. To him it was the curlews that brought the spring, not the spring that brought the curlews. In truth, they were well on their way, and only the exceptional lowness of the river had prevented the arrival of spring a week ago. For the curlews, finding vast areas of desolate mud-flats exposed, were dallying on their way from the coast marsh-land. Usually they arrived in flocks; but this year, owing to the delay, the flocks away down the river were breaking up into packs, the packs into straggling groups, and finally the groups into pairs. And when at length the last smoky city was left behind, the little towns gave way to sleepy villages, and ultimately the blue Pennines hove in view, the couples quietly disappeared, as couples generally do, each pair heading for some remembered spot dearer to them than any other place on earth.

Thus one evening the old man, seated on his step, over his pipe, heard a sound of laughter high overhead—of wild, piercing laughter which seemed to bid the very hills to awaken. He jumped up with a start, and almost bit his lip. 'Mary!' he cried. 'Mary, the curlews is come!'

Then at last he hobbled up the hillside to inspect his chicken-coops in readiness for a prospective generation of roosters—a task he never attended to till his calendar, which was surely the most unreliable of all, told him that spring had really come.

But the old man was a little puzzled. True

that his favourite birds had arrived as usual to nest in Black Allotment; but one thing worried him, and he said to his friend, 'William, I ain't seen no flocks of curlews this year. Do you reckon the fighting at sea can have harmed them?'

The other old man grunted, but ventured no comment, so our hero went his leisurely way. Twenty minutes later, when he was putting down his parsley-seed, the other old man came and leant over the gate. 'George,' he said, 'I don't reckon it's the fighting, because I call to mind that in 1857—that's longer than you can remember, George—there weren't no flocks of curlews—just solitary birds like what you see this year.'

George grunted, and the other old man went back to his hoeing. Presently George straightened his back, relit his pipe, and hobbled after him. 'William,' he said, squashing a caterpillar on the wall-top, 'did you say 1857? That was the spring the bridge was swept away, weren't it?'

William agreed that it was. 'A terrible dry early spring,' he explained; 'then terrible wet all through April. The lambs'——

And thereafter the conversation wound its leisurely way through quite different channels.

II.

But the curlews had come—that was the main point; and now day and night they were astir, flying, alighting, calling, cackling, hovering like gigantic humming-birds, and wheeling in mid-heaven like mighty hawks awing. When they rested no man could say, for the little white-walled village far below fell asleep with their wild calls ringing in its ears, and awoke with the joyous morning to hear the same triumphant notes aloft.

Whether or not all this searching and discussion concerned a suitable nesting-place one cannot tell; but if it did, one fails to comprehend the grounds for argument, for in the end the curlews chose a grassy mound for their nest which was exactly like a thousand other grassy mounds dotting the whole swamp. It would seem, however, that some of these mounds were better from the curlews' point of view than others, for the hen-bird made a dozen different nests on different mounds ere her final choice was arrived at. She would scrape a hole in the ground, lie on it, sit in it, turn round a few times, then decide she didn't like it. All this time her husband looked on with uncomprehending admiration; then, grasping the idea at length, he made a nest on his own account, sat on it, sprawled over it, even went so far as to line it with grass. His wife, however, had now succeeded in that most difficult of feminine tasks—she had made up her mind, and so she stole the lining from her husband's nest to finish her own.

In due course three eggs were produced—large for the size of the bird, and of the same drab hue as the surrounding grass and ling. They were not really very beautiful to look upon, but their colour was truly serviceable, for none but a trained eye, which knew just what to look for, could have picked them out. To the curlews they were the most beautiful things in all the world.

If the birds had been restless before, they were more so now—or, rather, the male bird was, for while his wife covered her treasures he mounted guard not far away, flying from wall-top to wall-top, from boulder to boulder, or rising straight skywards on quivering wings to a point of observation, suddenly to drop like a stone to earth. Nothing escaped his unremitting watchfulness. When the shepherd-boy mounted the hill, whistling to his dog, the curlew would warn his mate by a melancholy 'Toy-e-toy-e;' then, if the boy or the dog drew nearer, his notes would rise in volume, and he himself would dash from point to point, flying, alighting, screaming, screaming, till at length his mate slipped from her nest to run stooping though the grass, suddenly to rise a-wing a hundred yards away and join him, clamouring in chorus.

Thus they advertised the locality of their nest, till one day the boy turned aside and searched the marsh from end to end. Twice he passed within a few feet of the eggs, but their colour saved them even from his keen eyes, till he conveniently decided, 'There ain't no nest at all.'

When, a day or two later, old George hobbled up to look for the nest, the alarm of the birds was not so marked. Him they saw daily when he came to feed his chickens, and evidently his slow and quiet movements were less disturbing than the movements of the shepherd-boy. Even when old George picked up the eggs and examined them, the curlews looked quietly on from the neighbouring wall-top with scarcely a murmur, and the old man went his way happy in the knowledge that all went well with the birds he loved.

III.

The curlews were curious birds, and one of their many curious ways lay in their solicitude for others. Normally in the wild each creature cares for itself, and leaves every one else to do the same; but the curlews could faithfully be described as the sentries of the hillside. One evening the fox, sneaking down from the heather-line, was walking straight for their nest, when the male bird swooped so low as almost to lash the freebooter with his wings. The fox leapt like a flash of fire, but too late to catch that hurtling cannon-ball from the blue—and the leap carried him out of the direct line of the nest. The female crouched motionless on

her eggs, and the fox did not locate her, for kind nature at this season takes all tell-tale scent from the brooding mothers of earth and air.

In the next field the old blue hare was quietly feeding. He did not see the fox creeping from tuft to tuft, till the wheeling curlew, finding his wild alarm-notes unheeded, swooped down and brushed the hare with his wings. Such a warning could not pass unobserved, and away went little Brown Lugs with ears acock, leaving reynard to glare maliciously at the interfering bird.

IV.

Old George had put some new perches in his hen-house, and that night he must needs take his lantern and hobble up to see if the fowls were using them. Unfortunately he forgot his hat, and the wind was so strong that the lantern flung long, dancing shadows everywhere. George was just about to open the hen-house door, when there was a wild scream overhead, and down came the male curlew, to dash itself at the bewildering light, then fall at the old man's feet.

'Oh, poor thing! Poor thing!' said George. He picked the bird up in his old shaky hands, but finding no hurt had befallen it, he launched it into the air again. Round and round the bird flew, screaming wildly, to dash into the lamp once more, hypnotised by the light, so that old George was compelled to extinguish the flame. He went back in the dark, and, unable to see his way, walked into the swamp and got his feet wet, reaching home tired and chilled.

Next day the old man was in bed, and the day after that the doctor shook his head gravely. George was a very old man, you see, and quite ready to go when the call came. At sundown he sat up and enjoyed his tea; then he fell asleep with his Mary at the bedside, holding his poor old hand, knotted and lined by a life of slow and honest toil.

At midnight a curlew, attracted by the candle in the room, flew twice round the house with its piercing, joyous call-note. Old George awoke. He smiled faintly. 'Listen, Mary—the curlews!' he said.

To him it was the voice of spring, the voice that had brought the spring of his boyhood, of his courting youth; that had brought the spring in the quiet days of his autumn.

'Yes,' said the old woman, 'your curlews, George!' And she too smiled.

An hour later the curlew again flew round the house, settled on the window-sill, looking in at the wonderful light, then tapped three times with its bill against the glass and flew away.

But old George did not hear. He had ceased to wonder why the curlews had not arrived in flocks that year, and his Mary thought nothing strange about the happening. She, too, was very old, you see, and she knew how George had always loved the birds.

When, a day or two later, they carried old George out, to rest him in that quiet little corner where the sweet syringa grows, his wife noticed that the curlews were calling louder than ever in Black Allotment. She thought it was because of her George, for she did not know that at that very hour three little fluffy chicks had burst from their sombre shells and crept into the world of Life.

THE WALTZ OF THE LEAVES.

When Autumn has thrown silver mist o'er the valley,
And hedgerows with berries of crimson are dyed,
Then the leaves loose their hold of the twigs and the branches,
And out on the wind's mighty pinions they ride
O'er the cornfields now stripped of their sheaves;
O the joy and the madness,
The whirling wind-gladness—
The waltz of the first yellow leaves!

The copses that stand by the onrushing river
Are blind with the glory that circles them round,
As faster and faster the leaves are a-twisting,
And gold is the carpet that covers the ground.
The swallows from under their eaves
Have flown South, but to heaven
New glory is given—
The waltz of the bright yellow leaves.

The light of Autumn fades from off the hillside, and the days
In heavy fog and purple cloud-wreaths die,
While beneath the naked trees that lift gaunt branches to the winds
The drifted leaves in sodden masses lie.

But when snow lightly touches the meadows of Flanders,
And icicles hang from the banks of the streams,
Then, like ghosts of the past, on the grave-scattered hillsides
Whirl leaves madly dancing the dance of their dreams.
And the cold sky their glory receives
O'er the sleeping, still meadows
In lights or blue shadows—
The waltz of the dead yellow leaves.

LORNA KEELING COLLARD.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

AMID a condition of things in which hope seems at times to halt before confusion and perversity, only the aeroplane unfalteringly progresses higher to its ideals. It is like a star in the gloom of the aftermath of civilisation's greatest tragedy. Each day it gathers a new achievement. The wonders of progress cannot be ranged in comparative order; but if they could, would not man-made flight be the first of them? There is a mark of its superiority in this, that even now when it is so little novel, when any one for a pound or two may experience a few minutes of the sensation, the newly initiated are asked by their friends in sincere curiosity for an exposition of their emotions. How did this adventure strike the mind? What were the flier's feelings like? they eagerly wish to know—for they cannot guess. It is the new emotion that most persons have not experienced. Descriptions vary with the man, of necessity; and it is an advantage. Often they fail in reality and intensity, because emotions as they have been felt are considered and reflected upon in some analytical fashion a while after the experience, and there is nothing so fleeting and so difficult to realise at a later time as an abnormal and intense action of the mental and nervous system. The strong emotional periods are as bubbles rising from the seething mass of life; they burst and vanish. In the intense experience of half-an-hour there might be a hundred quick and definite thoughts, each of but a few seconds' duration, and on the following day perhaps not six of them could be recalled, though it was with these lightning fancies that the drama was composed. Thoughts in their vast volume are near infinity, but most of them slip away uncaught.

* * *

To myself, engaged upon a first adventure in extended flight, it seemed that a matter for most marvelling was presented and produced effect ere the higher air was taken. It lay in this, that such as I should make a flight of good length, some fifty miles or so, by one of the most powerful planes, when for the first time 'twas given to the air. So firm, so sure, are now the knowledge and the confidence of these flying folk that, having prepared a plane, they do not speculate upon its capacity for flight; they know it entirely and without a test. We for ourselves know that they know it, have confidence in their confidence, to the point that we stake our most precious lives upon it. Such is the truth without embellishment. The man is master to the point that he knows that in this untried thing he shall be lifted above the clouds, dart over a wide country, and at any place of choosing alight within a yard of the appointed spot. Enjoying the distinction and the security of having for host and pilot on this private and special mission one, Captain Sir John Alcock, who fixed himself in history by first flying the Atlantic Ocean, I did this thing. Our flight was from near London to Southampton by a 750-horse-power Vickers-Vimy aeroplane upon a sunny summer's morning. It seemed an odd and remarkable affair. One was at work in an upper room in London. The bell of the telephone rang, and Captain Alcock (with whom the matter had been discussed), speaking, desired to know if I would start with him within the hour, for there was a new machine to be plighted to the air that morning. 'Do not trouble about your clothes,' said he; 'just a cap, and a raincoat if you please. It is warm enough when flying.' One mistaken fancy gone! It was then half-past nine. . . . At four o'clock in the afternoon, again in the upper room, I resumed the morning's interrupted task. We, plane and writer both, had made our maiden flight. Sir John Alcock, satisfied, young enough to delight in everything, had added fifty miles to the tens of thousands he had darted through the sky. The plane had hardly quivered or trembled. From its atmosphere, its home, its human makers, it seemed to have inherited, as one might say, an instinct which did not fail. It knew the air; it leapt joyously to it at the first offer. For myself, at four in the afternoon I was already wondering upon my feelings in flight, and turned curiously to the many notes I had written in the air. It was not a callous thing to write at such a stupendous time, for let it be said at once that the essence of the experience was tranquillity—wonderment indeed with fine emotion, and yet tranquillity. One did not feel the same; there was a sense of a spiritual and corporeal change, of deep experience; and yet it was as if one had partaken of the hasheesh of

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Monte Cristo, and gone half-dreaming through these south of England skies. We were at peace in a strange freedom in some unworldly way, and above all things tranquil. Never save in the last moments of consciousness before sleep had one experienced such a soft placidity. It was the dominating sensation · it existed, but cannot be explained.

* * *

Of us three who walked across the Brooklands flats from the Vickers headquarters to our bird's nest, where lay helpless many others not yet so fully fledged, one was Mr R. K. Pierson, chief designer of them all and the many that had gone before. Thus he was the human parent of this most prodigious family. He related some points and episodes in the romance of this affair that were new to me, points which only he fully knew and understood. How did he know that F 8610, waiting for us over there, charged with the safety of our most precious persons, would really fly—fly straight for fifty miles—and would not need to descend quickly for any reason, and would not overturn? He gave his reasons. Our F 8610 was an exact copy, to the minutest detail, of the machine by which Captain Alcock had crossed the Atlantic. There was no difference whatever in engines or in anything. They were the same. The War Office, it appeared, had ordered many of them, and this was one, making her trial and delivery at the same time. The queen-mother, the real Atlantic machine, as we now perceived, was in the spacious nest, or aerodrome, amid the young ones. A vast company of humans—girls of strong frame and delicate touch among them—were at work upon the wings of this expectant brood. And all the parts of every plane, copied from or modelled on the plans by which the queen-mother was reared up to her proud perfection, were cut and shaped, and fitted accordingly, to within one two-thousandth of an inch, measured by micrometer. You cannot imagine a two-thousandth of an inch. Regard the scale. There are the inches and the halves and the quarters, the eighths and the sixteenths. Then the measure quits this divisional theme. Yet one can imagine the thirty-seconds, and with an effort, observing a hair and fancying the splitting of it, even the sixty-fourths; but after that, beyond a hundredth, one's grasp of realities helped by hard imagination is unloosened, and the effort ceases, with the single thousandth still so far away. But Designer Pierson does some of his chief business with his pretty two-thousandths; they are of more consequence in his system than the forty-two feet six of height to which rise the queen-mother and her latest child to leave her, F 8610, or the glorious sixty-eight feet of wing-span with which our new clipper will sail the air. This two-thousandth limit of margin for error in metal parts and many others is always the thing that matters most. It is not merely a nominal standard; it is insisted upon. Testers and inspectors, more and more of them, and Mr Designer Pierson see that it is obeyed. Thus they know that F 8610 can and will do, without demur or falter, all that her famous parent did—and Southampton is not so far away as Newfoundland. This unthinkable exactness, exerted by micrometer, the acuteness of such as this Pierson, engineers of a new era and new school, who to their native genius and their engineering skill add an artist's inspiration, who seek, indeed, to realise almost poetic fancies of their own—such is the secret of the F 8610 and how she flew with us before she knew. She waited at the open doors, her wide white wings in the biplane form, ready for the start. One regarded her with a vast respect, for never more sincerely could her responsibilities be appreciated. At each side of her beak was a polished propeller, ten feet six of span per blade, and back of each a Rolls-Royce engine of 375 horse-power which spun it round at the rate of twelve hundred revolutions in each minute—twenty per second. That also is difficult to imagine—but later we heard the noise of it! Whenever she may have occasion to fly along in the fighting way she will carry twelve bombs weighing each two hundred and fifty pounds, and three Lewis guns also may she bear. Then, at full load, she would weigh twelve thousand pounds; this morning, awaiting us, she was nine thousand. Heavier than air indeed! Again our simple understanding, trained upon mean limitations of earth, slips and fails. Let loose a penny, but a fraction of an ounce; see how unhesitatingly, heavily, it falls, obedient to old father Gravity. And here are nine thousand pounds—and I!—to ascend some thousand feet, a mile or so, and fly along at a hundred and twenty miles the hour, and do as one may please—fling somersaults if in the mood. Many men have flown by planes, but not all have had such planes to fly by. So may there be reason for some reproduction of our personal log during this first flight, when ideas were fresh-born and the emotions effervesced.

* * *

'Well, in you go!' There sounded something finally committal in these words. Time for compliments and praise had passed; the practical and serious business of flight was now beginning. Here was a brink, with a chasm upwards to which we were to swoop. We were to leave the solid surface as never before; space was to be experienced. There was that one tremulous moment—and in a subject by no means devoid of nerves it was the last ever felt of the most passing shadow of apprehension whatsoever. This indeed I regard as one of the most peculiar of the psychological results. Despite Pierson, despite Alcock, despite the proud two-thousandths of this perfect craft, I do not understand why I was not afraid. That is to me one of the special points of this experience. I had thought I should have some

touches on the nerve; yet it was tranquillity and soft confidence all the way, up for the first thousand feet, higher for the second, leaping lightly to the third, higher and higher, and then swift darting amid the clouds towards the sea, with England in her summer looking lovely down below. Earth, save in a dreamy contemplation, passed away, and one floated serenely in a new mid-heaven when the Isle of Wight, in a silver setting, came into view on the port side down below, and one regretted beginning to descend so soon. But let us take the key-words of our log, and expand to a full meaning the thoughts that were taken and loosed again in air

* * *

Lumbered into the aft gun-pit, as told to do. Sir John Alcock took his pilot's place in front, and adjusted his airman's cap. One quarrels now with the injunction that nothing such was needed by a civilian in the aft gun-pit, even though he was some way behind and his back was to the wind. This gun-pit is a sort of well, a hole in what they call the fuselage or belly part of the machine. Seated on a small shelf inside, half one's body projects from the top of this well, the aperture being a ring some two feet in diameter. In verity this is a chief gunner's seat. One sprawls the arms in a way of ease along the fuselage of polished wood and over the sides, and looks along the top of the thing towards its fancy bi-planed tail with the strings up to it that the pilot pulls. The real wings are above one and behind. So far as these things go, the gun-pit berth seemed comfortable enough. The inside of the fuselage was open to us; it was like the bottom of a skiff with the top roofed in, with the rather important difference that part of the floor on which one might crawl *à plat ventre* was made of transparent glass, and that where the glass ended there was nothing at all, just a big hole in the bottom of the aeroplane. Through this in war a gun would be projected; the glass is for the gunner to observe what lies—or flies—beneath him, and know when the moment for his shooting comes. . . . 12.19, and they were loosening something; it was now too late for any change of mind! But at first the craft just 'taxied' for a spell, limped along on her little wheels to a place where she might really stretch her wings. There was a halt for a few seconds. Then the pilot moved a lever, or one supposed he did. Who-r-oo-ooo-oooo....! *Crescendo, con furore!*

* * *

Tricks of language would be flimsy stuff for description of a roaring moment when seven hundred and fifty aerial horses sprang to their whirlwind game. The sudden thunder of their flying feet was merciful in its deafening intensity, for a moment later the senses were unconscious of it—with strange consequences that shall be noted. But the fancy one had, clear and true and well-defined, from this tremendous whoop, a wild roar of exultation, was of this mighty thing alive at last, and bounding in a furious joy to its own element. The frenzy and the freedom, the delirious leap of joy—real enough were those suggestions. And true enough it also seemed that this thing that Designer Pierson had fashioned had now, like a bird Galatea, come to life—and that was perhaps the reason why a new tranquillity was laid upon the landsman in the gun-pit, and he thought no more of machinery and its various faults. The rest was a placid happiness. First thoughts? There were hardly any. I saw the ground was going; well, let it go! Nothing mattered. Still a minute or so later one was looking round for the aerodrome and could not find it. Goodness! So far behind, so far below, two miles back and down a slope of forty degrees or so. It was then I remembered our capacity of a couple of miles a minute, and knew I had never moved so fast before. But there was little sensation of either rising or advancing or of being in air at all—only a perfect steadiness and security. I tested the steadiness by the notes I began to make on paper. You know the tremblings in even the smoothest express trains, and how they jog the writing; here I could have undergone a writing-test upon which my all was staked. One could have threaded the finest needles or balanced on a finger a glass full to the final drop of liquid. This was strange with those nearly thousand horses flying, but there were stranger things ahead. Anyhow, one perceived that this air was a soft and kindly thing, and good for roads. I was told that at first we rose on an air gradient of about one in fifty, steepened later to one in thirty. . . . H-h-haaa! Just a slight mental tremor. We were up perhaps a thousand feet, or it may have been more, when She (meaning F 8610; but if it suits the War Department, that style is too wasteful of memory for me), who had been gliding on the evenest keel, suddenly seemed to dip in three long, quick steps, tilting a trifle sideways and making the least suspicion of a shake—no, it was not a shake either, but a feeling of something. Then She glided on. (The Log: 'Sudden—O—drop!') It transpired that we had struck a choppy patch of air, which had bumped Her; but it was really nothing. Captain said later that the airway had been somewhat rough that day; there was a stiffish thirty-miler spouting from the north-west. All was smoothness again, and the man in the gun-pit settled down to sights and thoughts. Rising though She was, She had seemed horizontal quite, but now for a second She seemed to cock her tail up. You see, I watched closely. (Log: 'Tail-up—first time—little.')

* * *

The glass floor of our establishment attracted me, for it presented a fair picture framed by our thin timbers. It was mostly a soft, luscious green. It was Surrey verdure—fields and spinneys and extensive woods—but, well as

I knew it, it had never seemed so liquid green below. And in this I made some discovery, I think. We were now up more than three thousand feet, and the vision of things below, with no more than normal assistance to the eyes, was most marvellously acute and definite. I could mark the spires of churches, cottage gardens, building formations that at such a distance on the flat would have needed telescopes for finding. It was the pure and superior atmosphere through which we peered. Now one understood the value of railways to airmen—long, clean, straight cuts right through the country, clear beyond all else, marking the way to everywhere. Captain Alcock had told me he used railways, stations, manufactories, a hill or two, and divers objects and excrescences as his direction marks. But the hills were hard to see, to one looking down on them. There were the Surrey hills—Hindhead and all round about which I know well—some of them nearly a thousand feet, but scarcely could they be distinguished from the surrounding flatness. A chaste scene was Surrey from the air on this sunny day—though we were moving over into Hampshire now. So nice and oddly shaped were all the fields, fitted together so perfectly like one big jig-saw puzzle, making compact order from all irregularity. Inevitably one lapsed to some light philosophies, the Struggle of Man being a compelling theme, for there was an instinct of something Olympian in our personal situation. It was a sincere reflection. Here is Log: 'Man for all his strikes is an orderly kind of beast—railways so straight—fields nice shapes—how beautiful is the world in sunlight!' For a moment one thought of the war, human effort, difficulty, contradiction, suffering. Stupid perhaps, but there was a compelling tendency to such reflections. It seemed, from the air, more pitiable, sadder than ever; and it was not a forced or exaggerated sentiment.

* * *

More Log: 'Falls—dips—as on waves in sea when yachting.' Yes, that was the exact sensation. The only change from the perfect undeviating glide was a faint, hardly perceptible rise and fall just like a yacht's on a waveless sea in a very gentle swell. It was dreamy, soothing. (Log: 'Quite comfy; could read or work.') Had there been nothing for the eyes and mind to do, I should assuredly have turned over for a little sleep. Log is very interesting here: 'Turning forward—great sensation of fresh air in solid blocks.' Exactly! I should not have thought of that now had I not written it then. You see, the civilian in the gun-pit had his back to the seven hundred and fifty horses, and the back, moreover, was up against the gun-pit wall. He rose for a moment, turned about—and did something in the way of gasping! For windshields were not, there was a business of a hundred and twenty miles an hour proceeding, and with those twelve hundred revolutions a lashing back-wash of churned air was flung hard against him—or so he thought. Not for more than a second could the eyes withstand it, and all the furies were shrieking through the air. The propellers were spinning too fast for even their circuit to be marked. And when by some chance the lips were parted, the fresh air of these high heavens choked in by solid pieces. There was—I mean it—the distinct sensation of eating it. A few minutes later there was the Log again showing the reality and persistency of this impression: 'Lots of fresh air—hitting me!' I remember holding out my arm at right angles to our line of flight, and having difficulty in sustaining it, the wind-force was so great. There was another curious thing: it occurred to me to cough. Not that I was cold or needed any coughing, but just as English beings do cough. So I did then—goodness, nothing happened! No sound, no sensation of coughing. I tried again—same result. A first sensation of alarm, as though something might have gone amiss with my lungs, but then an understanding and reassurance. The man in the aft gun-pit was stone-deaf! There was not the slightest sound from anything! Now I realised that the roaring engines had been silent to me from the start. I spoke, shouted, screamed. Not a sound, the faintest even! Inside me even there was no sound, for speaking amid great noises one sometimes hears, as it were, one's voice thrown back within. No, there was nothing, and the illusion of suspension of throat action in the coughing business was clearly due to the failure of suggestion that is made by sound. Here let it be said that on alighting at the end of the flight the deafness was absolute. Friends' voices could not even faintly be heard. An hour later they were with difficulty audible when loud; then there was a gradual but slow improvement. It was a couple of days before the hearing was normal again. (And oh for the airman's padded head-dress in our next scamper through the winds!)

* * *

We were more than half-way through when Log had it again: 'Most comfy journey;' and again, 'Gentle heaving like small yacht;' and again, 'Feeling of absolute confidence—don't mind swaying.' (Fine fellow in the gun-pit, eh?) Premature, perhaps, for Log at 12.33: 'Tail shaking—one or two bumps—beginning not to care.' (Was passenger not splendid? One enjoys this objective regard of him.) We would quote much more of Log, but only a little must suffice: 'All alone; nobody seen.' One wonders if that was a weak attempt at aerial humour. I don't remember the sensation, though I recall the reflection that one could not have communicated with Captain Alcock, even had one wished to do so, without first crawling along our apparatus—and this latter was a contemplation

when my cap flew loose and settled shivering in the strings of the elevating plane in the tail, which led to certain important speculations not unconnected with self-preservation. One remembered then the thrilling stories of how pilots in peril had crawled along their wings. Somehow it did not now seem such a desperate thing to do—merely a matter of balance and holding on—the point being that all sense of dizzy height was lost. That cap of mine was twenty feet away along the fuselage, a yard or so in width, and if Pilot had seen and had insisted, I am almost certain I could have fetched it back, nervous creature though I be. There is another suggestive note in Log: 'Can see our own shadow down below creeping over the fields. Could that be noticed below?' That was interesting. There was our sharp silhouette, black on green and gold, and a big thing, too, crossing the fields, in at one side, out again at the other, leaping the hedges in such style. High up here the shadow looked a big thing; of course, upon the surface it would not be discerned. It followed us throughout. Log asks: 'What are those little pin-heads in the fields?' They were really ricks of corn. My friend Cleary, who has committed most adventures in nearly every land, saw Captain Alcock off from Newfoundland, and was a kind sponsor to me in this enterprise, had told me to lie down in the fuselage and put my face through the hole in the bottom thereof for the most perfect view. It was worth it.

* * *

Log said at 12.50: 'Think we are beginning to descend.' It was a fear—a sad one. At 12.57: 'Tail up—can see propellers—rocking.' Alas! it was nearly done, and it was so pleasant there. The hard earth came back, bigger and bigger, but not more beautiful. One began to see too many material and ugly things. Nearer and nearer—quickly—we glided like a martin down, the little wheels touched the ground, and we stopped within a yard of the appointed place. Half-an-hour of perfect placid life.

KAVANAGH'S LUCKY BEAN.

CHAPTER VII.—WALKING THE PLANK.

THE long voyage was coming to an end at last. During the final three days intense excitement prevailed on board the *Taurana*. Much packing was accomplished. With the near prospect of tips in view, stewards and stewardesses redoubled their attentions. Novices among the travellers consulted more experienced voyagers as to the largess deemed customary or expedient, and were staggered by the amount of the sums recommended to be given. Protestations of undying friendship were exchanged, only to be speedily forgotten. At least three rash matrimonial engagements—happily breakable—were rushed into.

Dennis Kavanagh, whose mind was filled with sick longing for the home that might have been his, with Nora as his wife, kept his desires shut in his heart. Looking back to the night in his dismal Glasgow lodging when, with the Lascar's lucky bean glowing in his hand, he had asked for a new life in a new clean country, and ground of his own to till, he now regretted that he had not included in the wish a request for a wife that he loved. And then he told himself bitterly that, after all, the brown man had been wrong as to the magic qualities of his gift; for if he reached New Zealand, a murderer, only to be buried there, surely the bean had proved itself a mockery of a talisman.

He derived a savage satisfaction from the belief that never again would the bean have power to delude any poor mortal into false hopes of a glorified future, as he had destroyed it by fire. He did not guess that at that moment the bean, its occult properties unimpaired, lay snugly hidden away in a large pill-box in a dresser-drawer in Mrs Knox's kitchen.

Probably the so-called 'Mr Brown' was the most excited of the entire company of ship's passengers at the near prospect of reaching land. Restlessness possessed him. He talked incessantly about the future; made countless plans, only to unmake them. Sometimes he referred to himself as a tourist, and thought he would travel and see the country. At such times he read up a guide-book, and exhaustively discussed excursions to the Hot Lakes, the Wanganui River, or the Southern Alps. That scheme would suddenly be ousted by an avowed intention to take up land, until he decided that he was too old to break new ground, and speculated how a little farm, already cleared and stocked, would suit him. Sometimes he wondered how a country store might repay a man prepared to invest a little capital in it. But through all his vapourings one thing was painfully evident—his intense craving to get on shore.

In these last days he had completely lost his fear of the patience-player. Either Brown had concluded that he had been mistaken regarding the man's evil intent, or Dennis's promise of personal protection had reassured him as to his bodily safety; and, though he always kept close to Dennis, Brown never again referred to his day of panic.

With his self-constituted protector matters were different. Try as he might, Dennis was ever conscious of the presence of Mr Folsome, the player of patience. He was a quiet man, of pleasantly unobtrusive manners, who was

rumoured to be taking the voyage for the benefit of his health. It was curious that he left no impression of individuality on any one except Dennis, to whom he seemed the one strong personality on board. Were Mr Folsome specially conscious of Dennis's presence, he betrayed no sign of it. He lived by system, his time being methodically portioned out. Twice daily he paced a measured mile round the deck. During one hour of the morning, and another of the afternoon, he rested, stretched in his long deck-chair. For his dyspepsia, a bottle of pepsin tablets stood by his place at table, and he drank only mineral waters.

The long-looked-for hour had come at last. The good ship *Taurana* had passed the Great Barrier, and was threading her way between the islets of the beautiful Hauraki Gulf, at the head of which stands the picturesque city of Auckland. The voyagers, silent now, thronged the bows, eager to glimpse their land of promise. Mr Brown, clad in an extraordinary tourist suit of checks and a mackintosh, and carrying his heavy leather hand-bag, was foremost in the crowd. Engrossed in arrival, he forgot to impose his company upon his protector, and Dennis, seizing the opportunity when her father was thus preoccupied, sought Nora, and found her, seated alone, in a deserted corner of the deck.

She received him without a word; and the wistfulness of her expression and the knowledge of her forlorn condition broke down all the barriers of resistance that Dennis had so resolutely raised between them.

'Oh darlin'!' he said, throwing prudence to the winds, 'it's us that's for partin', an' the words that I would be speakin' to ye, I darsen't. But in the dark days to come I'd have ye keep mind that there never was another woman in the world for me—barrin' only yourself, Nora.'

As she listened to his impassioned words Nora's sad face became transfigured. 'Oh man, dear, and me that was well-nigh breakin' me poor heart thinkin' you wasn't carin' for me at all, at all!' she breathed in a tremulous whisper, then sobbed for sheer joy.

'Oh, Nora dear,' Dennis murmured, almost in tears himself, 'whatever comes between us two, ye'll maybe keep mind of me?'

'I'll never forget you till my dyin' day, and maybe not then neither!'

'An' if the Powers had willed it, could ye have put up with me for your own man, Nora?'

'Oh Dennis, and it's us that might be the happy couple,' she was sighing, when their solitude was invaded by Mr Folsome, the patience-player, who came quietly along the deck, followed by a steward bearing his folding card-table and some light luggage. He, too, was dressed for going on shore. Dennis came back to earth with a bump, leaving Nora alone in the heaven to which his confession of affection had raised her. Then Mr Brown appeared, and attached himself to Dennis. Now that the long-anticipated moment had actually come, the informer's nerves were in a state of extreme tension. He was alternately pale and flushed, and began innumerable sentences, only to forget to finish them.

The *Taurana* was nearing the wharf, on which friends of the arriving passengers were assembled. Signals of recognition were exchanged, even greetings called across the rapidly lessening dividing space. Then the *Taurana* lay in to the wharf, and the voyagers clustered round, eagerly ready to claim early use of the gangways.

At this point Mr Brown's impatience threatened to get beyond his control. To be within a few feet of the coveted land, and to be blocked by a mob of fellow-passengers and expected to yield precedence to a pack of women, proved almost too much for his strained endurance. Dennis tried to soothe him with repeated assurances that there was nothing to do but wait patiently, and that the delay would soon be ended.

All the time Dennis was acutely conscious that just behind them in the line stood the man who had journeyed so far to kill him if he failed to obey the orders of the Society of Silent Workers and put an end to Brown. Once Dennis glanced round at Folsome, only to encounter a gaze as tranquil and expressionless as ever. To his own surprise, Dennis was quite calm. He even felt a certain sardonic curiosity as to the means Mr Folsome would employ in disposing of him; and he was conscious of a slight sensation of chagrin in the conviction that the thing would be so neatly and swiftly accomplished that he would probably never know what had hurt him!

Seeing that, farther down the deck, a supplementary gangway of broad planks was being placed for the conveyance of luggage from the ship to the wharf, Brown conceived the notion that it might afford a more expeditious method of landing than waiting his turn at the passengers' gangway. Breaking out of the queue, he hastened over, accompanied by Dennis, and waited impatiently for the moment when the wide boards would be securely fixed in place. Quietly and unobtrusively, as he did all things, the patience-player followed on their heels, and stood, still wearing his admirably detached air, close behind them.

When the planks were in place Brown did not lose a moment before starting to cross. There had been a sharp shower earlier in the day, and the boards were wet. As he stepped on to the railless gangway, encumbered with his waterproof and the leather bag that was so absurdly heavy for its size, his foot slipped a little on the greasy surface.

'It's slippery! Take care, Quigley!' Dennis cried in warning, involuntarily stretching out a hand to catch him should he fall.

He had spoken the name unconsciously. It was only when he saw Quigley start violently,

and met the horrified glance that he cast back, that Dennis realised the fatal mistake he had made. Even then it was too late. In jerking away from the outstretched hand Quigley had overbalanced himself. For one giddy moment he swayed perilously; then, weighted by the heavy bag, he lurched over, and, with a hoarse scream of terror, plunged into the narrow strip of water that lay between the ship's side and the wharf. For a ghastly instant his convulsed face showed upon the surface of the water, then disappeared.

At this moment of his enemy's extremity Dennis forgot everything — forgot that, did Nathan Quigley meet his death by any means whatever, his own life would cease to be forfeit —forgot that the informer's death would leave him a free man, free to marry Nora, and to lead the life he so earnestly desired. He was oblivious of all possible benefits to himself, and remembered only that a fellow-creature was drowning within a few yards of him. Casting down the things he carried, Dennis threw himself into the water, striking his head as he fell.

Some time later he recovered consciousness, on dry land, to find himself a hero, raised to that enviable height by his chivalrous, though rash and unsuccessful, attempt to rescue a drowning fellow-passenger.

Nora's tears of grief at her father's loss were mingled with tears of joy at her lover's safety. When at length Brown's body was recovered, it was found that the weight of a belt (heavily lined with gold coins) that he wore had probably helped to drown him by preventing his body from rising to the surface.

The bag he had been clutching when he fell into the water was never recovered. So the greater portion of Quigley's blood-money has lain for twelve years at the bottom of Auckland Harbour. As for the patience-player, he drifted out of Dennis's life as unobtrusively as he had drifted into it. They never met again.

. . . . . .

As a sequel to the above record, a recent item from the New Zealand press may be of interest. 'At Kaitara, her pretty homestead near Dargaville, Mrs Dennis Kavanagh was the recipient of many congratulations when the news was cabled that her husband, Corporal Dennis Kavanagh, had been awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous gallantry in the field. Corporal Kavanagh, V.C., who is a native of Ireland, settled in Auckland Province a dozen years ago. On the outbreak of war he was one of the first to enlist in the New Zealand forces, and he has seen much fighting. He has three young sons.'

THE END.

HITTING THE BEACH AT TOGOLAND.

PART II.

IV.

IMAGINE a white cloister-like building, with arched windows, shaded verandas, and Moorish towers at either end, and you have some idea of Government House at Lome. Only, one must see the Atlantic breaking on the beach a stone's-throw away to appreciate the grandeur of the view from the first floor, where the living-rooms are situated. There the Governor awaited his guests on the spacious landing. He was a little man, dressed in the khaki uniform of an army major, with a stubbly moustache, and the grayish-brown complexion acquired by a long residence in the tropics. No spouse ever shared the eighteen years he had spent in Africa, so the wife of Captain Manners acted as hostess. She was a Yorkshire lady, who was fast taking on the pinched, bleached appearance so characteristic of Englishwomen sojourning in hot climates. The war was hitting these ladies very badly, owing to travel restrictions preventing many of them from returning home for the change they needed so badly.

The Duke of Mecklenburg was the last German governor of Togoland, and he had furnished the house very tastefully. The draperies were light and chaste, and, except in the dining-room, wickered furniture predominated, giving a cool, airy look to the house. Nothing had been disturbed. All had been left exactly as the duke had said *auf wiedersehen* to it, 'in case,' the Governor remarked with a twinkle in his humorous brown eyes, 'we ever give it back to them.' Paintings of Friederich der Grosse, Bismarck, Kaiser Wilhelm, and other trappings of the German Empire were very much in evidence—bespeaking such a toleration and respect for an enemy's household arrangements as has rarely been heard of in military history.

After a round of sherry, the party sat down to lunch. There was not much of the conqueror about them; and indeed at that time (July 1917) the situation did not look any too rosy for the Allies, with a large amount of tonnage being sunk every day of the week. All the same, it was a jolly lunch. The pilot's irresponsible chatter alone would have kept any fair-sized gathering going strong. Whether it is the reaction from many silent hours on the bridge or not, most navigating officers are extremely garrulous whenever they get the chance. In addition to being blessed with more than his branch's usual allowance of conversational talent, the *Blastus's* pilot had the loudest laugh in the service. Time and again his messmates had suggested that a gramophone record ought to be made of it, so that the

mess might, on the one hand, reap royalty benefits therefrom, and, on the other, transmit to weaker posterity incontestable evidence of guffaws rivalling in their loudness those of Megaphonos, the famous Greek! . . .

The padre did not say much. Two and a half years on that coast had pretty well done for him, as his sunken eyes and hollow cheeks testified. He could, indeed, tell most people something about the pain of Africa! The captain of marines, fresh from the ship which has been in more fights, perhaps, than any other fighting unit, the intrepid *Lion*, communed with Manners on the military situation. Staff-Paymaster de Carteret related his high-diving exploits to the Governor. Macmurdo always got on well so far as the ladies were concerned, and on this occasion Mrs Manners was quite *simpatico* with his submarine adventures in the Baltic.

Newcome sat next a friend of the Governor, a Mr Weatherspoon, whom he understood from Manners to be a sort of colonial adviser to the Government, although originally he had started out as a planter. He was a big-limbed man, with a slightly melancholy, set expression, suggestive of deep thinking. Newcome did not take long to break the ice of his apparent reserve. Like Mr Wells, the doctor was ever on the trail of imperialism; and here he was face to face with one of those unassuming pro-consuls who are content to spend the greater part of their lives in out-of-the-way places, and have made the British Empire what it is.

Newcome's first query would have been disallowed as a 'leading question' at any naval court of inquiry. 'Do you think, sir,' the surgeon asked, helping himself to guava-jelly for his mutton, 'our imperialism is a bit antiquated?'

Weatherspoon looked at him gravely as he sipped his red wine. 'I don't know whether I should call it that. I think it ought to be Americanised,' he answered slowly.

'I take it, then,' Newcome followed up quickly, 'Crown colonies are apt to suffer from the proverbial cobwebs of Downing Street. In other words, our policy, which ought to be progressive, is allowed to crystallise, to become a monument of sorts, like the Pyramids, but not really worthy of the ever-changing momentum of our genius.'

'Young fellow,' Weatherspoon reproved, 'your metaphoricalness is apt to be confusing to an African barbarian like myself, but I think I understand what you mean. Crystallisation is far too pretty a term; it conjures up something artistic—and Sierra Leone is anything but that. Stagnation is a better word,' the ex-planter said musingly.

'Great minds think alike,' Newcome agreed sententiously, if a trifle boldly. 'I've had Sierra Leone on the brain for some time, partly because I think it's one of our oldest colonies. What a bonanza that place has been to the gentlemen of Lombard Street!'

'And we haven't yet presented it with a proper sewage system, or electric light—not even a cold-storage plant, so that we might have ice for our cocktails,' Weatherspoon said bitterly, clapping his hands absent-mindedly for the servants to fill up the glasses again, as if he were master of the household. 'That's what I mean by saying it's high time we did a little Americanising. Let's start by eradicating malaria from our towns on this coast, the same as the Yanks mopped up Havannah, and made a paradise out of Panama.'

'It seems we're too fond of planting the flag, giving the place a rate of exchange, perhaps a tennis-club, and then imagining our work is done,' Newcome reflected. 'I've actually seen able-bodied officials at Sierra Leone who, when it was too rainy for a game of some kind, or they couldn't find a fourth for a "rubber," were at their wits' end for something to do; and yet think of the material problems they could be working out! There is so much to do'——

'You've hit the nail on the head,' Weatherspoon burst in. 'What we need is a director of materialism, some one who will give us better sanitation, netting to keep out the mosquitoes, more machinery and modern appliances generally to make life more tolerable for the people we govern. We make too much of self-determination. These natives must be taught first, led in the right direction, so that eventually they will be capable of deciding what is conducive to their own welfare. There are millions of them all over the world depending on us for leadership. Are we giving it to them in the best materialistic sense? . . . That crane on the end of the pier is a symbol of progression to me,' Weatherspoon said, as they all rose in obedience to their hostess, and went out on the veranda to watch the Atlantic ambling in, in a good-humoured sort of way, as if it were mighty pleased with itself; 'at least, it enables a white man to land on this coast in a decent and becoming manner.'

V.

With characteristic good sense, the Governor of Togoland protected his guests from that awful hour after lunch when all life tends to be reduced to somnolence in the equatorial region. He sent them off on a motor-ride.

The *Blastus* had not called at Lome merely to enable the officers to have a good time. The four-funnel cruiser's real business was to convoy a couple of transports which were taking native troops from Togoland. The motorists passed the last of these troops on their way to the embarkation pier; and well-set-up fellows they looked, marching with a well-trained, elated bearing, as if they were only too pleased to fight against their former masters. It was understood they would eventually fetch up on the East Coast.

The party visited the native quarter. The streets were well made, the houses mostly square,

and all of them whitewashed regularly, Manners said. Their thatched roofs sat upon them like so many mushrooms. Fencing was resorted to a good deal for the purpose of imparting a look of regularity to the streets and corners. The natives appeared to be of an extremely amiable disposition, and whenever the party got out and walked, they stood deferentially aside until the white men went by. There was not nearly so much nakedness among the women and the girls as at Sierra Leone; and whereas in the principal town of that colony, Freetown, the females did most of the work, carrying tremendous burdens on their heads, here the labour appeared to be more evenly divided. Most of the children were pot-bellied, Newcome believing this to be due to the large spleen they develop early in life as the result of malaria. Many of them, too, showed cone-shaped protrusions in the vicinity of the navel. The doctor explained these ruptures as being due to the indifferent way in which the severed cord is treated at birth—once more demonstrating that primitive habits do not necessarily give unblemished results, and that science can always be depended upon as nature's first assistant. The aide-de-camp declared immorality to be quite uncommon among the people of Togoland. There were two kinds of love—Christian (that of legitimate wedlock), and pagan (free sort); and most of the natives had a great abhorrence for the latter. Virginity was greatly prized; and no wonder, Newcome thought, as the car turned an unexpected curve in an out-of-the-way corner of the native quarter, and they came upon a maiden drawing water at the village pump. She was probably not more than fourteen, but her slim body showed perfect development, and made the doctor think of a beautiful bronze Venus he had seen in the Vatican Galleries.

They went on to the Catholic Mission. Although German, this had been allowed to carry on the good work of teaching the natives all kinds of trades, the skilful outcomes of which were displayed in the Mission's shop. It is feared that several of the officers of H.M.S. *Blastus* disobeyed the injunction which is laid upon service people not to trade with the enemy, by buying Koh-i-noor lead-pencils! Alas! the missionaries afterwards forfeited all right to the hospitality which had been extended them so freely. One of their order was apprehended in the act of attaching an infernal machine to a British cruiser. His excuse was that the supposed interests of the Kaiser weighed more heavily with him than his vows. So different from the example of his betters, the early saints!

Of course, the visitors looked in at the post-office, bristling with its German eagles. That is always a *sine qua non* of a visit to an out-of-the-way place. Everybody was keen to buy Togoland stamps. Captain Manners told them that when the country was first occupied not a stamp could be found. It so happened that about this time a neutral ship was taken into Sierra Leone, and a consignment of German stamps for Togoland discovered among the contraband. These were sent on to Lome, stamped 'Anglo-French Occupation,' and issued in the ordinary way. Needless to say, they were snapped up immediately, some individuals making nearly a thousand pounds out of them.

The officers were returning to Government House, when, as they passed the pier again, the pilot surveyed the *Blastus* through the binoculars he always carried on such expeditions. 'Hello!' he exclaimed; 'they've hoisted the "Blue Peter." That means a recall. The transport must be finished taking off troops. Sorry we shall not see Mrs Manners and the Governor again. Will you please give them our kindest regards, and say how much we've enjoyed ourselves? We're awfully obliged to you also for all you've done for us,' he assured the courteous aide-de-camp.

The latter waved all thanks aside. 'It's a great pleasure to see you chaps. Goodness knows when we'll see a man-o'-war again,' he said somewhat wistfully, as if he were feeling the exile a bit. 'The Governor will be very sorry you can't come to tea. Good-bye and good luck,' he wished them.

They got safely aboard; but what a 'head' Newcome had from drinking red wine in the middle of the day in the torrid (most of them called it horrid) zone! 'Confound imperialism,' he grumbled, 'if it means a headache like this!'

THE END.

GOOD LUCK AT 'POKER.'

I.

THE main incident in this story is absolutely true, and forcibly exhibits the inhuman treatment to which jurors serving on murder trials were subjected by those in authority seventy years ago. At the same time, it shows how a human life trembling on the knees of the gods was rescued by a providential stroke of good luck as the result of a proposal made by one of the jurymen to gamble for the prisoner's life.

The circumstances were related to me some time after the occurrence by the chief actor in the drama. My old friend James Simmer was a keen sportsman, who cherished a rooted antipathy to capital punishment, and he always declared that if it should ever be his fate to be summoned to serve on a jury in a murder case, he

would never, no matter how clear the evidence against the prisoner might be, consent to a verdict of 'Guilty.' In course of time Mr Simmer was served with a *subpœna* to attend the Old Bailey Sessions at the Central Criminal Court and form one of the jury empanelled to try for his life a man charged with a peculiarly atrocious murder. Simmer, being a man of superior education, good social standing, and genial manner, was at once elected foreman of that jury.

The details of the trial, which lasted several days, are of no consequence. Suffice it to say that the evidence, though circumstantial, appeared to point conclusively to the guilt of the prisoner in the dock; while the eloquent efforts, close reasoning, and brilliant speech of the eminent counsel engaged for the defence completely failed to convince the learned judge, who summed up strongly against the culprit. During the judge's lucid epitome of the evidence a large piece of plaster fell from the roof and settled on the desk in front of his lordship. Raising it in his hand so that all in the court might see it, he said, with a humorous twinkle in his eye and a self-satisfied chuckle, '*Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.*' After pausing a little for the Bar and the jury to appreciate to the full this witty and appropriate quotation, the judge concluded his speech with these words: 'Gentlemen of the jury, you are here empanelled and sworn to well and truly try the prisoner at the bar for the crime of murder. I have placed the more important features of the case before you as succinctly as I am able; I have deleted from the mass of evidence everything not bearing directly on the charge; and from the close attention you have paid to all that has been brought forward by the Crown prosecutor and urged by the eminent counsel for the defence, I am certainly unable to perceive that there can be the slightest doubt in your minds as to the nature of your verdict.'

The usher of the court thereupon conducted the jurymen to the retiring-room. After a prolonged absence of the jury, the judge, becoming impatient, sent round to where the jurors were deliberating to inquire if there was any point in the evidence on which they required further elucidation, and what chance there was of their reaching a unanimous verdict. The reply returned was that they were not agreed, nor did there seem to be any likelihood of any such agreement. Again a message was sent, to meet with a similar reply. 'Then, gentlemen of the jury, you shall remain in custody until such time as you shall have agreed upon your verdict. His lordship will remain in close attendance to the court to receive your decision when you may have arrived at it.'

II.

This took place on a Saturday afternoon, and, as was the invariable custom at that period, the jury were escorted by warders to the London Coffee-House, situated on Ludgate Hill, there to be locked up, 'without food, fire, or light,' until they had decided upon a unanimous verdict. At first eleven out of the dozen arbiters on the destiny of the accused were in favour of returning a verdict of 'Guilty,' but our friend the sporting foreman obstinately stood out for an acquittal. However, *he* had come fully prepared for eventualities. Over his arm he carried a warm Inverness cape, upon his person he bore a plentiful supply of sandwiches and a goodly flask of sherry to sustain the inner man, while a bulky tobacco-pouch, with a well-seasoned pipe, provided ample consolation during his enforced detention in custody.

Stolidly impervious to all the reasoning and arguments brought to bear upon him, he still maintained his determination with dogged obstinacy. Hour succeeded hour with unrelenting monotony. Occasionally the foreman munched a sandwich, took a pull at his flask, or varied these proceedings by smoking his cherished meerschaum. Although at ordinary times a generous and altruistic mortal, he now was obdurate to all the suggestions made by his fellow-jurors, and churlishly refused to share with them any of his creature comforts. 'I do not say the man is innocent—I don't for one moment believe he is,' he stated; 'but I do say that I will never consent to a verdict which will consign a fellow-creature to the gallows.'

The deep-toned bell of St Paul's struck the hour of midnight. The chilliness of the room, the need of sleep, and the lack of food combined to exercise their influence; one after another of the recalcitrant opposition surrendered—not from conviction, but from discomfort and exhaustion. With leaden feet the hours crept slowly onward till presently daylight began to dawn, by which time the two camps had become equal, and now stood at six for a verdict of 'Guilty,' and the same number against. The impasse continued unaltered. For a long time it seemed a practical exemplification of the insoluble problem of an irresistible force trying conclusions with an immovable body.

Towards the afternoon the foreman, actuated by some feelings of compassion towards his less fortunate fellow-sufferers, once more addressed them: 'Gentlemen, I have always been determined that by no action of mine should a human life ever be sacrificed, and I was quite prepared to remain in durance vile for a whole week, if necessary, rather than surrender my lifelong convictions; but out of consideration for your sufferings and discomfort, I am willing to make you a sporting offer and leave the decision as to the guilt or the innocence of the poor wretch in Newgate to chance. Observe: I shall balance the poker upright in front of the empty grate. I shall then slowly count "One! two! three!" You will range yourselves, half your number on either side, two

yards away. At the word "three" we shall all jump. If the poker falls to the side of the opposition I shall give in to your verdict of "Guilty," but if it comes down on my side you will join me in returning a verdict of "Not guilty."—One! two! three!'

At the word 'three' the twelve men jumped for all they were worth. A human life hung in the balance; on the fall of that poker depended the momentous verdict! And the poker fell with a clatter to the side of the foreman! The warders were summoned, and the jurors, relieved from the long tension of suspense, were escorted back to the Old Bailey, and re-entered the jury-box. In reply to the question put by the Clerk of Arraigns, 'How say you, gentlemen of the jury; do you find the prisoner in the dock guilty, or not guilty?' the foreman replied, 'Our unanimous verdict is, "Not guilty."'

The judge, who had been hurriedly fetched to receive the verdict, was seated behind his desk, on which, carefully folded, lay the ominous black cap. He appeared completely paralysed with astonishment on hearing the announcement. 'Gentlemen of the jury,' he said, 'I utterly fail to understand the reasons that have guided men whom I assumed to be gifted with at least ordinary intelligence in arriving at such an absurd conclusion. I must say that I differ from your verdict *in toto*. However, the responsibility, thank Heaven! rests on your shoulders, not on mine. I am here only to give effect to your finding.' Turning towards the dock, he continued: 'Prisoner, owing to some incomprehensible form of mental aberration on the part of the men who had sworn to well and truly try you on the evidence before them, I have no option but to discharge you, which I do most reluctantly. You may consider yourself extremely fortunate to escape hanging.' Once more addressing the occupants of the jury-box, the judge said with scathing irony, 'Gentlemen, your valuable services will be dispensed with by the Crown for the next ten years.'

III.

Some twenty years later the following paragraph appeared in the columns of the *Midday Telegram*: 'Some days ago a terrible accident, attended with fatal results, happened to a convict who was injured by the premature explosion of a cartridge while employed in some blasting operations in the quarries at Portland, where he was undergoing a long term of penal servitude for burglary with violence. The man was so seriously injured that his death, after several days of terrible torture, came as a happy release from his sufferings. Fortunately, however, before the end came he was able to confess in the presence of the chaplain and the governor of the prison that he alone had committed a most atrocious murder twenty years ago. . . .

'In connection with this notorious crime, the mystery of which is now solved, many of our readers may remember how nearly a man, now proved to have been innocent, suffered the extreme penalty of the law. In point of fact, it was only owing to the determined resistance on the part of one of the jury that he escaped the expiation of the crime on the scaffold. It is a great source of satisfaction to the public to learn, after so many years, that the jury were fully justified in acquitting the man charged at the time with this most brutal murder. Once more the truth is revealed, a man's innocence is established; while the real culprit has punishment meted out to him by Providence. Thus we have a further confirmation of the fact that,

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.'

TWO STARTS: WHAT THEY HAVE TAUGHT ME.

By a DEMOBILISED OFFICER.

THE return to civilian life has awakened many young officers to the unpleasant fact that in the battle for freedom they have lost many of the accoutrements necessary for the battle of life. Numbers of them came to war straight from a public school, and the majority were healthy, average boys. A certain familiarity with the names—maybe the writings—of a few classical celebrities, a sound knowledge of the pursuit of sundry types of ball, and an unshaken belief in the futility of the Gallic tongue formed the mental porridge which they had properly digested. Morally they were probably sound, and more especially so if athletics was their religion. In sympathy with these I write. My experience may be of value to others, and self-analysis be encouraged in consequence.

During the last few months I have talked much with young officers whose plans for the future may be briefly summed up in their own words: 'I think I'll go abroad or somewhere.' The vagueness of this phrase, and the number of times I have heard it repeated, have led me to a little exposition of what happens when one goes to the Colonies minus profession or trade, minus capital, and (as is often the case) minus capacity for sustained hard manual work. Well, here is my own story.

Two years previous to the war I left my public school and set sail for Canada, with a little money and the mental equipment with

which a paltry thousand pounds or so had endowed me. No band or eager crowd of employers met me on the quayside at Montreal. This, however, did not particularly upset me. My ambition was to ranch, and I *knew*, after studying many pamphlets, that the Golden West would greet me. For a year or so I would gain experience; gallop o'er the prairie, and assist to round up the cattle of some wealthy ranch-owner; then, having saved enough money, take a homestead of my own. The first rung on the ladder of fortune would be scaled. Now, nothing of this kind did happen. It very rarely does.

I travelled comfortably and by easy stages to Calgary, succeeding thereby in spending the greater part of my small capital. The rest quickly vanished in a search for work. On the very day I parted with my last dollar to an ill-favoured Chinese restaurateur, I obtained 'a position' on a so-called ranch in the foothills. The owner, a cadaverous individual of no fixed nationality, demurred a good deal at taking a totally inexperienced young man in a collar and 'boiled shirt,' but eventually engaged me at the modest wage of fifteen dollars a month and board. He took the trouble to point out that 'pink' teas and garden-parties were not in vogue in his part of the country, and that a friend of his would willingly exchange for my rather nice line in summer suitings something more adapted to my prospective environment.

A few details of my life with this employer will be sufficient to illustrate my point. As an appetiser I rose daily at 5 A.M., cleaned out a couple of stables, groomed three horses, and milked five cows. I then breakfasted—or, rather, devoured—an allowance of baked beans, molasses, and pancakes. A dour lady, with the immobile expression of a screech-owl, watched over me, and successfully prevented any chance of dyspepsia. From breakfast onward I laboured continuously till about eight at night, with intervals for such refreshment as I have described above. Many jobs came my way, which I will not attempt to describe. Sufficient to say that a ten-hour day of hoeing turnips, or riding on a roller up and down a field, is not exactly the best use to which a public-school education can be put. The sleeping accommodation was limited. I was expected to share a bed with a person who enjoyed the distinguished name of 'Ike.' Accustomed during the greater part of his career to mass formations in bed, he regarded me as no interloper. His rather odoriferous nature, however, made me seek the floor. Soon after my arrival he took his departure—accompanied by my watch.

The amusements (when time permitted) were not extensive. Of a Saturday night one might sit on an upturned apple-barrel in the village store, discuss turnips and a concoction known as 'root-beer,' and, if so minded, expectorate freely.

A bath was obtainable on Sundays, either in the creek or in one of the pig-buckets. The weekly regularity with which I performed this function was a source of much concern to this household, whose custom it was to celebrate bi-annually.

Such, in brief, was my life for six months. I then left the job, treated myself to baths and respectability for a week, and finally, for lack of further capital, drifted into another job of similar nature—though with slightly better conditions. For two years I played with time and opportunity in this fashion. Some of the jobs I undertook as a potential farmer were a great deal pleasanter than the one I have described, but not one of them led anywhere. At the end of that time there was just enough money saved to pay my fare to England.

Now, I do not wish to deny that many men have done well by going to the Colonies to farm—even without capital or much practical knowledge—but the majority were not public-school boys. If the last-mentioned type of man wishes to farm, he must have capital at his back—and plenty of it. On the other hand, provided he dislikes the amenities of our higher civilisation, is a confirmed woman-hater, and revels in a fourteen-hour day, homesteading offers a golden opportunity.

Being young, I was impressed with the fact that in severing my home connections, and leading this somewhat roving life, I was being a bit of a dare-devil. This feeling, I believe, was shared by, and sustained, the great majority of potential farmers whom I met on my periodic visits to town. Our time on these occasions was spent in loafing round the hotels and visiting the Employment Exchanges. Only a small percentage of these men were 'remittance men.' The rest were mostly of the middle class, whose fathers, having spent much on their education, were unable to provide for them further. They therefore got no money from home, and had it been forthcoming, would probably have scorned to take it. They had come to Canada imbued with hope, energy, and courage, but no knowledge of any use whatever in the world of affairs. Circumstances alone had reduced them to the kind of life I have pictured, and unless things have greatly changed, such will be the lot of many more who seek fortune indiscriminately in the Colonies. The Colonials do not want our particular type for *ordinary labourers' tasks*, and one soon gets to know it. Self-respect diminishes and one's mental and moral fibre is impaired.

Now, most young officers tell me that they are no longer boys, that the war has taught them much, and that there is little likelihood of their drifting into the sort of life I have described.

I enlisted in '14 as a private, served three years in France, three years as an officer in the infantry. These are some of the lessons that I have learnt:

1. The effects of battle are only transitory. A 'big night' in the mess will soon dissipate them. Any great mental or moral change in a man comes about gradually, and is the result of continual impression. The excitement or shock of action is too short-lived and sudden to have any lasting effect. It is rather like a bad dream. The ordinary life of the trenches was, without doubt, unpleasant. I recall working-parties, strafes, and patrols with a certain maudlin pleasure after my third glass of port; but if ever I think of these things when going about my ordinary business, it is only with a sense of the intolerable boredom I suffered. The war to most of us has been not a continual impression, but a series of disjointed impressions, which, because they were short-lived, have left little mark.

2. I have learned to enjoy the company of good fellows whose motto, owing to circumstances which war induces, was, 'Let us eat and especially drink, for to-morrow we may die.' Now, this motto had many advantages during the war, but the effects are going to be somewhat difficult to overcome. Mr Cox—bountiful as he was—gave many of us opportunities to indulge expensive, and in some ways harmful, pleasures, which we now find difficult to forgo.

3. I flatter myself that I have learned something of the control of men. Whether my old company would echo that sentiment I do not know, but it is eminently satisfactory to myself. Probably all officers possess this feeling of—shall I say?—superiority. But a word of warning. It is a great deal easier to control men under that rigid system of obedience which is the watchword of our army than it is to perform the same function with men who are allowed to think for themselves and act as they please. The 'sergeant-major' method is not much good with the British workman.

4. The war has taught me to take everything as a matter of course. Consequently my imagination is dulled. Surprise is a big incentive to imagination, and to be surprised is '*infra dig.* after one has been through a war. It is a great effort at present to take a concentrated interest in anything.

5. My capabilities have, to some extent, been revealed to me—nay, more: my weaknesses. As far as knowledge of self goes, I am much older than my years. Is this an advantage? In a young man I don't think it is. Unbounded confidence in self and a certain amount of blind enthusiasm—these are the assets that carry a young man over the obstacles that confront him at the beginning of his career. Many of us are now only just starting our careers, but we have partly lost these invaluable assets.

Such are some of the lessons I have learnt during the war. There are others—but from a money-making standpoint I am no further advanced than when I left school. To 'go abroad or somewhere' would be to drift into the same old life, with the same lowering, unproductive results. The army has taught me nothing that could possibly lead me into any other channel. I have, therefore, settled down to learn a distinct business. It is a tremendous effort, but as the memory of the war and its lessons fades, to the same degree will my task be lightened.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

STRAIGHTENING A BUCKLED SHIP.

IN the great explosion at Halifax the British ship *Curaca* had her superstructure blown away and her back broken. When this vessel was refloated it was found that although she drew sixteen feet two inches of water amidships, the depth of the bow under water was only seven feet, and that of the stern nine feet eight inches, showing that she was buckled to the extent of nine feet two inches and six feet six inches at bow and stern respectively. In this condition, says the *Scientific American*, the *Curaca* was raised, temporarily repaired to the extent necessary to make her float, and brought to New York under her own steam. In order to straighten the hull she was floated into a dry dock, and the water pumped out until she just touched the keel-blocks amidships. The two ends were then very carefully secured so that it was impossible for them to fall over or alter their position excepting in a vertical direction. Next the plating on both sides of the ship was cut at the buckle from the deck down to the water-line. Further pumping was then resorted to, and as the water-level fell in the dock the cutting process was continued, with the result that each end of the ship gently settled down upon the keel-blocks at the bottom of the dock until the vessel was completely straightened. During the operation frequent inspections were made to determine that both the forward and the after sections remained upright, and that the bow had not twisted. Once the *Curaca* was straightened, the task of joining her together again, and making good the damage, was a comparatively simple one.

COLD CAUSES BREAD TO BECOME STALE.

Comparatively few people care to eat stale bread, and most of us rejoiced when bakers were once more allowed to sell new bread. The reason why bread becomes stale has been investigated recently by Professor J. R. Katz of Amsterdam, who has discovered that the staleness is due to low temperatures, and not merely to loss

of moisture. The experiments of Professor Katz were based upon the keeping of bread for forty-eight hours after it was taken out of the oven. He found that if the temperature was maintained at 140 degrees Fahrenheit the bread was quite fresh at the end of the period, but if the temperature was reduced to 122 degrees Fahrenheit a certain amount of staleness was discernible, the process becoming more rapid until a temperature of about three degrees below freezing-point was reached. Curiously enough, at lower temperatures than this the degree of staleness is reduced, until at a temperature of liquid air the bread is again perfectly fresh. On the strength of these experiments it has been suggested that bread could be kept fresh till required for use by placing it in a fireless cooker immediately after removal from the oven.

SCIENCE IN THE GREAT WAR.

In his presidential address to the British Association at Bournemouth, Sir Charles A. Parsons, K.C.B., D.Sc., F.R.S., made some interesting references to the development of scientific instruments for war service, special attention being directed to sound-ranging and listening devices. For instance, mention was made of the apparatus of Professor Bragg and his son, whereby, from the recorded times at which sound-waves from hostile artillery reached a number of receiving-stations, the positions of these guns could be located to within fifty yards at a 7000-yard range, thus enabling our artillery to concentrate their fire on certain areas with good prospects of destroying the guns in question. After referring to hydrophones for locating submarines, and their limitations owing to the disturbances caused by the instruments dragging through the water and waves striking the ship, Sir Charles mentioned experiments in this connection by Sir Richard Paget on sea-lions, and Professor Keith's explanation of how the hearing organs of the whale are constructed. Under water sea-lions were found to have directional hearing up to speeds of six knots; and the hearing organs of the whale were said to resemble hydrophones to some extent. Based on these investigations, water-filled fish-shaped bodies made of celluloid, varnished canvas, or the like, with hydrophones fixed in the centre of their heads, were towed at some distance behind ships in search of submarines, the wires to the observers being carried by the tow-ropes. In this position the disturbing noises from the submarine-hunter itself were minimised, and sounds from enemy craft could be heard up to speeds of fourteen knots and over considerable distances. Another interesting war development was referred to by Sir Charles in the following words: 'Leader gear, first used by the Germans to direct their ships through their minefields, and subsequently used by the Allies, consists of an insulated cable laid on the bottom of the sea and earthed at the farther end, through which an alternating current is passed. By means of delicate devices installed on a ship, she is able to follow the cable at any speed with as much precision as a railless electric bus can follow its trolley-wire. Cables up to fifty miles long have been used, and this device promises to be invaluable to ships navigating narrow and tortuous channels and entering or leaving harbours in a fog.'

AN AUTOMATIC GUIDE-BOOK.

Now that railway fares are so high, it is often found that a number of persons can travel to a distant point with their luggage at a lower cost by motor-car than by train; and this frequently applies even when the car has to be hired from a concern which supplies a chauffeur and makes a profit out of the transaction. Many people travelled to the seaside for their holidays by motor-car last summer; others used cars for touring; and the railway strike in the autumn forced large numbers to travel long distances by motor in the absence of trains. In cases of the kind, when the driver is passing over a road which is new to him, certain information has to be acquired regarding such matters as hotel accommodation *en route*, dangerous crossings or hills, together with particulars of speed-limits where imposed. In the United States information of this description is now supplied automatically to drivers of motor-cars as they go along. The information is printed on a tape which is moved round by the wheels of the car at exactly the right speed, instructions relating to the particular part of the road being driven over being visible to the driver as he sits at the steering-wheel. This indicator also gives the exact position of the car at any time, and it is almost indispensable at night for this reason. According to the *Scientific American*, thousands of miles of road in the east and middle west of the United States have been logged and recorded on tapes by the company which is introducing this new apparatus. Service-stations are to be established in each city, where tapes for various routes will always be kept on hand for free distribution to users of the automatic road-guide.

NEW PARAFFIN CARBURETTER FOR MOTOR-CARS.

Supposing that results equal to those obtained with petrol in motor-cars could be realised from paraffin at half the cost, few owners would continue to use petrol. Hitherto the appliances for running motor-cars on paraffin have not proved entirely satisfactory, the reason (according to Mr Charles Dawson, who has perfected a new method of using the heavier fuel) being lack of homogeneity in the mixture of paraffin vapour and air at various loads and speeds. In previous paraffin vaporisers the oil has been evaporated in a chamber heated by the exhaust gases, or by the admission

of a small portion of these gases into the induction-pipe. In Mr Dawson's device the paraffin is vaporised at the jet by what is practically red-hot air, the latter having been drawn through a multitubular heater in which a large surface, heated on one side by the exhaust, is exposed to the air on the other. Moreover, the tubes are small and thin; hence they heat up in a few seconds—an important point in connection with the quantity of petrol needed for starting. When the engine is just ticking round by itself, the hot air supplied to the jet suffices to give a correct mixture; but as soon as the throttle is opened and the speed increases, a piston is drawn upwards by the extra suction of the engine and uncovers additional air-holes, at the same time allowing a paraffin needle-valve to rise and admit more fuel. In this way the mixture is always exactly proportioned to give the best results at all loads and speeds. However, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the writer recently had a long run in a small American car fitted with Mr Dawson's device. For starting, the hot-air pipe leading to the jet was primed with petrol from an ordinary lubricating oil-can (such as might be used with a lawn-mower) holding about a quarter of a pint. Two or three squirts were enough—perhaps a teaspoonful—and the engine started at the first turn of the handle. After the engine had been allowed to run for a couple of minutes to warm it up, a start was made, and the car was taken for twenty miles or so over some of the most hilly and winding roads in Kent. The results can be best summed up by the statement that no one would have known that the car was not running on petrol, every conceivable test (including going up hills on the high gear until the engine all but stopped) being made to try the flexibility, which appeared to be perfect. Moreover, there was not the slightest sign of pinking (pre-ignition) at any time, although the engine was designed for petrol and no alteration had been made to the compression. With previous devices for using paraffin for motor-cars the compression has had to be reduced, otherwise pinking took place. The exhaust, also, was perfectly clean throughout the test. The device is equally applicable to all petrol-engines, whether in boats or aeroplanes, or for producing electricity; and the inventor claims that his appliance will vaporise yet heavier and lower-priced fuels than paraffin, such as gas oils, while with extra heat even residual oils, such as are used in Diesel engines, can be employed.

A NEW DIVING-BELL FOR SALVAGING.

What is practically a diving-bell in a new guise has been devised for salvage-work by Mr Simon Lake, the well-known American inventor of submarines. The most striking feature of this appliance is that access can be obtained to it while it is at the bottom of the sea. The diving-bell consists of a steel chamber which measures about twenty feet in length and eight feet in width, and is of sufficient height to let the occupants stand upright. A steel tube four and a half feet in diameter and seventy-five feet long connects the bell to the parent ship. At the bottom end this tube divides into a T piece which fits into huge bearings in the bell chamber, the latter, therefore, being hinged and able to remain level, whatever the inclination of the communication tube. The upper end of the tube, again, is carried on hinges, the result being that the bell chamber can be raised or lowered to suit the depth of water without interfering with the communication from the parent ship. Communication at the bottom end is through one side of the T piece into an air-lock, where the pressure is gradually raised to that inside the bell chamber before the communication door is opened. In the bottom of the bell chamber is an opening with a water-tight door, measuring about three feet in length by about five feet in width, through which objects can be picked up from the sea-bed. Like the submarine, the diving-bell is caused to sink by admitting water into tanks until the buoyancy is overcome, but the depth is controlled by wire ropes running over a framework at the bow of the parent ship; in fact, the operation is almost exactly similar to that of raising or lowering the ladder of a dredger. In addition to giving access to the bell chamber, the communication tube serves to carry electric light and telephone cables, besides the compressed-air pipe and other accessories. A motor is fitted to the diving-bell whereby it can be moved along to a limited extent by a wheel under the bottom. Outside of the communication tube is a ten-inch suction-pipe which passes through the bell chamber. Its upper end is connected to a powerful pump on board the parent ship. This appliance is used for dredging up grain and other materials which lend themselves to removal by pumping when carried in a stream of water. Already a certain amount of coal has been raised from Long Island Sound banks by this apparatus. Athough the above experimental device can reach depths of about forty feet only, it is considered that no serious difficulty would be met with in designing a similar diving-bell with a communication tube three hundred feet long, which would be sufficient to reach the greatest depths at which men would be capable of working.

HOME-MADE FOOD-COOLER.

The evaporation of liquid is known to produce cold in proportion to the amount of moisture that is carried off by the air. So rapid is the evaporation of ether, for instance, that ice can be produced by this means. The evaporation of water also has a powerful cooling effect, and this fact is taken advantage of for the cooling of water for condensing steam in large electric generating-stations, the water being allowed to

trickle over a large number of shelves arranged in a tower. A home-made cooler for food based upon this principle was recently described in *Popular Science Siftings*. The appliance consists of a wooden framework covered with galvanised wire netting, a number of shelves for holding the comestibles to be cooled being arranged inside. Tapes provided with buttons are tacked to the edges of the framework, and on to these pieces of flannel, flannelette, or coarse cotton material can be buttoned to cover the sides. At the top is a rectangular enamel pan containing water into which dip flaps of flannel turned over from the upper edges of the frame. These flaps serve as wick siphons to keep the encasing material moist. The whole arrangement stands in a pan of water. One side is provided with hinges, and opens to give access to the shelves. Although the temperature inside this cooler does not nearly reach freezing-point, it is many degrees lower than the surrounding atmosphere. The refrigerator should be kept in the shade, preferably where currents of air will play upon it. The plan of buttoning on the covers allows of these being taken off and washed at intervals. The covers should be of white material, as this absorbs less heat than do coloured covers.

HUGE FARM WITHOUT HORSES.

Most readers of this journal know that in America farming is conducted on a scale that is colossal in comparison with the largest agricultural operations to be seen in this country; but there are few who will not be astonished at the size of a wheat-farm in Montana and Wyoming that was originated and established by Mr Thomas D. Campbell, in furtherance of the recent efforts of the United States Government to increase the production of wheat. This farm covers an area of no less than 200,000 acres, and is divided up into forty sections of 5000 acres. A remarkable feature of the concern is that all operations are carried out by machinery, not a single horse being employed. Instead, huge tractors, the largest ever built, do all the work of ploughing, seeding, and harvesting, explains Robert H. Moulton in the *Scientific American*. Each section is provided with one of these giant tractors, while a dozen are held in reserve in case of breakdowns. A manager is in charge of each section, which has its own group of permanent buildings, but the general management is entirely in the hands of the originator of the scheme. All operations are carried out to scheduled times, this system being possible owing to the dependable character of the weather. The capacity of the tractors may be gathered from the fact that fourteen of them have ploughed more than 350 acres of virgin soil in a day. Even if the yield of this farm be no higher than twenty bushels an acre, it will mean no inconsiderable addition to the year's crop.

PROFESSIONAL MEN AND EXCESS PROFITS DUTY.

There are strong indications—and indeed more than indications—that claims for excess profits duty are going to be pressed against professional men in circumstances where it has been thought (or assumed) that there was immunity. The tax is laid on 'all trades or businesses of any description . . . excepting . . . offices or employments, and any profession the profits of which are dependent mainly on the personal qualifications of the person by whom the profession is carried on, and in which no capital expenditure is required, or only capital expenditure of a comparatively small amount; but including the business of any person taking commissions in respect of any transactions or services rendered, and of any agent of any description (not being a commercial traveller, or an agent whose remuneration consists wholly of a fixed and definite sum not depending on the amount of business done or any other contingency).' We shall make no attempt to discuss the matter, but shall merely state enough to indicate the lengths to which the claim is apparently to be carried. (1) Stockbrokers are liable. The reasons are that stockbroking is not a profession, or at any rate not a profession dependent mainly on personal qualifications. But apparently, even if it could be held to pass these two tests, it would still be liable on the ground of taking commissions. (2) Commercial advisers paid by commission are liable. They might pass the test of personal qualifications, but their business is not recognised as a profession; and, again, even if it were, it would apparently be unavailing in the face of remuneration by commissions. (3) Mr Justice Peterson has recently dealt with a case in which a claim is made by the authorities against a technical advisory engineer remunerated by a commission on turn-over. The case came up on an action by the engineer for a declaration of non-liability, and that has been thrown out; but this involves no decision either way on the question of liability. What is feared, however, is that the Inland Revenue intend to maintain that any professional man, be he civil engineer, mechanical, electrical, marine, or mining engineer, architect, surveyor, or the like, is assessable to excess profits duty (if excess profits exist) unless he receives all his remuneration as a predetermined fixed amount—e.g. a lump sum, or so much per month or per year; and that any variation by way of percentage or otherwise, with reference to turn-over or profit or any other element, renders him liable. This at least is the way in which we have heard it put, and our only doubt is whether, as so put, it shows the full extent to which such claims may be pushed.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE BROWN NABOB'S MONEY.

By J. S. FLETCHER.

CHAPTER I.—END OF THE BROWN NABOB.

FRIARGATE, in Normansholt, a short, narrow street leading away from the south-west corner of the Market Place, has, since memory can tell of it, been almost entirely given up to solicitors, auctioneers, and accountants. Its tall houses, the front-doors of which are approached by low steps set between pilasters, bear the stamp of professional gravity; almost every high, narrow window of the lower floors is shrouded from the curiosity of the pedestrian by a wire blind, inscribed with a name or names wrought in gilt letters, most of them much faded. Only two breaks occur in the monotony of the street. One is made by a square, railed-in courtyard, at the rear of which a solid old house affords accommodation to the private banking firm of Shillito, Wilbrick, & Partners; the other is where a low-roofed Jacobean mansion, also set back a little from the line of its neighbours, presents a frontage of old red brick, partly covered with ivy, and contrasts cheerily with the prevalent pale yellow of its stucco-faced surroundings. This, called Friargate House, is the only private residence in the ancient thoroughfare. Where it stands, once stood a house of Grey Friars—certain ruins of their house may be seen in the tree-shaded garden at the rear.

For many years, at the end of last century, Friargate House remained untenanted and neglected. Its owner, an old lady who had retired to Scarborough, appeared to have forgotten its existence. Suddenly she instructed one of the neighbouring auctioneers to offer it for sale. It was put up for auction at the Crown Hotel, in the Market Place, one spring afternoon in the year 1899. When the auctioneer read out the conditions of sale, he was hopeless about getting a bid. But there was at that time staying at the 'Crown' a stranger, an elderly gentleman, Mr Martin Farmadale, who had come to Normansholt to take a look at its antiquities. Within five minutes of the sale's opening he had bought Friargate House for £6500; within an hour he had paid over the purchase money; before evening he had given full instructions for the immediate restoration and renovation of his new property; and by the end of the summer he had settled down.

For the next six years Normansholt knew no more of its new inhabitant than that he was a bachelor gentleman who kept a housekeeper, two maids, and a boy in buttons; that he paid his bills every Saturday morning, in hard cash; and that every day he took a ten-mile walk, always in the same direction, after which he was not again seen outside his own door until another sun had risen. There were, of course, rumours about him. He was said to be very wealthy, and entirely without relations. There appeared to be little doubt—this was founded on his known predilection for curries and similar highly flavoured dishes—that he had spent most of his life in India, and had made a fortune there. As for his outward seeming, he was a little, squat, tubby sort of man, who wore his clothes tightly buttoned across his chest, carried a very large umbrella, and sported old-fashioned whiskers on either side of a mahogany-hued face. From the first week of his settling down to his hermit-like existence in Normansholt he became known as the Brown Nabob.

The Brown Nabob was now dead, having come to his end just as suddenly as he had come to Normansholt, and on this, an autumn, afternoon his funeral equipage stood at the gates of the old house in which he had lived for six quiet years. It was not an imposing equipage. It consisted, indeed, of a hearse and one roomy mourning-coach. The coffin, an affair of plain oak, was already in the hearse; the undertaker's men were ranged alongside the black horses; the undertaker himself was hovering about the open door of the house, evidently in a fidgety state. Overhead, from a corner of the Market Place, the great bell of St Eanswythe's Church was tolling dismally. And inside the house three men waited, in a heavily furnished, rather gloomy dining-room, on the table of which stood decanters of port and sherry. One of these men was Mr Shillito, senior partner in the banking firm across the way; another was Dr Milford, from round the corner; the third was Mr Haddlesey, a solicitor, whose office was next door on the right-hand side. The banker was sipping a glass of port; the doctor had just set down the empty glass wherein he had sampled the dead man's

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brown sherry; the solicitor was gazing fretfully through a crack of the drawn blinds, his eyes directed towards a door on the opposite side of the street. He had been so gazing for five minutes when the undertaker looked into the room.

'We're late already, gentlemen,' murmured the undertaker. 'I fixed three o'clock sharp with the vicar, and it's past that now, and we can't get to the cemetery in less than ten minutes. Hadn't we better'——

'We can't go without young Denton,' said the solicitor sharply and without turning from the window. 'Those were my instructions from the deceased: young Denton was to go with us, and return with us. I don't know what's keeping him—I told him myself to be here at ten minutes to three.'

'Well, you know what the vicar is, Mr Haddlesey,' said the undertaker. 'He's a model of punctuality himself, and'——

'I suppose there are reasons why we can't go without the young man?' suggested the banker, setting down his glass. 'Perhaps you're aware'——

'I'm aware of nothing, Mr Shillito,' answered the solicitor. 'I know nothing at all beyond what the late Mr Farmadale told me to do just before his death. This young fellow was'——

'Why not send across to Petherfield's office, and hurry him up?' said the doctor.

But Haddlesey suddenly left the blind, and turning away from the window, began to draw on a pair of new black kid gloves. 'He's coming,' he said. 'Tumbling over himself, of course.'

The undertaker hurried out to the door of the hall, passing, with a reproachful shake of the head, a young man who came running breathlessly and made for the dining-room as if well acquainted with its location. Denton burst in with glances, right and left, which denoted humble apology.

'Very sorry, Mr Haddlesey,' he blurted out. 'Very sorry indeed, gentlemen! Not my fault, though—I couldn't help it. We're awfully busy at our place, Mr Haddlesey. The guv'nor's quite angry because I asked for an hour off—said he didn't know whatever reason there could be for my presence.'

The three men, who gave a mere glance at Petherfield's clerk, were secretly of Petherfield's opinion. Nobody who looked at young Bellamy Denton could have fancied his presence necessary at anything except his own humble job. He was obviously one of the multitude—born to obscurity and humility—the sort of young man whose duty was to thank everybody else for allowing him to exist. His hair was nearer red than auburn; his pale, mild blue eyes were fringed by sandy eyelashes; his plain features were liberally covered with freckles; his nose was a snub, and his mouth a slit. The only redeeming feature in him was a resolute chin. Plain—very plain, and homely—very homely; and his plainness was accentuated by the black mourning-clothes he had borrowed for the occasion, not one single garment of which fitted him. The trousers, too short, revealed an inch or two of gray sock. The tails of the coat came much too far below the crook of the wearer's knee; its collar rose too high above the nape of his neck. As for his black cravat, it had already worked round under his left ear. The silk hat which he had borrowed, and about which he had clumsily fastened a band of crape, was as much too small as the gloves which he was nervously drawing on were too large. The other men, as they looked at him for a second, mechanically eyed their own well-fitting garments, and felt a strange sense of incongruity.

'You're nearly twenty minutes late,' grumbled Haddlesey. 'However'——

He led the way from the room, the banker walking at his side. The doctor followed. Bellamy, instead of falling into line with him, walked a good yard in his rear. And when they came to the mourning-coach he glanced doubtfully at the box, as if his proper place was by the side of the driver. But out there the undertaker was master; in another moment the clerk found himself in a corner of the stuffy old carriage, with his back to the horses, and the doctor sitting at his side, while the banker and the solicitor confronted them from the more honourable positions. The procession moved off up Friargate, and the two or three women and children who had lingered to see it start turned away, grumbling at its lack of ostentation.

'A curious old man!' murmured the banker, as the coach began to traverse the cobble-stones of the wide Market Place. 'Something mysterious about him, eh?' He gave the solicitor a side-glance. 'I suppose you don't know much?' he suggested, with a spice of elderly inquisitiveness. 'I don't know, of course, if you knew much of him?'

Haddlesey pointed a finger at Bellamy Denton's freckled face. 'That's about the only chap in Normansholt that knew him,' he said incisively. 'If you want to know anything, Mr Shillito, ask him!'

Bellamy, to whom the banker was a very great and terrible personage, blushed scarlet under his inspection, and shifted his eyes to the less formidable solicitor.

'I, Mr Haddlesey!' he exclaimed. 'I don't know anything about the late Mr Farmadale, sir—except what—what I do know, you know. No more than that, sir, I assure you.'

'You're the only Normansholt man who had ever been inside his house till last week, when he sent for me, and for Mr Shillito, and for Dr Milford,' retorted Haddlesey dryly. 'And you used to go there pretty regularly, by all accounts.'

'For a purpose, sir; for a purpose!' answered Bellamy. 'It was this way, you see, Mr Haddlesey. One night, two years ago, I happened to get into conversation with Mr Farmadale, down there near Barbican, and it came out that I could play chess a bit. So he asked me to look in and play a game with him; and after that I used to go regularly. Three nights a week, sir, ever since then. But—I don't know any more than that.'

'Did he ever give you anything for your trouble?' asked the solicitor.

Bellamy blushed again, but his eyes faced his questioner steadily enough. 'Well, now that's over and done with, Mr Haddlesey,' he answered, 'I don't mind saying. He did! I didn't want to take it, because I'm fond of chess; it's all the games I play, and he taught me a lot—a tremendous lot, d'you see, sir? But he would insist on it. Yes; he gave me a sovereign every Saturday night. I've saved the whole lot of it—every penny.'

The banker, a tall, solidly built man, made a little approving murmur somewhere inside his capacious throat, and regarding the clerk with a new interest, bent forward to him. 'Did Mr Farmadale ever tell you if he had any relations,' he asked—'ever mention anything in that way?'

'Well, sir, he did once remark—casual-like—that he hadn't,' answered Bellamy. 'I forget what it was that brought it out, but he did say that he hadn't a single relation living—not one.'

'Did he ever tell you what he meant to do with his money?' inquired the banker.

'I once heard him say—and not so long ago—that he'd left his fortune to a thoroughly deserving object, sir,' replied Bellamy. 'But, of course, I didn't ask anything further—some charity or other, I took him to mean.'

'Did you ever hear him mention what he was worth, or where he'd made it?' asked Haddlesey. 'I suppose you weren't playing chess all the time?'

'Most of the time, sir,' answered Bellamy. 'That was what I went for. No, sir; I never heard Mr Farmadale say what money he had, or where he'd made it. But I know he spent nearly all his life in India. He'd—perhaps I oughtn't to mention it—he'd a very fine set of chess-men, in ivory, that he'd brought from India. He used to say he'd leave it to me, but it may have been his joke.'

'You hope he has, eh?' said the banker, smiling good-humouredly.

'I should be very proud of it, sir,' assented Bellamy. 'I've never seen a set like it, sir.'

'Here we are, anyway,' said Haddlesey, as the coach pulled up at the ornamental gate of the cemetery. 'And there's the vicar, looking in anything but a Christian state of mind. However, we can't hurry things now, even for him.'

Half-an-hour later banker, solicitor, and doctor turned quietly away from the open grave; Bellamy Denton lingered behind. When they were gone, and he was alone, save for a grave-digger, he pulled a small cardboard box from his pocket, took a tiny bunch of roses from it, and, with a shy glance at the grave-digger, dropped it on the coffin; then, with another quick look into the grave, he hurried after the other three and subsided into his corner. The coach went back up Cemetery Lane, and through the Market Place into Friargate, and discharged its occupants.

Bellamy turned to the solicitor. 'You'll excuse me now, Mr Haddlesey,' he said. 'I promised Mr Petherfield I'd be back the minute it was over. We're that busy'——

'Petherfield'll just have to do without you, then, for a few minutes longer,' said Haddlesey. 'My instructions from Mr Farmadale were that four persons were to be present at the reading of his will, and you're one of 'em. I don't know what's in his will, and I don't know why you should be there, but you'll have to come in while it's read.'

Bellamy glanced nervously across the street. It chanced that Petherfield, who was an insistent person, and terrible in wrath, was looking out of his window, and the clerk paled under his glance. He half-turned; but Haddlesey, nodding at his fellow-solicitor, shepherded his captive into Friargate House.

'Well, as soon as you can, then, Mr Haddlesey,' pleaded Bellamy. 'Mr Petherfield'll have the skin off me if'——

'Come on, now!' commanded Haddlesey, and pushed him into the dining-room, whither the banker and the doctor had already repaired. He closed the door, and motioned his companions to draw chairs to the table. 'Now, gentlemen,' he continued, taking a seat at the head and helping himself to a glass of port, 'we'll do this business. And, to start with, I think I'd better make an explanation, and I think Mr Shillito will follow it with another A week ago the late Mr Farmadale, with whom I had never had any transactions before, sent for me, and in Dr Milford's presence told me that he knew he was not going to live many days, and handed me this sealed envelope, which, he said, contained his will. He would not tell me its contents. He gave me instructions to read it, as soon as his funeral was over, to you three. That's all.—Now, Mr Shillito.'

The banker drew a somewhat bulky packet from an inner pocket of his overcoat and laid it on the table. 'My story is something like yours, Haddlesey,' he said. 'After you'd been with him, Mr Farmadale sent for me, and in Dr Milford's presence handed me this sealed packet, and told me it contained the whole of his property. He asked me to take care of it until the reading of his will, and—that's all.'

Haddlesey picked up the sealed envelope,

took a penknife from his pocket, and sliced open the flap. He drew out a single sheet of paper and unfolded it. The banker and the doctor, watching his face carefully, saw a quick gleam pass over it. Bellamy, whose sole immediate concern was to get away to Petherfield's office, saw nothing of that gleam; he was staring at the clock.

'Well,' said Haddlesey, after a moment's pause, 'here it is, then—short, too. I'll read it.

'"This is the last will of me, Martin Farmadale, of Friargate House, Friargate, Normansholt, in the county of Yorkshire, formerly Commissioner of Bundelwara, Bengal, India. I devise and bequeath all my estate and effects, real and personal, which I may die possessed of or entitled to, unto Bellamy Denton, of Number Seven, Trinity Terrace, Normansholt, absolutely. And I hereby appoint the said Bellamy Denton sole executor of this my will, and I revoke all former wills and codicils. Dated this seventh day of April 1904."

'That's all,' added the solicitor sharply. 'It's all correct—duly signed, and witnessed by the housekeeper and the parlour-maid, both highly respectable persons. Well, I suspected something of this sort, but not quite what's here, Mr Denton'——

'Stop a bit!' said the doctor. He stretched out a quick hand, hurried some wine into a glass, and turned to Bellamy. 'Drink, man!' he said authoritatively. 'Drink!—pull yourself round—come on, now!'

Bellamy drank, and choked, and made an effort, and suddenly pushed away the glass. He turned a wild stare on Haddlesey. 'Is—is it right?' he asked thickly. 'You're not'——

'Good Lord, man, of course it's right!' said Haddlesey. 'Buck up! What a slice of luck! The question now is—what's it amount to?'

He turned to the banker, who was already breaking the seals of the bulky packet which he had laid on the table.

(*Continued on page 772.*)

THE FAIRY-TALES OF SOUTH AFRICA.

By E. L. M'Pherson.

I.

JUST half-a-century ago, when the Rev. Dr Callaway, afterwards Bishop of St John's, Kaffraria, published his *Nursery Tales of the Zulus*, the *Saturday Review* classed these stories with Grimm's *Märchen*, the *Zendavesta*, and the *Veda*, and prophesied that in fifty years the collection would become as valuable as the few remaining bones of the dodo.

The prophetic words are slightly exaggerated, for copies are still procurable, though they are rare and costly. The writer, however, had the extreme good fortune to find one in a Natal rectory, where it was in danger of being cast into a jumble sale. It came originally from the library of a theological college in England, and had been given to a young priest in case he should find it useful in his labours in South Africa. The librarian of the college had been clearing out 'rubbish,' and a later worker in the same field as Bishop Callaway consented to part with the book for a few shillings!

This is not the first time that treasures have been cast aside carelessly, and South Africa in the past has been notoriously indifferent to many of her good things. Her indifference to the great treasure of wonder-tales told by the natives, especially by the Zulus and the Basutos, is one of the most surprising and saddening instances of wasteful neglect, for in wealth of fancy and in rich and poetic diction these are not easily surpassed.

Bishop Callaway took the stories direct from the lips of members of his flock, partly as a means of learning their language, and in his work the Zulu text appears side by side with the English version. He was, moreover, an ardent student of the folklore of many nations, and the notes appended show his deep knowledge of the legends of almost every people under the sun.

He was amongst the first of the missionaries to collect the native tales and to treat them with respect. Others, in their zeal to teach the new faith, held the stories in contempt, and to-day the 'educated' native, even if he is acquainted with the lore of his people, will not acknowledge it for fear of being laughed at for his childishness; and if it had not been for the timely work of Bishop Callaway, the world would have lost many a beautiful fairy-tale.

Luckily, too, there have been other scholars and missionaries who have shared the enthusiasm of Bishop Callaway, and before passing on to speak of the stories themselves one must mention the names of a few who, like him, saw the beauty of the native lore and made haste to rescue it from the destruction with which it was threatened.

When Sir George Grey, that accomplished scholar and far-sighted statesman, became Governor of the Cape Colony in 1854, he requested all magistrates, officials, and traders to collect the stories told by the natives, and he established the Grey Library in Cape Town as a repository for such manuscripts and as a centre of work. He appointed Dr Bleek, the great student of Bushman lore, as its first custodian. Dr Bleek.

one may remark in passing, preserved the dying language of a dying race, and reduced it to writing—a work in which he was assisted by Dr Lucy Lloyd, his sister-in-law, and which is being continued by his daughter, Miss Bleek, who has also done much to discover and preserve the cave-drawings which show these primitive people to have been possessed of a remarkable artistic gift. Another scholar of note is Dr Theal, who, in addition to writing a history of South Africa, has found time to collect some of the native legends.

About the middle of the nineteenth century and later, the German missionaries did good work in Damaraland; but, with the exception of Bishop Callaway, the most enthusiastic among the missionaries appear to have been the members of the French Protestant Mission in Basutoland. They were the first pioneers, and as early as 1842 Arbousset and Casilis began to take down the stories from the lips of their converts; and their work to-day is being carried on by M. Jacotet, who has published volumes in French and in English, but is unhappily hindered by want of funds from publishing his most recent work. Others are in a like difficulty, and, through lack of a Folklore Society such as existed in Cape Town in 1879–80, much good material is wasted. Here and there some enthusiast gathers together a few stories, which are published in a tiny pamphlet by a small local press. The edition is limited, and in a year or two runs out, and so the fairy-gold of South Africa is squandered.

II.

But now to the stories themselves. Roughly, these may be divided into two groups—the animal tales or fables, which are generally satiric in character and full of humour; and the romances, in which gallant warrior-chiefs, beautiful princesses, and the dreaded witch-doctor play their part.

These romances appear to belong chiefly to the Zulus and the Basutos, both of whom are superior in intelligence to the great majority of the South African peoples, and it is mainly from their stories that quotations will be made.

In all probability the reader will not at first be attracted by the legends, for up to the present no one has attempted to give them a literary form. He will be wearied by the tedious repetition, and he will be repelled by the grossness natural to the native mind, but he will assuredly be rewarded if he will but persevere.

To many the unfamiliar setting will be a drawback; but is there not charm in all things new? True, the reader will look in vain for the knightly graces of the Court of King Arthur, or the beauty of La Belle-au-Bois-Dormant; nor will he find any figure to compare with Puck making merry in the heart of an English wood, and directing the revels of His Majesty King Oberon through the brief darkness of a summer night, till the gay carol of the lark heralds the dawn. But if romance be in his soul, he will come to recognise the majesty of the native chief, wrapped in a mantle of skins and crowned with a head-dress made from the many-coloured plumage of the wild birds of the veld; he will look with wonder on the beautiful dark-skinned maiden adorned with anklets and armlets of shining brass; and in the witch-doctor standing on the hilltop, with rod raised towards the pitiless blue, praying for the mercy of the rain, he will find a figure not unworthy to rank with the great enchanter Merlin. The wonder and the beauty are there to all who have eyes to see. There is moral grandeur too, and in the figure of Senkenpeng, the Basuto girl who consented to sacrifice herself to Bulane, the Water-God, we have a maiden victim who may rank with Jephthah's daughter, Iphigenia, or Andromeda.

Through the ages poet and artist have taken the legends of East and West and have woven for them the fairest of raiment, but strip them of all their trappings, and in their naked beauty they are essentially the same as the stories of the South; and so much do they resemble one another that they seem as the children of one family, some of whom have been carried away to dwell in palaces, while others have been left to wander over the sun-steeped veld or to hide within the untrodden forests of Africa. One day—unless Romance be dead—there will surely emerge a writer who will give shape and form to these primitive tales, and raise them to the place which by right is theirs. The Hans Andersen or the Perrault of South Africa has not yet come forward, but among the natives there will assuredly some day arise one who, bearing in his heart all the traditions of his people, will lift these stories into the front rank of literature.

The statue lies within the marble, waiting only for the hand that shall release it.

III.

One of the most beautiful of the legends, which is found in varying forms, bears a close resemblance to that of Cupid and Psyche. A girl—usually one who has been neglected and ill-treated in her home—is carried away by an unseen husband, whose face she must not seek to look upon. She dwells alone, tended by invisible servants, until after the birth of her child. When the child is a year or two old, she receives permission to return and show the little one to her friends; and after the visit is over, she is welcomed back by her husband, a great and renowned chief, who openly claims her as his wife.

Again and again we come across the Enchanted Prince condemned to wear the form of a hideous five-headed snake until he is redeemed by a maiden bold enough to take him for a husband; and there is a startling familiarity in the history of the Princess whose tears, falling into a pool,

bring to her aid a Frog. The Princess does not weep for a lost golden ball, but because she has been ordered to take for her husband a foster-brother, and thereby offend against the custom of her tribe. The Frog puts an end to her troubles by swallowing her, carrying her back to her father's kraal, and restoring her to the mother who had left her on the veld, a helpless babe, and had returned to find her darling carried away.

Here is Callaway's version of the meeting between mother and daughter, the beauty and the simplicity of which need no comment.

'She took her brass rod, and went and entered at the gateway, and she passed across the cattle-enclosure; she went in the middle of it; she came to the opening, she went out, and entered the house of her mother. Her mother followed her into the house and said, "Whence comest thou, damsel?"

'She said, "I am merely on a journey."

'The mother said, "Tell me."

'She said, "There is nothing. I am merely on a journey."

'The mother said, "Women are satisfied who have such fine children as you. For my part, I am in trouble; my child was lost; I left her in the valley; she died there."

'The child answered, saying, "Why did you leave her? Did you do it because you did not love her?"

'She said, "No; the Queens made me forget her. They would not allow the nurse to carry her."

'She said in answer, "No. There is no woman who can forget her own child."

'She said, "No; it happened through my not being accustomed to carry a child; for she used to remain with the nurse."

'She said, "Yes; you did it because you did not love me."

'She began to look very earnestly at her; she saw that it was her child.

'When she saw her she rejoiced. She lauded her with the laud-giving names of her child. The mother took her robes, and girded herself; she took her head-ornament, and put it on her head; she took her petticoat, and put it on; she took her staff and went out; she leaped for joy and "Halalaed;" she went into the cattle-pen; she played, leaping with joy. The people wondered and said, "What has happened to Untombinde to-day? Why does she rejoice so much? Since the time her first-born died she has never rejoiced, but has constantly been sorrowful."'

In time the lost Princess is given in marriage; and here are the words in which she resigns herself to the care of her husband's father:

'She took brass, and placed it before her father, and prayed, saying, "Sire, take care of me for ever, for now I am in thy hands, preserve me."'

The wicked Queens—in other words, the jealous wives of the chief—play the part of the cruel Stepmother of Western story; and the Cannibal, the dread monster who carries off his victims in a bag and roasts them, corresponds to the Ogre of nursery lore. There is also a wicked old woman, Longtoe, who devours children, and whose approach is always heralded by the cloud of dust raised by her enormous toe, —surely first cousin to the Witch in high-peaked cap so familiar in European lore. In fact, the *dramatis personæ* of our own fairy-tales are all here in slightly different guise. We have the birds who carry messages, and the mouse who guides the traveller on his path. We have talking trees, and strange instruments of music, which, untouched by human hand, breathe forth sweet sounds. There is, moreover, a wonderful world beneath the sea where life goes on much as on land, and upon whose rich pastures vast herds of cattle graze peacefully; and there is a land beneath the earth, the Kingdom of the Dead, to which men have strayed like Ulysses of old. There is a Heaven Kingdom, too, to which one may journey by climbing a great tree which has its roots deep in the earth, and of which the branches are lost in the clouds.

Here is a description, taken from one of Callaway's stories, of this Heaven Country, into which a brother and a sister had climbed to escape the pursuing cannibals.

'They found a very beautiful house there; that house was green, and the floor was burnished; and the country of the upper region was very beautiful; they walked about there continually, and looked at it, for they saw it for the first time. But the earth they saw was at a great distance below them.'

IV.

The writer is not rash enough to offer any suggestion as to the origin of these romances. Probably they date back to the far-off dawn of human life, when, in the beautiful Sesuto phrase, 'the world was fresh from the hand of the Creator.' It is patent, however, to the most unlearned and uncritical observer that numbers of the stories have come from the East, brought probably by the Arab traders who are known to have penetrated far South, doubtless in search of slaves for the market. One of these legends, 'The Rock of Two Holes,' bears a marked resemblance to the 'Open Sesame' story. Within the rock cavern dwells a cannibal, and at his voice, and his alone, the great wall of rock swings open. To what words it opens we are not told, but, oddly enough, sesame plays a part in the story. His victim who escaped, a girl, scattered sesame—a favourite dainty with cannibals—on the ground, and thus kept her pursuers occupied until she reached the giant tree, which she climbed, and which brought her safely into the Heaven Country.

Two stories at least seem borrowed from the Old Testament. In the one we have a chief who delivers his people from the dominion of a conqueror, and, by lifting his rod, causes the waters of a deep river to part and let them pass to the other bank in safety. We have also a story recalling that of the Tower of Babel. A tribe eager to reach the moon, 'the shining plate of the Lord,' build a great tower, that they may grasp the bright treasure and bring it to earth. The tower falls, and all the men and women of the tribe are crushed beneath its ruins. The children alone, who were playing in the kraal at some distance from the scene of the disaster, are saved.

The story of the youthful virgin-mother who gives birth to a son fairer and wiser than any child who ever saw the light, and who, when he reached manhood, went from place to place healing the sick, is surely an echo of the teaching of the early Portuguese missionaries who followed in the footsteps of Diaz and Da Gama.

Mention has already been made of the wearisome repetition often found in these stories. This is due, doubtless, to the fact that the stories have for generations been handed down by oral tradition only. Children—and the natives are but grown-up children—are not wearied with the repetition of an incident, and, moreover, the narrators have a great dramatic gift, and the telling of the story is enlivened by change of tone and by gesture.

One must say a few words about the beauty of phrase which is characteristic of the stories. Our traditional 'once upon a time' gives place to 'uncounted years ago.' The waning moon has been 'eaten by time' or 'devoured by the days.' Travellers on a long quest 'journeyed until that moon died.' A witch-doctor in preparation for his mystic calling 'becomes a House of Dreams.' The beauty of a girl is 'like the good green grass refreshed by rain.' A girl drawing water knew, through that telepathic sense so strong among the natives, that her sister had been carried away by a monster, and we are told that she 'felt her sister's departure.'

In conclusion, one is impelled to quote the beautiful blessing of the Basutos, a benediction unsurpassed in any tongue: 'May you go softly all your days, and may your face be as the morning sun!'

REDRIB.

THE LIFE-STORY OF A BROOK TROUT.

By H. Mortimer Batten.

I.

REDRIB never knew his mother. He was hatched in a tiny, sandy-bedded pool away up on the heights of Bareface Mountain, together with teeming thousands of similar minute fish-life, perhaps 1 per cent. of which would grow into adult trouthood. Early enough the weeding-out process began, and we shall see how this multitude of little fishes dwindled to the merest few ere the lush green grasses overshadowed the lower levels of the burn.

When first Redrib was hatched he was, like his brothers and sisters, a perfectly formed little fish, except that to his underside there clung a little oval bag of glutinous substance. This was the yolk of the egg from which he came, and it supplied him with sustenance for many days after his birth. Each day the appendage was smaller, each day Redrib himself a little more developed and a little livelier, so that when the natural food-supply gave out he was quite well able to pick up morsels of food for himself.

Hatched in the sandy pool, along with the thousands of tiny trout, were two veritable fiends of destruction in the hideous form of the larvæ of dragon-flies. Behind a pebble one of these would crouch with tail erect like a scorpion, and when a baby trout drifted near, it pounced upon him and drained his life-blood till only the empty skin remained. At the end of a week there were dozens of empty skins washed up on the sandy shore. But one morning one of the larvæ made the mistake of striking at the bill of a drinking grouse, and was promptly hoisted ashore, while on the same happy day the other was snatched up by a dipper prospecting among the pebbles on the bed of the burn.

In a fortnight the lassitude of their extreme infancy had left most of the young trout, and though they still spent the bulk of their time resting on the gravel-bed, they were capable of yard-long darts which served to circumvent the miller's-thumb and most of the deadly insect-life. Then came a heavy rainstorm, which swelled the burn bank-high and entirely altered the bed of it. Many of the tiny trout were swept away, many more were buried alive, and little Redrib, borne on by the tide, narrowly escaped a hundred different fates ere finally he came to rest in the deep dam of the water-trap. Vast number of his brothers and sisters were drawn over the weir into the underground culverts which supplied a throbbing city, forty miles from this wild region, but of these some might live, to become white, wall-eyed trout, existing underground in the

black, silent passages, perhaps for many years to come.

Redrib grew quickly, and by the end of June he was a perfect little brook trout, even to the red and black spots and the lustrous golden eyes. He would hang in the current under his favourite alder-bush with quivering tail and vibrating fins, pouncing upon any atom of food with the fury of a shark. Often he had colossal struggles with drifting worms larger than himself, and he would rise a dozen times at the same gauzy-winged Mayfly, till finally he wrecked it by a dexterous flip of the tail, when he and his nursery mates would tear it limb from limb.

Redrib was a born wanderer, but all his wandering tended in a down-stream direction, so that by this time he was a mile below the sandy pool, at a point where the bent allotments joined the heather of the greater heights. He knew nothing of the world without—how the air was filled with the wild calling of mother-curlews, mother-redshanks, and a thousand other anxious mothers of earth and air. His world—the world of that tiny stream—was one complete in itself, and for everything of the world of earth and air without there existed here an exact counterpart. The stream, too, had its hawks in the form of weird insects gliding above. True, they belonged to the surface, to the realms of air, but many of them could dive at an instant's warning and snatch their prey from the bed of the pool. The stream, too, had its stoats and weasels, which skulked among the shadows, ready to pounce upon the unwary. Then there was a vast assortment of minor life, much of which was leaving the water at this season, to creep up the grass-blades, and there assume forms more wonderful and startling, leaving behind the empty husks of aquatic days.

II.

August brought a long drought, and the tiny brook dried up to the merest trickle. Soon even the trickle ceased, and there remained only a pool here and there, filled with the brightest, clearest crystal that ever percolated through a gravel-bed. In one of these pools, not more than three yards long and two yards wide, Redrib was land-locked with a hundred of his friends, and—worst of all—a last year's trout, eight inches in length. They were in little danger of starvation, for flies were plentiful, but the unnatural condition of things brought about many a real menace in other ways. To begin with, the last year's trout turned cannibal, and hid in a shadowy nook, which he never left except to dart upon some unwary mite that drifted by. He would doubtless have accounted for all of them had not two wild-cats, the sole survivors of their kind in the district, taken to haunting the burn at this period. One day they appeared on the bank, glowering down into the water with vicious yellow eyes. The little trout knew instinctively that the felines were dangerous, and Redrib, wise in his generation, immediately hid under a pebble and 'nuffin' said.

One of the cats crouched at the narrow neck of the pool, while the other walked along the bank, and drove the frightened fish under the very nose of his waiting accomplice. The yearling's nerves gave out, and he darted from his hiding, to be scooped into the air by one lightning sweep of the crouching feline's forepaw. Three other trout were caught ere the cats left the pool—two of them being grovelled from under the bank by the groping forepaws of the fur-clad anglers.

Some of the little trout died of fright after this adventure; several more were swallowed by a kingfisher; and the owls which, like the cats, had taken to hunting the burn as its waters dwindled away accounted for so many of Redrib's friends that ere, finally, the rains came there were scarcely a dozen of them left. It is thus that nature's whole balance is upset when man steps in; for ages past the trout had deposited their spawn in this burn, and so long as there was water enough in winter for the spawning fish to reach their recognised 'reds,' they would continue to do so—yes, even though that distant city stole all the summer supply, and left their children stranded in pathetic little ridges among the pebbles.

At length, with the veering of the wind, there came a mighty flood, and Redrib, now strong enough to battle with it, swept joyously down-stream, feasting as he went, till he reached a still, shallow stretch of water with a bed of silver sand. In this loch were flashing multitudes of little trout—not one of them more than eight inches in length. It was the nursery of the spawning brook, for, being only two acres in area and nowhere more than three feet in depth, it offered no attraction for larger fish. So here Redrib rested a while, feasting and splashing with his fellows, and nowhere in all the world was a merrier, safer nursery than the loch of silver sand.

III.

The autumn faded by, the water became icy cold, and Redrib spent most of his time under a flat boulder, not exactly hibernating, but somewhat torpid. This was part of nature's scheme of protection, for now there began to appear many adult trout, all voyaging up into the hills as Redrib's mother had voyaged the year before. Many of them were mammoth fellows—black, gaping leviathans; and though all were obsessed with the desire to travel, the old bulls would have played sad havoc in Silver Loch but for this period of winter torpor which caused the tiny fish to hide.

When April came Redrib was a fine yearling trout of seven inches in length, and now, with the desire to travel once more upon him, he threw

in his lot with a devil-may-care band of youngsters at the tail-end of the adult procession passing down-stream. So Silver Loch was left, and down over many a sparkling weir, across many a deep and shadowy pool, Redrib and his mates splashed their scintillating way. In one of the pools he had a narrow escape, for suddenly from the depths below there rose a strange, waving shape. Straight at the little trout it came, a hideous, writhing, serpent form; but, luckily for Redrib, he kept his head and did not attempt to aspire to the heights of a flying-fish. He darted to left and right like a startled snipe; but the little fellow nearest him, who made for the surface and jumped, fell back into the jaws of the eel, and there his history ended. Thereafter Redrib knew that when travelling strange waters it is best to keep to the edge and avoid the shadowy depths.

Another month of idle travelling brought little Redrid to yet another loch—this time a noble sheet of water of profound depth. The name of the loch is Colgart, and on its mighty rocky shores the peregrine and the buzzard have their nests, hidden from the four winds by nature's towering buttresses. Dangers enough had beset Redrib's voyagings hitherto, but they were as nothing to the dangers that existed here. Here he could never have survived his helpless infancy, and thus we see the wisdom of the guiding hand which takes the mother-trout away into the tiny springs to lay her eggs, where the little ones will be safe at any rate from the greatest of their foes—their own kind!

Redrib arrived in Colgart just in time for the Mayfly hatch, and during the days that followed the surface of the loch was literally brown with gauzy-winged life. All day Redrib, with armies of his fellows, rose and splashed along the shallow margins, gorging to repletion, then wrecking flies for the fun of the thing. Redrib grew at an alarming speed, and his dashing energy would have been bewildering to watch. He took an immense joy in being alive, and very often he tried his strength with his fellows. One of these fights resulted in himself and another fish of the same size getting their jaws interlocked, and thus they struggled till the other fish, the weaker of the two, became limp and unresisting. Then Redrib struggled hard to swallow him. Of course, it was impossible, since they were both the same size, but for ten minutes Redrib persisted, till the other fish was torn and bleeding; and this incident, brought about by a contest for the possession of an insect turned from under a pebble, had the effect of influencing the whole of Redrib's future career.

Though the small fish kept to the shallow water of the loch-margin, the night was a veritable horror to them, for with the coming of darkness there rose from the shadowy depths many a big black form, to feed upon the narrow shelves. More than once a movement in the water warned Redrib to skedaddle for his life, and glancing round as he darted off, he would see a pair of mighty gaping jaws with hooked teeth pursuing him—see two savage golden eyes of horrifying size sweeping towards him through the blackness. Once he was driven ashore by one of these giants of his own kind, and there this story would have ended had not a friend once more appeared in the disguise of a mortal foe. Redrib was drifting idly when his mammoth relative rushed at him from the depths, and Redrib, having cleverly dodged, made, as usual, for the shallow water, where the big fish would be at a disadvantage he himself would not share. But the cannibal trout persisted, rushing along with tremendous noise, his broad back out of the water, till Redrib, darting and dodging, found himself suddenly high and dry on the gravel-bank. And there he struggled and gasped, while his adversary lingered not a foot away watching him fiendishly. Another kick and Redrib would have been between those awful jaws, but at that very instant the gray post standing near suddenly transformed itself into a bird. Two big gray wings wafted the air, and with one sedate and ungainly hop the heron reached the spot. A lightning stab of the bayonet bill, and the big fish, impaled through the eyes, was dragged and jerked up the gravel-bank, leaving behind a streak of crimson on the crystal flood. And while the heron strove to swallow the mammoth of the depths, good luck and gravity, rather than sound judgment, took Redrib back to his natural element.

Other narrow escapes Redrib underwent ere the cold and leaden touch of winter settled upon the mighty loch. Once one of the party of cormorants which had their stronghold on the lonely island in the centre of the loch pursued him hither and thither till his breath gave out, and it was only because a perch, no longer than himself, but a good deal heavier, dashed out to swallow him, and itself got swallowed, that he managed to escape.

But Redrib's enemies became fewer and fewer as he himself grew. Once he fed with gusto on the larva of a dragon-fly of the kind he once had dreaded, and now he found that when he erected his dorsal fin and opened wide his jaws the smaller fish fled from him towards the shallow water. He no longer frequented the extreme edge, but moved with the medium weights between the sunny shallows and the murky depths; but it is to be feared that very often now he voyaged shorewards, and returned a few seconds later with a little pink tail showing between his jaws.

IV.

That winter Redrib mated with a female trout of his own size and age, though she was smaller in the head and more rotund of figure.

Together they journeyed up the burn to Silver Loch, sometimes struggling for hours till completely exhausted to mount a rocky shelf, but always in the end their efforts succeeded. On and up they voyaged, obsessed by the one desire to gain some distant point, and though it is not to be expected that Redrib should recognise the place, their voyagings at length ceased in the very pool where he was born.

Here the female trout got busy making her nest, which she did by nosing away the gravel in a long groove running lengthwise with the stream. In this groove she laid her eggs, covering them with sand by the movement of her big underfins; while Redrib helped at intervals by nosing the piled-up ridge back into place. The fertile eggs were sticky, and stuck to the end of the pool; the infertile ones drifted away so as not to foul the bed. When the whole batch was safely harboured the adult trout turned down-stream again, their parental duties faithfully and fully accomplished.

At Silver Loch Redrib dallied for a while, and the criminal tendency which had showed evidence at so early an age now rapidly developed. He was fiendishly hungry, and for days he wrought the most appalling havoc among the small fry of the nursery loch. Early spring found him still there, a wolf in the sheepfold; and when, finally, he decided to proceed on his leisurely way, he found the exit of the loch so shallow that he decided not to trouble. And so he remained in the nursery loch till a heavy spate in late summer fairly carried him out, and down to Colgart Loch he went.

If any further influence had been needed for the framing of Redrib's future, that period in the nursery loch decided it. All trout are cannibals more or less, but the trout that settles down to live exclusively on its own kind soon comes to bear, in every line of its being, the brand of the cannibal. That summer Redrib's head and mouth grew enormously. True, he put on weight all round, but the development of his upper parts was out of all proportion. He took to hiding in the deep waters, seldom stirring during the day, and at night ranging the shallow shelves like a frenzied tiger. The result was that the gold and silver left his flanks, which partook of the murky gloom of the greater depths. No longer a creature of the sunshine, no longer a joyous nerve of life in the dancing, sparkling spray, we leave him now for a while to the sombre depths in which so many of the mysteries of his life were hidden.

V.

Few wild creatures, whether of earth or air or water, die by the natural course where they have lived. Sooner or later, when their prime is past, there comes the call to wander off; and twelve years after the day that a tiny bright-eyed brook trout glanced and flashed from the loch of silver sand towards the great world of the lower loch, a mammoth black trout sallied forth from the depths of Colgart on a last fierce voyage of discovery. Men would have told you that this creature was of the black loch species, and had you said, 'This is a common brook trout,' few would have agreed.

Redrib was now an eight-pound fish, but had he been perfectly proportioned he might have scaled twenty. His head and his fins were huge; his tail would have been huge but that the lower half was worn away by constant contact with the sand. Down from the loch to the river he went, travelling once more through sparkling, flashing water—down, and still down, amidst drifting blossoms, till the hills were left behind and green meadows spanned the valley. More than one angler he encountered *en route*, leaving them gaping at their tackle, himself hardly aware that a hitch had occurred. So in due course the meadows too were left, and the river wormed its dark and oily course between the gray walls of a city.

A row of little urchins sat with dangling legs at the quayside fishing for the swarms of minnows invisible in the depths below. One of them, more ragged even than the rest, with a willow wand for a rod and a length of string for a line, suddenly scrambled to his feet with a frightened shout, clinging to his primitive tackle for dear life.

Redrib had seen the swarm of little fish drawn by the common attraction of the line of baits, and had dashed into their midst out of sheer ferocity. All of them scattered but one, which was in the embarrassing predicament of having just swallowed the urchin's bait, and him Redrib swallowed with a snapping and a worrying of mighty jaws.

By some whimsicality of fate, there was no flaw in that urchin's tackle. The string was sound; the knots were good; the small-eyed hook refused to snap. Steadily, remorselessly, Redrib was drawn to the top, lashing the water into foam, and two loitering bargemen lent a willing hand in sealing his ignominious fate.

Thus, washed up with the dregs of the human city, filtered with the driftwood to the outside edge of the loch of men and women, he who had been great among the small, a despot of the depths, fell to the smallest and least, the humblest of all human anglers. But about the silver bed of a lonely little loch, away back in the hills, there sported a new generation of yearling trout, each weaving its own life-history, a fabric of bright and scintillating shades—in the making of which the turning of a pebble, like the breaking of a thread, might decide the texture for good or ill, a thing of coarseness or of beauty incomparable.

THE 'JOLLIES'—A REUNITED AND HAPPY FAMILY.

By Lord Teignmouth.

THE Admiralty have announced the approaching amalgamation of the two Royal Marine corps. Thus, after an independent existence of rather more than a century, the Marine Artillery, or 'Blue Marines,' are to be absorbed into the parent stem from which they originally sprang. The measure has been long overdue. But sentiment has always intervened, and it needed the Great War to supply the necessary impulse.

The fact of there being two distinct corps of Royal Marines will doubtless come as a surprise to many civilians. And as the divorce arose out of a situation which reflected very little credit on the naval service of the period—in connection with an episode that has slipped out of recollection, even in the navy—it may be well to recall the facts.

And first it must be explained that throughout the entire period of our last great war (the Napoleonic struggle, 1793–1815) there was no established system of gunnery instruction in the British Navy. Every ship was left to its own devices in this vitally important matter, with the inevitable result that in many instances the science and the practice of gunnery were shamefully neglected. The principle on which most captains fought an action was to lay their ship alongside the enemy—within 'close pistol-shot,' so that their gunners 'could see the whites of the enemy's eyes,' and thus could not fail of hitting the target.

This was all very well, provided the enemy could be brought to 'close action;' but there were occasions on which this lack of training proved disastrous. Let the following two examples suffice.

In the year 1794 a squadron was ordered to capture the town of San Fiorenzo, in the north of Corsica. It was necessary first of all, however, to destroy a tower, at the entrance to the bay, commanding the anchorage. The tower mounted only three guns—one twenty-four-pounder and two eighteen-pounders, garrisoned by thirty-three French soldiers under command of Ensign Thomas le Telier—not a very formidable work for a British squadron comprising line-of-battle ships to tackle. To make sure of the business, however, troops and guns were landed in order to bring their fire to bear from a height, and arrangements were completed for a joint-attack by land and sea the following morning.

The naval attack was entrusted to the *Fortitude* (seventy-four guns, Captain W. Young) and the *Juno* (forty-two guns, Captain Samuel Hood), which vessels, after keeping up an unremitting fire on the tower for two and a half hours at fairly close range, without making any visible impression on the work, drew off out of gun-shot, the *Fortitude* with her mainmast badly wounded, many of her shrouds cut away, three of her guns dismounted, many shots in her hull, on fire from a red-hot shot sticking in her side, and with a loss of six killed and fifty-six wounded. The *Juno* escaped with trivial damage and no loss of life.

The fire from the height had been equally ineffective; and it was not until heavier guns had been brought to bear from the same spot, and red-hot shot poured on to the devoted garrison—by which means the bass-junk lining of the parapet was set on fire—that these brave and skilful gunners, only two of whom were wounded, were forced to surrender.

Most justly does our latest naval historian refer to the exploit of these gallant Frenchmen, who, with three guns, beat off a naval force of 1000 men and 118 guns, as 'a really magnificent defence.'

Two years later, on the final abandonment of San Fiorenzo, an equally discreditable exhibition of British naval marksmanship was afforded. While the last of the stores were being removed from the beach, hostile 'snipers' kept up a constant fire on the boats. 'One man, with peculiar audacity and firmness,' wrote an eye-witness, 'took possession of a point of rock within musket-shot of the *St George* (ninety-eight guns), and continued firing at her, undaunted by the fire of several guns directed upon him from some of the line-of-battle ships; until, having, as was supposed, expended his ammunition, he rose and walked deliberately away.'

British gunnery must have been a standing joke in Corsica for long afterwards. And the surprising part of the business was the utter inability of those concerned in these shameful exhibitions to learn the lesson conveyed: an inability destined to bear most bitter fruit later on, when our ships encountered the highly trained gunners of the United States.

Lord St Vincent—Captain Jervis, as he then was—in reporting, two years later, the destruction of the tower to the officer who suffered such a discreditable defeat at the hands of its garrison, wrote, 'I have the satisfaction to acquaint you that the Martello Tower is reduced to a heap of fragments;' and wound up with an allusion to 'the spirited attack you made upon it in the *Fortitude*,' as if that was something to be proud of, instead of very much the reverse.

One result of this indifference to the art of gunnery was that when the bombardment of Calais, Boulogne, and other French ports was undertaken in 1804, soldier artillerymen, under their own officers, had to be embarked to work

the mortars. Now, the tars of those days had the most supreme contempt for landsmen, and especially for soldiers, whom they would refer to as 'having nothing to do but pipeclay their breeches.' And as the artillery officers were young and high-spirited, they resented this affected contempt, and quite naturally objected to being under naval discipline, being often commanded by naval officers much younger than themselves, with the result that there were constant bickerings. It was this friction that drew from Lord Nelson the plaint: 'There is no real happiness in this world. With all content and smiles around me, up start these artillery-boys—I understand they are not above that age—and set us all at defiance. It would be better for the navy to have its own corps of artillery.'

The outcome of the trouble was the establishment of the Royal Marine Artillery, a body of skilled gunners obtained by selecting intelligent men from the Marines and passing them through a special course of gunnery training. Following the custom of the army, the men were eventually clothed in blue and organised as a distinct corps—and admirable service they have rendered ever since. The finest eulogium ever earned by a body of fighting-men was that accorded to a battalion of the newly organised Marine Artillery serving under Colonel Charles Napier, the future conqueror of Scinde, at the sack of Little Hampton during the war with the United States. 'Never in my life have I met soldiers like the Marine Artillery,' he wrote; 'we suffered much from fatigue and hardship, but never was seen anything not admirable in these glorious soldiers. Should my life extend to antediluvian years, their conduct at Little Hampton will not be forgotten by me.'

The particular circumstances which called this splendid corps into being have long passed away, however. Gunnery is now recognised as the *raison d'être* of the navy. The existence, therefore, of a special corps of artillerists is not only an anachronism, but an implied slur on the naval service. The proposed amalgamation has not even the merit of novelty. As long ago as 1841 Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton wrote: 'The custom of making a practical gunner of every man in the ship by the system so happily pursued on board the *Excellent* has rendered this distinct branch of the Royal Marines unnecessary.' No one, therefore, can accuse the Admiralty of undue haste in effecting this reform.

The sequel to the 'Battle of the Tower' in Corsica was a singular one. So deeply impressed was Lord St Vincent with the defensive properties of what he termed 'this powerful, though simple fortification,' that he caused a model of it to be made and presented to Lord Cornwallis, together with the expression of a hope that he might 'see such works erected on every part of the coast of England likely for an enemy to make a descent on.' The suggestion took shape early the following century, at the time of the 'Invasion Scare,' when a line of Martello Towers was erected along the south-east coast; and very useful they proved—after the war!—as barracks for the men of the Coast Blockade service, a force established for the prevention of smuggling.

The coincidence is not a little singular, though it has escaped notice, that Napoleon, 'The Scourge of Europe,' and the towers erected to keep him out of England, both originated in the island of Corsica.

The origin of the word 'Martello' has been variously assigned in our gazetteers and works of reference. There is, however, no real mystery about it. Old French maps of Corsica give the name of the tower as 'Torre Mortella'—so called from its proximity to Mortella Point. Now, as *mortella* signifies 'myrtle' in Italian, one naturally concludes that the promontory obtained its designation from the abundance of myrtle growing around. Our name, Martello, is simply an English corruption of Mortella, which came into vogue amongst the naval officers employed in Corsica—*vide* Lord St Vincent's letter. The only connection the tower can claim with a 'hammer' (the meaning of the Italian word *martello*) is the terrific hammering its garrison administered to a British seventy-four-gun ship in 1794. It would have been a chivalrous act on the part of the British Navy to have allowed the tower to remain intact as a memorial of a really astonishing feat of arms on the part of a small French garrison. It would have been a still more graceful act to have engraved thereon the words that adorn our own noble structure of St Paul's: '*Si Monumentum requiris, circumspice.*'

PASTORAL REMINISCENCES.

By Sir George Douglas, Bart.

RECLINING high up on the steep slopes of Cocklaw, and glancing through warm dreamy atmosphere across the valley, I caught the sound of laughter and of shrieks, of bleating sheep and barking dogs. It was the shearers' dinner-hour at Kelsocleuch, and looking down upon the distant farm-buildings, I could make out the shearing-pen, the huddled unshorn sheep, even the 'teats of 'oo;' but not a human form was to be seen. All had withdrawn out of the heat. And the shrieks I heard, be it said, were uttered in the female register, subdued by distance, and were by no means those of genuine distress. So, as of old, in the days of Virgil and

Theocritus, there was daffin' and rude courtship by the sheepfolds.

The atmosphere, I have already said, was dim with mist—a pearly heat-haze, as of milk clouding clear water; so that dimness of vision, mixing with the drowsiness of summer noontide, came at last to engender dreams—that is, recollections; for are not these the old man's dreams?

I was once more a boy of eleven years—a schoolboy spending, not his holidays, but (ever so much better!) his term-time away from school. For, my elder brother having developed scarlet-fever during the vacation, the schoolmaster would have none of me; and so, to have me out of the way throughout the infectious desquamation period, I had been packed off into the hill-country and boarded with a shepherd's family. From my point of view this arrangement was ideal. In the first place, it carried with it all the privileges of illness without any of its penalties. In the second place, it meant being 'on one's own,' for the first time in one's life. And though the hill-country was not altogether new to me, the hill-life was entirely so. Can you wonder, then, that my six weeks of shepherd-life remain ever memorable? My host was a fine specimen of the Scottish Border shepherd—a noted wrestler, who in youth had thrown Noble Ewebank, the Westmorland champion. For my father's sake, he and his wife and family treated me, if not 'like a prince,' at least with a kindly courtesy such as I have never seen surpassed. As for me, I was, if anything, rather over-conscious that I owed it to myself to make a good impression. And if I did upon occasion presume to give myself some few airs, I sincerely trust and believe that these were foolish rather than aggressive. It was scarcely in my nature to throw myself actively into all that went on around me; rather was I an interested onlooker, drinking things in. And as, even in those conservative pastoral districts, the features of life have greatly changed since then, I trust that a few reminiscences gleaned at that time may be found not quite wanting in interest.

My constitution was exceptionally susceptible to impressions of the weird, and I shall never quite forget an impression I received one night, when the members of the shepherd's household were comfortably seated round the fire, the males reading, the women stitching. All at once, from without the circle and behind the shepherd's wife's chair, there spoke a voice which was not one of our voices, and, looking up, I saw a figure which was not one of ourselves. It appeared to have started up from nowhere, and must, as a matter of fact, have come noiselessly into the room, which, in a house where there were several dogs, was an unprecedented occurrence. The figure was that of a tall and fine-looking man—fine-looking, that is, in so far as any man can be whose eye has no 'speculation' in it. I saw at a glance that he was not as the rest of us were.

The single word he had uttered had been the harmless inquiry, 'Shirt-making?' which he addressed to the shepherdess—thus constituting himself one of the company without even going to the expense of a preliminary salutation. And as no one, excepting myself, showed the slightest astonishment at his intrusion, I at once regained my composure. The intruder, as I afterwards learned, was a half-witted wastrel, known as Daft Wull, whose life was spent in wandering through a wide segment of that country-side. Except when provoked, he was inoffensive, so that the kindly inhabitants of the district were content to treat him, as I have seen idiots treated in Roman Catholic countries, as a sort of God's Deputy. So Daft Wull never wanted for a meal or a night's lodging, and it was noted that the wise sheep-dogs never bayed his arrival. Long afterwards I heard that he had disappeared as mysteriously as he had come; for none of us had ever known his origin. It may be that he found burial in the shifting gravel-bed of some raging hill-stream; for, had he perished in a snowdrift, his bones must eventually have come to light. Or it may be that an unidentified body, cast away on Bewcastle Waste, was that of poor Daft Wull. Only once had I seen him roused. It was at the 'sheep-bathing,' when shepherds are employed in shedding their sheeps' wool, whilst an assistant, bearing a bottle fitted with quills at either end, pours an insecticide solution along the parting thus made. One of the young herds had 'yoked upon' Wull, and Wull could not stand it. He just lifted the full-grown lad with one hand, and chucked him, without a word spoken, over the half-door of the shearing-house. It was a trifling specimen of what he could do when occasion called on him, and it had no doubt its due effect.

It is said that the Scottish peasant inclines to associate all striking features of the landscape with the Devil, and, sure enough, a jutting boulder not far from Kelsocleuch was known as Split-the-Deil. But in this case the association was not with the authentic Prince of Darkness, but merely with a local character who had earned the nickname of 'The Deil.' The rock rose from the side of a blind road, and one winter's day, when it was crusted over with frozen snow, 'The Deil' was approaching it on horseback, in the teeth of a bitter wind, bearing a heavy load of hay. And, beneath that hay, it was shrewdly suspected that he had smuggled goods concealed. As he drew near, the wind snatched a wedge of ice from the rock and dashed it in his face, splitting the nose. As his offence was one against the laws of contraband only, I imagine that the community would be too large-minded to view his misadventure as a 'judgment.' It served the purpose, however, of giving the rock

a name which has stuck to it ever since; whilst, for ourselves, the reminiscence carries us back at least a century, into days when Free Trade bore a significance other than that which Cobden gave it.

The summer I am speaking of was one of memorable drought. If I remember right, there were two such in succession, and I believe there has been nothing to equal them in this respect until the summer of 1919, just half-a-century later. The hillside pastures burned, and the pools upon the Cheviot plateau shrank. And thereby hangs a tale, for many sheep, accustomed to drink there, got entangled in the peaty mud of the recently uncovered shore, and failing to extricate themselves, became submerged, or perished from starvation. Indeed, I well remember that on the day when we ascended to the summit of High Cheviot, we found more than one drowned carcass adding its touch of grimness to the austerity of the landscape, whilst rams' skulls, such as I afterwards learnt to associate with Rome, were in evidence to right and left. But, though the earth around us might be ugly, the atmosphere of that particular day was of especial beauty. The sky was pure, a light brisk air had made our ascent easy, and when we came to look down from the east end of the mountain-top, it seemed that the far-off surf-line of the North Sea lay almost vertically beneath us. Well, the unprecedented danger now being incurred by the sheep served to bring out a fine trait of devotion in one of the herds. He was an athletic youth, by name Bob Robson, who, on making his rounds one morning, found a ewe deeply bogged in the slough, and on the point of perishing. He made up his mind to save her. So, having stripped himself to the skin, he made a loop in a strong-grown tuft of heather, passed the crook of his shepherd's-staff through it, and keeping hold of the staff, plunged into the mud. He had soon grasped the bleating ewe with his disengaged arm, but the mud beneath his feet was bottomless, and had engulfed him breast-high ere he succeeded in dragging her ashore. After watching her recovery, it occurred to him that he was naked, and caked in peat-soil up to the nipples. So he set off to race across Cheviot-head towards the clear waters of the Mereburn, therein to wash himself clean. And now a ludicrous situation developed; for, though you may visit the Cheviot plateau a hundred times and find it vacant of human occupants, it so happened that a brilliant young Oxford student, who was at that time acting as tutor in a neighbouring family, had chosen that morning for climbing the hill to see the sunrise. He caught sight of Bob, was immensely impressed, and went home to write a letter to the London press, describing the singular survival of primeval usages in certain outlying districts of Northumberland—where to this day the natives may be found dispensing with clothes, and smearing their skins with a substitute for woad. Such, at least, is the tale as it was told to me. But let me add that, though I vouch for the truth of the first part, I am inclined to suspect the second part to have originated in the teeming brain of my friend Tom Crosby, a noted *farceur*, and to have been by him designed as a hit at a certain passage in Macaulay's *History*, in which the too credulous historian has described the savages of the Upper Tyne in the early days of the eighteenth century. Let future historians balance the evidence in the one case and the other.

The waters of the river Kale abound in eels, and a favourite night-ploy of the local herds at that time was the sport known as eel-shearing. It is quite distinct from eel-spearing, and consists in luring the eels to the surface by means of a flare, and then gripping them between the roughened points of a species of lazy-tongs manufactured by the Hownam blacksmith. In this manner whole sackfuls of the fish would sometimes be taken between the darkening of a Saturday night and the dawn of the next morning; and, as the eel is a shrewd biter, it is worth mentioning that he sometimes gave as good as he got. Being regarded as one in whose system the seeds of fever might be lurking undeveloped, like a foe in ambush, and who must, therefore, be guarded from wet feet and night-air, I was forbidden to take part in this pastime. But darkness and the motley throng of straggling sportsmen made it easy to evade observation, and when at last I did come face to face with my temporary guardian, it might be assumed that the mischief (if any) was already done, and that interference would now be too late. As this was one of the sports in which girls occasionally took part, romantic convention requires that I should have fallen over head and ears, not indeed into a pool in Kale, but in love. But though the setting moon shone on a scene of bewildering loveliness, and the girls were pretty and friendly, I distinctly recall the great efforts I made to avoid them, and to keep always with the men and the lads.

Nearly opposite Kelsocleuch, on the other side of the valley, there was a small dry-stone enclosure known as the Drovers' Park. Abutting on the Cocklaw hill-track, it was pastured indiscriminately, in terms of an ancient right, by drovers and by tinklers, who brought sheep or horses over the Border. Well, one night, whilst I was still an inmate of the shepherd's house, a company of gipsies, driving horses, took up their quarters in the park. Their arrival instantly attracted us youngsters to the enclosure, and the gipsies were so far friendly as to make some slight use of our assistance in watering horses, collecting fuel, and the like. The alien nomad life was full of interest and fascination for us, and the fine young horses running loose fulfilled the measure of our

delight. But the spirit of mischief still predominated; so that, when the tinkler fires were burning low, Tom Elliot remarked to my host's son, Mark Davidson, what fun it would be to enter the enclosure while the gipsies were asleep, drive off the horses stealthily, and conceal them within the Kelsocleuch stell, or sheepfold. This proposal was quite in the spirit of the old Border reivers, whose blood beat in the veins of all of us, and, of course, it found immediate favour. And so, after a night of eager wakefulness, the gray of morning beheld Mark Davidson steal forth, bearing a feed of corn. Reaching the park, he set the gate wide, unhobbled the gipsy horses, and mounting one of them, led the others to the hillside. As we watched his movements from our distant coign, Kinmont Willie seemed to live again.

But the gipsies were light sleepers. A vague sense of something wrong roused one of them, and in a moment the theft was discovered and the hue-and-cry raised. Mark heard the volley of threatening shouts which was sent after him as soon as he was sighted, but instead of pausing or turning back, he only pushed on faster than before. Then the hillside became alive with gipsy men, women, children, and dogs, all pursuing, or urging the pursuit, whilst Mark ambled gloriously forward, driving the captured steeds before him. Alas! he was a better herd than rough-rider; the ground was uneven, his horse stumbled, and down he fell. Ere he could rise, the leading gipsies had gained on him, and as they were reputed to be very formidable customers, there was a moment when we trembled for his skin. But at this juncture an opportune diversion was effected; for it happened that Jasper Midway, the fat farmer, was bringing a pig over the Border, from Uswayford, by the drove-road. Startled by the unusual disturbance, his pony bolted, and overturning the cart, rolled Jasper and the pig together upon the bents. None of them was hurt; but the pig had regained its liberty, and meant to make the fullest use of it; whilst the farmer had no mind to lose the pig. Accordingly a new and even more absorbing chase began—the little pig darting hither and thither, and the big farmer pounding after it. And so overpoweringly ridiculous was this hunt to look upon that the defrauded gipsies were fain to hold their sides for laughter; and when at last old Jasper had caught his shot by the hind-leg, and had fallen on his corporation in doing so, they were quite ready to forget the trick which had been put upon them, and to fraternise with Mark, or Jasper, or any other body in the little crowd that had gathered round them. For laughter is a potent humaniser, solvent of frets and grudges of all kinds!

MERSEY TERRIERS.

By OSWALD WILDRIDGE, Author of *The Luck-Penny*, &c.

WITH the tide at the half-flood mark, the gates swung slowly back into the lock-pits, and the fleet of tugs made a bolt for the open river, looking for all the world, as Captain Enoch Carron put it, 'like a pack o' terriers'—a frisky, boisterous pack, some of them making a rakish cant as the helm was thrown hard over, and every one tossing up a flurry of creamy foam. Soon, however, the pack ceased to be a pack. Three of the boats sheered away to the north, heading for the spacious freedom of Liverpool Bay; five of them rounded-to by the jetty, and there made fast to await a further call; a couple cut across into the fairway, where they snuggled in by the hull of a Cunarder, which, in spite of her power, would be unable to find her berth in dock without their help; and the rest, having been ordered south, scurried up the river to Birkenhead, to the Sloyne, and to the gates of the ship-canal at Eastham. As for the *Tuskar*, from whose bridge Captain Enoch Carron watched the varied manœuvres, she had been locked-out on river duty all the night, and was now dropping down to the jetty for instructions.

'Just like a pack o' terriers,' Carron repeated, clearly well pleased with the phrase; 'and some of them,' he reflectively added, 'are every bit as queer in their ways. That's one of the things about tugs. Now, take a sight of this squad. Most of 'em look as much alike as a handful of peas; half a mile off a landsman couldn't tell t' other from which—even a lot of deep-sea men wouldn't manage much better, and yet there isn't two of 'em alike. For the folk who live with 'em, they've all got points which make them a bit different in their looks, and if you want to know how much different they are in their ways, you'd better ask their skippers.'

Here he made a turn across the bridge, murmured a call to the mate, who was steering, for 'a bit more starboard,' and then began again: 'That's it—different in their ways. Like you and me and other folk. They've all got manners and customs of their own. You may turn half-a-dozen tugs out of the same yard, all the same length and draught and beam, driven by the same engine-power, built t' the same specifications, and yet some of 'em 'll do things what none of the others will, and the cleverest swab ashore or afloat can't tell the reason why. F'r instance, here's the old *Tuskar*. I'll own she's got a few tricks she'd be better without, but when it comes to answering the bell she's a reg'lar duck. And

as it's time I was getting the way off her, I'll show you, if you'll keep your ears tuned up.' Whereupon he signalled for 'half-speed astern,' and while his hand was yet on the telegraph-lever the deck jarred violently beneath our feet, the hull shivered and groaned, and under the stern the water broke into wild commotion. 'What did I tell you?' the skipper demanded. 'She was going astern before the bell was done speaking. That's how a tug ought t' be, and in a foreign docking commission I'd part with a chunk of her horse-power before I'd part with her obedience. Now, that's the *Tusker*. And yonder, there's the *Tuscan* standing-by that Swedish trag—might be sister-ship t' this one for size and power and general build, but *she* doesn't answer on the dot, not by ever so many seconds, and so she's mostly put on t' third-rate jobs.

'What's that? Ay, ay, I dare say you're right. Mebbe it isn't much of a mystery, one set of engines being a bit slower than another; but then it isn't only engines. Often enough it's the boats themselves, and it's there you run athwart the things you can't explain. Now, there was the *Porcupine*, that I was in ever so many years back. She was an out-an'-out wall-crab. A lot of boats have a fancy for a wall, as I dare say you've found out for yourself, but the *Porcupine* beat the band. Set her against a wall and she'd stick closer than a brother. Simply wouldn't come away. You'd think sometimes you'd have t' go overboard and push her off, and many a time I've thought I was going t' shake all her rivets out before I could get her t' budge. That was the only cranky trick she'd got. Out in the fairway she'd come about like a yacht an' do anything I asked her t' do.

'But I think the rummiest craft I ever handled was the *Dauntless*. She was a grand boat, too. Did some of my biggest deep-sea tows with her. Set her in a seaway and she'd stand up t' the heaviest wind that ever blew; but if you asked her t' come out of dock with a bit of weather on, she'd jib like a horse at a brow. And how d'ye think I used t' manage her?' Here the skipper's face expanded in a magnificent grin. 'Why, I used t' turn her round and back her out. Against a strong wind and tide she'd come through the locks a mighty sight better stern first than head on. Now, it's gospel truth, is that. Don't know why she did it, and I only found it out by accident; but it's the truth. Set her stem on to it and she'd jibe and do everything she shouldn't do; but drive her stern first and she'd manœuvre as easily as though that was the proper way t' go about it. So it's what I'm telling you: they're all different, have all got ways of their own, and you can't show rhyme or reason for it. But here we are at the jetty, and that puts an end t' my preachifying. I'll away t' the office and see what's stirring.'

So far as the captain was concerned, this was indeed the end of what he pleased to call his preachifying, but he had touched the strings of memory, and a host of other happenings came trooping out of the past. There was, for example, the case of the *Titan*, or, better still, that tremendous baptism the Mersey gave me on my day of introduction to its 'pack o' terriers.' Our mission was the docking of a Houston liner in one of the branches of the Queen's Dock, the *Tartar* being told off for service on the bow, and the *Trojan* being given the greater task of hanging on to her stern. From the shelter of the Canada Basin, while a hurricane wind boomed overhead, we watched her go by; and then, side by side, the tugs gave chase, but long before the liner was 'rounded-up' Mistress Mersey had convinced us of her temper. Not that her conduct provoked any sense of resentment. Had the jade but known it, that four-mile run in the teeth of her tantrums made a passage of delirious delight. At no time is there any make-believe in the tug's deportment; she is built for business, and to business she strictly attends. Moreover, heavily engined as she is, she has no taste for fancy work, and so she goes smashing through everything she meets, where other craft might make a show of buoyantly riding across the tops. And because of this we played a lively game upon the bridge; across the canvas dodger we watched for the signs; when the spindrift flung itself over the stem we ducked, and a roistering flume swept over our heads and swirled down upon the deck abaft the engine-room hood. Even if talk had been desired, there was little opportunity, but now and again, as Captain Ned Morrison wiped the water from his eyes, he cracked a joke; and once he begged a word of praise for his boat. 'Takes it bee-u-ti-ful, don't she?' he suggested. And when I asked about her conduct 'outside,' he waxed still more enthusiastic. 'Some tugs are only built for river work, and them I wouldn't cross the bar in,' he said; 'but I'd take the *Tartar* anywhere.' Then he jerked his thumb to starboard where the *Trojan* was pegging alongside. 'But that's the tug for you!' he cried, and it seemed as though a note of envy blended with his praise. 'Did you see about that wreck on the Burbo last month? Well, she's the tug that towed the lifeboat out!'

There we had it—the hall-mark of the two. Aboard his own boat he would trust his life 'anywhere,' but the *Trojan* was the tug of distinction. She had towed the lifeboat out!

THE AFTERMATH.

TRENCHES run o'er plain and hill
From Nieuport to the sea,
Craters grim and many graves
Speak of agonie.
Ruined town and shattered fane
Rise against the sky.
Underneath the circling stars
Echoes whisper, 'Why?'

J. M.

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SEVENTH SERIES

AFTER TRAFALGAR.

By H. W. Household, M.A.

I.

THE story of the Battle of Trafalgar, as it is generally told, closes with the death of Nelson. The immortal tragedy is acted, the hero dies, the curtain falls, and the audience depart. They neither know nor care what happened afterwards; yet there were many happenings of no little interest. Perhaps, if the tale of them is narrated apart from the main story, it will win the hearing which it so seldom gets.

. . . . . .

Storm followed battle. Nelson had seen it coming. There was no mistaking the meaning of the fall in the glass, or of the heavy swell that was rolling in from the westward on the morning of the 21st of October. A great gale was approaching from the Atlantic. The position of the Fleet would be full of danger. The shoals of Trafalgar were close at hand to leeward, and at Cadiz, not far away, sharp watch would be kept for any opportunity of cutting off disabled ships as they drifted shoreward. Masts would be crippled after the fight, and sails and rigging would be shot to pieces on many a ship. It would be safest (if it were possible) to ride out the storm at anchor; so before the battle opened Nelson signalled to the Fleet to 'prepare to anchor after the close of the day.' It was almost his last care as he lay dying. 'Anchor, Hardy; anchor!' he said when Hardy came down to the cockpit to take his last farewell.

'To this,' says the doctor's story, 'the captain replied, "I suppose, my lord, Admiral Collingwood will now take upon himself the direction of affairs?"

'"Not while I live, I hope, Hardy!" cried the dying chief, and at that moment endeavoured ineffectually to raise himself from the bed. "No," added he; "do *you* anchor, Hardy."

'Captain Hardy then said, "Shall *we* make the signal, sir?"

'"Yes," answered his lordship, "for, if I live, I'll anchor."'

But in a few minutes Nelson was dead, and Collingwood was in command. 'Anchor the Fleet! Why, it is the last thing I should have thought of,' said Collingwood to Hardy when he heard from his lips of Nelson's intention; and the signal was never made. Perhaps it was impossible to anchor. 'Few of the ships,' said Collingwood afterwards, 'had an anchor to let go, their cables being shot.'

During the night the wind took pity on the stricken ships, and, shifting southward, let them drift slowly out to sea. On the morrow it was blowing strongly, with heavy squalls from time to time. Before long there was trouble with the prizes. That day the prize crew of *Algésiras* were overpowered by the prisoners. Leaky and dismasted, she had been caught by the storm where a south wind only added to her danger, and was drifting fast towards the shore. The British on board were only fifty, the French 600. Fifty men could not save the ship; 600 might. So the prisoners were allowed to come on deck. They seized their chance. The British, with not unkindly force, were put in confinement. Small jury-masts were quickly rigged and sail was made upon them. With difficulty *Algésiras* was worked off the dangerous coast, and brought into Cadiz. The prize crew were then most honourably released, and sent back on a frigate to rejoin the British Fleet.

The same day *Bucentaure*, Villeneuve's flagship, also mastless, went upon the rocks. By night a gale was blowing from the north-west. *Redoutable*, in tow of *Swiftsure*, 'being actually sinking, hoisted a signal of distress. The latter ship immediately sent her boats, and brought off part of the prize crew and about 120 Frenchmen, which were as many as the boats would contain. At 10.30 P.M., the *Redoutable* being with her stern entirely under water, the *Swiftsure* cut herself clear. At about midnight the wind shifted to north-west and still blew a gale. At 3.30 A.M. on the 23rd, attracted by the cries of the people, the *Swiftsure*, which had wore to the southward, again sent her boats, and, from three rafts which the French crew, amidst a dreadful night of wind, rain, and lightning, constructed from the spars of their sunken ship, saved fifty more of the sufferers, making a total number of 170. . . . Captain Lucas had been previously removed to the *Téméraire*. The remaining survivors of the *Redoutable's* late officers and

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crew, and thirteen of the *Téméraire's* and five of the *Swiftsure's* men perished in her. Other casualties were the consequence of this night's gale. The *Fougueux*, having on board, besides a great portion of her late crew, thirty men belonging to the *Téméraire*, drifted on the rocks . . . and was totally wrecked, with the loss of all on board, except about twenty-five persons.'

During the days that followed, *Berwick*, *L'Aigle*, and *Monarca* shared the fate of *Fougueux*, and the loss of life was heavy. Others Collingwood destroyed at sea, finding it impossible to save them. *Santissima Trinidad* and *Argonauta* were scuttled and sunk; *Intrépide* and *San Agustin* were set fire to. One by one the sea laid claim to Nelson's prizes.

On the morning of the 23rd another danger had threatened. Led by an enterprising captain, five of the ships that had escaped with Admiral Gravina, the second-in-command, put out from Cadiz, with several frigates, for an attempt upon the drifting prizes. *Santa Ana*, Collingwood's great prize, battered and unmanageable, had drifted too far inshore, and the Spaniards cut her off and carried her into Cadiz. *Neptuno*, too, they recaptured, but the fury of the storm was too much for them, and they lost her on the rocks. That was the limit of their success. Collingwood was ready for them. He still had ships enough in fighting trim. These now cast off the prizes or the dismasted British ships that they were towing, and formed a line of battle covering the cripples. The enemy could do no more—no more but pay the price. They had recovered two shattered hulks (one of which was wrecked soon afterwards), but of the five ships that came out from Cadiz, only two returned. The Spanish *Rayo* and *San Francisco de Asis*, with the French *Indomptable*, all ships that had suffered little in the battle, were lost upon the rocks.

Out of the thirty-three French and Spanish ships that had fought at Trafalgar, there now lay in Cadiz only ten. *Santa Ana*, *San Justo*, *San Leandro*, *Principe de Asturias*, and *Montanez* still flew the flag of Spain, and with them were French *Pluton*, *Neptune*, *Algésiras*, *Argonaute*, and *Héros*. Five at least were utter wrecks, shot-torn and battered beyond repair, and not one of all the ten ever saw service at sea again. The French ships were still in Cadiz in 1808 when Spain declared war against Napoleon, and the Spaniards seized them and made prisoners of their crews.

II.

For a few days after the battle four ships that had fought there were still at large upon the sea. Rear-Admiral Dumanoir, in *Formidable*, accompanied by *Duguay-Trouin*, *Mont Blanc*, and *Scipion*, was flying northwards for shelter which he never found. On the evening of the 2nd of November Captain Sir Richard Strachan, with four of the line and four frigates under his command, came upon Dumanoir off Ferrol, and at once gave chase. All that night he followed, and all the next day and the next night. By eleven o'clock on the morning of the 4th, Dumanoir found that he could not escape, and accepted the inevitable battle. By half-past three it was all over, and the four French ships were prizes, with only two masts still standing on the four.

Though of Nelson's prizes, the eighteen that were left upon the field of battle, only French *Swiftsure*, and the Spaniards *Bahama*, *San Ildefonso*, and *San Juan Nepomuceno*, remained in British hands, of the twenty-seven glorious ships of the British Fleet that had fought at Trafalgar not one was lost. By the evening of the 24th, when the gale had somewhat abated, Collingwood, with the best of them, could be seen from Cadiz watching the port as closely as ever. 'It more astonished the Spaniards,' he wrote, 'than the beating they got; and one of them said, when I assured him that none of our ships were lost, "How can we contend with such a people, on whom the utmost violence of the elements has no effect?"'

Courteous and even friendly messages began to pass between the shore and the British Fleet. On the 2nd of November Collingwood tells in a letter how, 'to alleviate the miseries of the wounded as much as in my power, I sent a flag to the Marquis Solana, to offer him his wounded. Nothing can exceed the gratitude expressed by him for this act of humanity; all this part of Spain is in an uproar of praise and thankfulness to the English. Solana sent me a present of a cask of wine; and we have a free intercourse with the shore. Judge of the footing we are on, when I tell you he offered me his hospitals and pledged the Spanish honour for the care and cure of our wounded men. Our officers and men, who were wrecked in some of the prize ships, were most kindly treated: all the country was on the beach to receive them; the priests and women distributing wine, and bread, and fruit amongst them. The soldiers turned out of their barracks to make a lodging for them; whilst their allies, the French, were left to shift for themselves, with a guard over them to prevent their doing mischief.'

A few days later Collingwood was writing to Solana to thank him for a 'present of a cask of most excellent wine.' 'I wish,' he adds, 'I had anything half so good to send to your Excellency: but perhaps an English cheese might be a rarity at Cadiz; and I accordingly take the liberty of begging your Lordship's acceptance of one, and of a cask of porter.' It is good to know that the party which Solana invited to taste these rarities liked them so well that they were finished at a sitting.

Meanwhile the noble Gravina lay dying. There was no bitterness in his heart as he thought upon the genius and the splendid daring of the dead admiral, whose great blow at Trafalgar had dealt to him defeat and death. 'I die happy,' he said as the end drew near. 'I am going to join Nelson, the greatest hero the world has produced.'

III.

It was more than a fortnight before the news of the battle reached England. Not until the 26th was it possible for Collingwood to send off his despatches. On that day the schooner *Pickle* left with them. She reached Falmouth on the evening of the 4th of November, and early in the morning of the 6th the news was known in London. Joy at the great victory was almost swallowed up in sorrow at the death of Nelson. 'Not one individual who felt joy at this victory, so well-timed and so complete,' said Lord Malmesbury, 'but first had an instinctive feeling of sorrow. . . . I never saw so little public joy. The illuminations seemed dim, and as it were half-clouded by the desire of expressing the mixture of contending feelings; every common person in the streets speaking first of their sorrow for him, and then of the victory.' In the Fleet it was the same. The letter from a sailor on *Royal Sovereign*, who wrote home immediately after the battle, lets us see what he and his fellows felt. 'Our dear Admiral Nelson is killed,' he wrote, 'so we have paid pretty sharply for licking 'em. I never set eyes on him, for which I am both sorry and glad; for, to be sure, I should like to have seen him—but then, all the men in our ship who have seen him are such soft toads. They have done nothing but blast their eyes and cry ever since he was killed. God bless you! Chaps that fought like the devil sit down and cry like a wench.'

But even then there were those who counted Nelson happy in the moment of his death, and to-day there are few who would not agree with the noble words which Lady Londonderry wrote from Ireland when she heard the news. 'The sentiment of lamenting the individual more than rejoicing in the victory,' she said, 'shows the humanity and affection of the people of England; but their good sense upon reflection will dwell only on the conquest, because no death at a future moment could have been more glorious. . . . He now begins his immortal career, having nothing left to achieve upon earth, and *bequeathing to the English Fleet a legacy which they alone are able to improve.* Had I been his wife or his mother, I would rather have wept him dead than seen him languish on a less splendid day. In such a death there is no sting, and in such a grave there is everlasting victory.'

In France, Napoleon did his best to prevent his people from learning the true story of the great defeat. After Villeneuve's action with Sir Robert Calder in July, he had made haste to proclaim a victory. The papers were full of the battle. 'Far otherwise was it when the news of the battle of Trafalgar reached Paris. A grave-like silence was imposed: not a word, not a whisper transpired.'

In a manner with which in recent days we have been familiar, Napoleon tried to make France believe that the British had suffered very heavy losses. A few weeks after the battle a semi-official paper was furnished with an imaginary 'extract of a report sent by Vice-Admiral Collingwood to the Admiralty.' It was pretended that Collingwood had told how eight ships, *Royal Sovereign* among them, had been sunk by the French guns. Their very names were given; and of the eight, two had not even been present at the battle. The next thing was to make out that the French losses had been comparatively light, and were due rather to the storm than to the genius of Nelson and the prowess of the British Fleet. In a speech delivered in the following March, Napoleon told how the 'storm occasioned to us the loss of a few ships, after a battle imprudently fought.'

So Villeneuve was to share the blame with the storm. Poor Villeneuve! He had been bold, but he had not been wise! Yet Napoleon's orders had been very plain. 'Our intention,' he had said, 'is that wherever you meet the enemy in inferior force you will attack them without hesitation.' He would not even let the admiral choose his moment. Everything, he was told, 'depends . . . on the promptness of your leaving Cadiz.' Villeneuve knew well enough that he was sailing to defeat and ruin. If the battle was imprudently fought, the imprudence was Napoleon's. It was he who threw away the Fleet. But Napoleon was not going to bear the blame. That is not the way of emperors. He would fix it on the unhappy admiral. Villeneuve never expected anything else. He knew that he would find no mercy. Early in April 1806 he was released on parole, and returned to France; but he could not face the emperor. He shrank from the brutal and dishonouring injustice that would be his lot. Rather would he die. And so it was. A few days after he had landed he was found dead in his bed, stabbed by his own hand.

Three months earlier Nelson, with stately ceremony, had been borne to his last resting-place in St Paul's Cathedral. The Prince of Wales and his six brothers went before the coffin; Sir Peter Parker, Admiral of the Fleet and one of Nelson's oldest friends, followed it as chief mourner. Thirty admirals and a hundred captains were there to bear him company. In the crypt under the centre of the great dome of St Paul's they laid Nelson, and there he lies

to-day. 'His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth for evermore.' Like Drake, in very truth he remains an undying guardian of his country's liberty and honour, for the tradition which he created, and the imperishable story of his peerless deeds, inspire still, and will always inspire, the fleets of Britain for their task.

THE BROWN NABOB'S MONEY.

CHAPTER II.—TRANSFORMATION.

HALF-AN-HOUR later—the time being then close upon five o'clock—Bellamy emerged from Friargate House, crossed the street, and walked into the lower room at Petherfield's. The office-boy, who was copying a letter, turned from the press and regarded him as he might have regarded a hardened criminal who was just about to be placed in the dock; and Herbert Judd, Bellamy's fellow-clerk, came hurrying up with a warning look and a whisper.

'Petherfield's in no end of a wax, old man!' he said. 'You've been out nearly two hours. Better clear out for another ten minutes till he's gone home, and face him to-morrow. It's impossible to get that job done to-night now—nobody but you knew where all the papers were. Cut off till he's hooked it!'

'No!' retorted Bellamy. 'I'm going up to him. The fact is, Bert, I—I want to see him.'

He moved towards the stairs, and his fellow-clerk looked at him inquisitively.

'Anything happened, old man?' he inquired half doubtfully

'All right,' said Bellamy. 'Quite all right, Bert. I—I'll tell you—later. I—but, yes, later—later!'

He went slowly upstairs, knocked at Petherfield's door, and entered, with his usual softness of step and timidity of demeanour. He had been Petherfield's slave for ten long years, and it was impossible to realise that he was now his own master.

Petherfield stood on his hearthrug, his back to the fire, a cigarette between his lips. He was a biggish, fattish man, who looked much more like an actor than a solicitor, and was secretly proud of the suggestion; a good-looking man, too, with a consciousness of the fact. But his eyes were set somewhat too close together, and his nose came to rather too much of a point, and his mobile lips were inclined to sneer. They were sneering now, and Bellamy knew that when he sneered Petherfield was more dangerous and more vexed than when he stormed.

'Pity you should trouble to come back, Denton!' said Petherfield in bland accents that were almost oily. 'An hour or two makes no difference, of course! My time's yours, you know—also of course. Pray go back to whence you came, Denton, if——'

Bellamy then did two things that he had never done in his life before. He interrupted Petherfield with a word and a look—that was one; he sat down in Petherfield's presence, uninvited—that was the other.

'Wait!' said Bellamy. He lifted a hand and smoothed his red hair with a gesture which showed that he was confused. 'I—the fact is, Mr Petherfield,' he went on while his master stood gaping at him, 'I couldn't come sooner—Mr Haddlesey made me stop, sir. I've come to tell you, Mr Petherfield—something's happened.'

'Yes!' said Petherfield. 'Something has happened, my good friend—we've lost the five o'clock post for those papers! That's what's'——

'Not that,' interrupted Bellamy. 'At least—I'll get those papers off, sir, by the six—extra stamp, Mr Petherfield. All right. But—Mr Farmadale, sir, to whose funeral I've been'——

Petherfield took his cigarette from his lips, threw it away, and selected a new one from a box on the mantelpiece.

'Well?' he said.

Bellamy heaved a deep sigh.

'Left me all his money, sir,' he answered. 'All—his—money! All!'

Petherfield let the cigarette drop and turned sharply on his clerk.

'What!' he exclaimed. 'You? All his money? God bless my life and soul! Why—what's it come to?'

'That's just it!' muttered Bellamy in an awe-struck whisper. 'I feel as if—as if I was dreaming—it's awful. A hundred and sixty thousand, sir—just about!'

Petherfield jumped in every fibre of his fleshy frame. 'No!' he shouted. 'A hundred and sixty thousand! Who said so?'

Bellamy nodded wearily at the wall behind his master—the bank lay beyond that wall. 'Mr Shillito has it,' he answered. 'He reckoned it up. He's got everything—title-deeds, railway shares, stock—all sorts—and all of it. First-rate gilt-edged securities, he said. He totted up the value. A hundred and sixty one or two or three thousand—all mine! I—I left it with him.'

'God bless me!' murmured Petherfield. 'Never heard such a romance in my life! My dear fellow—my dear Bellamy'—he came forward, with the mobile lips wreathed in a peculiarly sweet smile, and with a readily outstretched hand—'a thousand congratulations,

my good friend! You have been with me many years, Bellamy, my boy, and we may have had our little tiffs; but you'll find none—none who will so sincerely rejoice over your good fortune as your old friend and master—none! God bless you, my dear fellow! Dear, dear me!—whoever would have thought it? By-the-by,' he added, as Bellamy, who never remembered having shaken hands with him before, timidly withdrew his fingers, 'you're sure about the will—no flaws, eh? No—loopholes for anybody else, my boy?'

'Mr Haddlesey says the will's as sound as if he'd made it himself,' answered Bellamy. 'Not a doubt about it, in any way. And Mr Farmadale hadn't a relation in the world.'

'Capital! Capital!' murmured Petherfield unctuously. 'The Lord be praised! My dear lad, what are you going to do?'

Bellamy looked down at his knees and wagged his head, on which the too small hat was still perched. 'I—don't—know!' he whispered. 'I'm all of a turn. But'—he sprang up and made for a drawer in one of the cupboards—'those papers! I'll have them off, Mr Petherfield, by the late fee collection. There's nothing to do but enclose them.'

He was leaving the room, but Petherfield caught his arm. 'Listen!' he said. 'You must have some one to talk to, my boy. Who better than your old guide and philosopher and friend? Come down this evening to The Acacias—better still, come to dinner—seven o'clock, sharp—pot-luck, you know. No ceremony. Just run home, change your clothes—I saw you in a nice tweed the other day—and walk down. Then—quiet bit of dinner—quiet bit of advice.'

'Thank you, sir,' responded Bellamy. 'Much obliged to you. I'll be there at seven.'

'Give those papers to Judd,' said Petherfield. 'Tell him to send them off. At seven, then—delighted.'

Bellamy descended the stairs and drew Herbert Judd into a corner away from the office-boy's large ears. He placed the papers in his fellow-clerk's hands with some precise instructions, and then sank his voice to a whisper. 'Bert!' he said. 'What do you think? The old gentleman's left me all his money! All!'

Herbert Judd started back and examined Bellamy's homely face closely. 'No kidding?' he said.

'It's right,' protested Bellamy. 'You can't be more astonished than I was! I'd hoped for the chess-men, but as for the whole lot—Lord! But I'm getting used to the idea now. Oh yes—it's all mine. Every cent!'

'How much?' asked Judd.

'Hundred and sixty thousand, so Mr Shillito reckons it,' replied Bellamy. 'He has it. I say—I'm going to dine with Mr Petherfield, and I want a new tie, and I've no coin on me—lend me half-a-crown.'

Judd pulled out some loose silver and held it towards the applicant. 'Well, I never did!' he exclaimed. 'Good heavens, old man, what ever will you do with it?'

Bellamy picked out half-a-crown from the silver and made for the door. 'Oh, I don't know!' he answered. 'It's—dreadful. Get those papers off, Bert—I must go home and change, and get down to The Acacias.'

'Going to tell the old woman and the girls?' asked Judd, following him out into the hall, and still regarding him with a species of terrible fascination. 'Gad!—they'll jump out of their skins!'

'No use keeping it back,' replied Bellamy, with more or less of dolefulness. 'It'll be all over the town by supper-time: Haddlesey won't keep it in. Well, so-long, old man, for the present—see you later.'

He went out into Friargate, now deepening into the first gloom of the evening, and slunk, rather than strode, past the bank and past Haddlesey's office. The news might already have leaked out, and he was afraid of being stopped and congratulated; he was afraid, too, he scarcely knew of what, as he glanced out of his eye-corners at Friargate House, and remembered that every stone of its ancient walls and every inch of soil on which the building stood belonged to him. Two hours ago he had been valued at twenty-eight shillings a week; now he was worth some six or seven thousand pounds a year. But the man in the draper's shop at the corner of the Market Place did not know that yet, and when Bellamy asked for a new tie he brought out the cheap goods, and Bellamy, from sheer habit, spent eighteenpence.

He went home then, still avoiding notice. 'Home' was No. 7 in Trinity Terrace, a small and meanish street running out of Cornmarket. Bellamy lodged there with one Mrs Parker, relict of a departed tradesman, who had left her two daughters and a houseful of furniture. The two daughters were teachers in the church school; their mother spent her time in looking after the house, wherein she had found room for Bellamy Denton and Bert Judd, whom she already regarded as future husbands for Evie and Kittie. But so far there had been no negotiations towards matrimony. The young men and the young women were on pleasantly close terms, and went innocent walks together, but it was an unpledged, untrammelled Bellamy who presently walked into the little parlour and confronted mother and daughters.

He looked at them meditatively and in a queer spirit of silence as he shut the door behind him. He was thinking. He knew that his Trinity Terrace days were numbered—Friargate House awaited him; he had nothing to do but walk in next morning—that night, if he liked—and hang up his hat. And he was relieved when Kittie Parker, who was inclined to levity and pertness,

laughed openly at the sight of his ill-fitting mourning.

'Well, you do look a sight, Bellamy!' she exclaimed. 'Where did you borrow that lot? I think the old Nabob might have left you something to buy a black suit with, if you had to have one!'

Bellamy glanced at Evie. She was his particular property, as Kittie was Bert Judd's. Kittie was little, elfish, quick of tongue and movement; Evie was a comfortable, motherly sort, large-eyed, slow-thinking—the sort of girl you could walk with in silence. She used one word to Kittie's twenty. All the same, she found her tongue now.

'Don't be so rude, Kittie!' she said, flashing up in defence of her motherless chick. 'You're too personal.'

'Rot!' retorted Kittie. 'Of course, the old fellow should have left him ten guineas to buy black.'

Mrs Parker, in the act of lifting the tea-pot from the tray round which she and the girls were sitting, waved it at Bellamy. The act was one of hospitality; Bellamy and Bert took their supper at half-past-six.

'Just in time for a cup, as you're home so early,' she said. 'Get a cup and saucer, Evie.'

But Bellamy shook his head. He laid down the new tie on the edge of the table, and sank heavily into a chair. 'You might as well know it,' he said, looking from one to the other. 'Everybody will, before long. Mr Farmadale's left me all his money.'

His mild, patient eyes had settled on Evie's placid face, and he saw her turn scarlet from throat to brow. But Mrs Parker dropped the tea-pot with a bang, Kittie screamed as a splash of the hot tea fell across her wrist, and Evie jumped up for a cloth and hid her confusion.

'Bellamy Denton!' exclaimed Mrs Parker. 'You don't say! All?'

'Every penny!' answered Bellamy. 'Mine now—all the lot. Everything!'

'What might it come to, now?' asked Mrs Parker.

Bellamy's eyes wandered round the tea-table as if he were estimating the value of the crockery, the linen, and the buttered toast. Thence he looked up at a fly-paper which dangled from the gas-bracket. ''Bout a hundred and sixty thousand pounds,' he said.

'Lord, ha' mercy!' muttered Mrs Parker. 'It's—it's almost like a miracle! And—and that house, too?'

'All's mine,' assented Bellamy. 'Every mortal thing. Means quite six thousand a year.' Then he glanced again at Evie. But Evie was mopping up the spilled tea, and his eyes wandered to Kittie.

Kittie had propped her elbows on the table and was staring at him. Suddenly she smiled. 'What'll you do with it?' she asked. 'Twenty-eight bob a week—and six thousand a year! Lawks!'

'Nonsense!' said Mrs Parker. 'Of course he'll know what to do with it!' She glanced at the new tie. 'What's that for?' she asked.

Bellamy got up, looking at the clock. 'I'm going to dine with Mr Petherfield,' he said, picking up the tie. 'He asked me to—we've got to talk. I must change my clothes.'

'Dine—at Mr and Mrs Petherfield's?' exclaimed Mrs Parker. 'Why, you ought to have evening-clothes!'

Bellamy's face fell. 'He said pot-luck,' he murmured. 'Does—does it matter?'

'All the Petherfields dress for dinner,' remarked Kittie. 'I've seen 'em, through the windows, many a time. Every night—we all know what snobs they are!'

Mrs Parker was looking Bellamy up and down. 'I've a brand-new dress-suit that belonged to your father,' she said suddenly, glancing at Evie. 'He got it that year he was town councillor, to go to the Mayor's Ball; he didn't wear it more than twice. It'll just fit you, Bellamy—like a glove. I've everything, put away—dress-shirt, ties, shoes. Come upstairs.'

Bellamy shifted his weight from one leg to the other. As was the case whenever he was in doubt, he looked at Evie; but Evie was otherwise occupied. 'Oh, well, if you think I ought'—— he said doubtfully. 'I didn't know they were like that every night.'

'Every night!' affirmed Kittie. 'I know!'

'Come upstairs,' said Mrs Parker.

She shepherded Bellamy to the upper regions and played valet to him; finally she conducted him downstairs again and showed him to the girls. The deceased Parker's suit fitted him well; brushed, shaved, apparelled in gloomy black and snowy white, Bellamy looked a new man.

'Fine feathers!' said Kittie.

'One thing he wants,' observed Mrs Parker critically—'a muffler for his neck.—Kittie, go up and get me that big white silk handkerchief out of the top long drawer in my room.'

Kittie tripped upstairs, laughing; Mrs Parker went into the passage to get Bellamy's overcoat; he and Evie were left alone. He looked at her shyly; Evie looked at the tea-cups which she was washing at a side-table.

'Evie!' he said suddenly.

'Yes, Bellamy?' she answered meekly.

'What d'you think of it?' he asked. 'Not—not this—but—the money, and all that, you know?'

'I don't know,' she answered very slowly. 'I can't realise it. What do you think of it?'

Bellamy glanced at the door. Kittie could not find the silk handkerchief, and Mrs Parker had gone upstairs to help in the search. He went closer to Evie. For a moment they looked at each other; then Bellamy drew back.

'Blessed if I know what I think!' he murmured. 'You 'll have to talk to me. I 'm—I 'm sort of lost!'

Then Mrs Parker came down and finished him off, and bustled him away, and he went out into the town, thankful beyond measure that darkness had fallen.

(*Continued on page 791.*)

MORE DUST FROM AN ENGLISH LAWYER'S PAPERS.

By G. H. Browning.

AMID the tortuous mazes of the law there is no path so difficult as that which leads through the Probate Division. In all but testamentary matters a man may correct mistakes of law which have been made; a faulty conveyance or lease of land, a defective settlement—these things may be cured if the mistakes become apparent in his own lifetime. But a will, which operates only from death, cannot in the same way be purged of error; there weakness is a fatal malady, for he whose intentions are written therein has passed to the incommunicable shore before they are construed by his sorrowing kindred.

And just as this branch of the law is the most complex for the layman, so, it appears, is it the most interesting for the lawyer; for the solution of testamentary problems involves him in human drama and pathos and sentiment in all their crudity. That silent yet eloquent paper left by him whose voice can never intervene to still the storm it raises, or the carelessness which has resulted in the leaving of no such paper at all, arouses in a marked degree the cupidity of interested parties, the anxious hopes of relatives, and the careful schemes of the covetous; it invites men to forgery and deceit, and lying that may never be stripped of its false garb, because dead men tell no tales.

The records of the Probate Division would indeed prove sad reading for the angels; they are damning evidence against the morals of mankind.

It is astonishing what a large proportion of these evils is due to the simple desire to revoke a will. A man makes his will, and afterwards, changing his mind, wishes to revoke it. Simple enough, it would seem. Put your pen through it, or if it is with your bankers or solicitors, tell them to do so for you; or, better still, burn the false witness. But it is not always simple—unfortunately the law seldom is simple. True, if you take the document in your own undeniable hands, consign it to the flames, and stand over it until the last particle is utterly consumed, it will manifest no Phœnix powers by rising from the ashes to confound your plans when you are dead; but short of this thorough extermination of the pest by your own hands, you cannot tell what mischief it may achieve in the time beyond your time, for, like an obstinate weed of indestructible growth, it will often spring up in the most unexpected places and work havoc in the garden of your desires.

Some considerable time ago there was a man who thought it a light matter to slay his testamentary dragon. He merely pierced it in divers places with his pen, inscribed on its back 'This is revoked,' and cast it into his wastepaper-basket. Presently a servant entered the room, took out the wastepaper-basket, and carefully placed the will on the kitchen table. There, the record confesses (to the horror of all good housewives), it remained for some eight years, when the testator died. And when these strange people, who could suffer a will to lie about the kitchen for years on end, produced the document in court, it was held that the will was *not* revoked.

In another case, a man died without anybody appearing to know the whereabouts of his will, until a woman who had shared his house for some years produced from a box a little handful of torn-up pieces of paper. These, she declared, were the treasured remains of the missing document, which her lover himself had destroyed, giving her directions to burn the pieces; but instead of obeying his behest, she, ultimately with his sanction, had placed the collection in the box whence they were now brought to light. The Court was dubious; it shook its bewigged head gravely, and in that unimpassioned voice whose even tenor betrays its long acquaintance with human frailty, declared simply that it didn't believe the story; and it granted probate of the will, for all that it lay before the disputants in fragments.

On one occasion a man destroyed his will during an attack of *delirium tremens*. The pieces were carefully preserved by his alarmed relatives, and presented to his repentant eyes on his recovery; whereupon he expressed his horror of the mad act, and declared that he would speedily make amends by executing another will. Unfortunately, however, a more serious affliction than extreme intemperance visited him before he could carry out his good intentions, and he died without having set his hand to the promised document. Notwithstanding these things, an indulgent Court declared that the original will still stood.

And now, on the principle of 'another and another cup to drown the memory of this impertinence,' let us take an even more curious instance of the longevity of wills. The scene is a bedchamber, the persons of the drama an elderly lady of feeble mind, and her sister-in-law,

of a distinctly vigorous mind. They are engaged in earnest conversation, and presently the elderly lady places her last will and testament in the other's hands for her to read. Evidently the terms of the document are unfair in the sister-in-law's views, for that lady, in the full enjoyment of her vigorous intellect, flies into a passion, and, in spite of the old lady's anxious remonstrations, tears the obnoxious paper into bits and flings them into the fire.

The old lady was afterwards pressed to make another will, but in her feeble condition declared that she was unable to bring her mind to the task, and she died without having yielded to persuasion. Let it be observed that at her death there was actually no will in existence; it had been utterly consumed by the flames, although it transpired that a copy was in the possession of the person whom she had named as executor. Yet, when the facts were laid before the Court, the judge decided that, as the will had been destroyed contrary to the wishes of the deceased, probate should be granted.

The clue to these strange decisions may be found in an Act which was passed in the first year of the reign of Queen Victoria, or in the general principle of the Courts, which strive with might and main, within the statutory limits of their powers, to give effect to the last wishes of all citizens and to defeat the ends of ill-doers. That Act (which, it should be observed, does not apply to Scotland) declared that no will can be revoked except by another will, or by a document executed and attested as a will and declaring an intention to revoke any previous will, or by 'the burning, tearing, or otherwise destroying the same *by the Testator, or by some person in his presence and by his direction*, with the intention of revoking the same.'

Difficulties frequently arise where a will has been mutilated with the intention, not of revoking it *in toto*, but of altering some of its provisions. The expression 'to cut any one out of a will' is familiar to every one, but it is something more than a figurative expression, for there are instances on record of this cutting-out process having literally been effected. There was once an old lady who, having taken umbrage at some fancied slight, did actually take a pair of scissors in her indignant hands and clip out the name of a gentleman who had offended her, wherever it appeared in her will; and the document was admitted to probate in its mutilated state.

The case of a paralysed man affords another instance of how far mutilation of a will may extend without being fatal. The sufferer in this case was partly speechless, and paralysed down one side. Two days before his death he intimated to his doctors that he wished to make a will. Accordingly his desires were interpreted by means of signs and recorded on a card, which the invalid executed by a mark and the doctors initialled as witnesses. Subsequently these gentlemen were persuaded by a relative of the testator that they had taken upon themselves undue responsibility in so acting, and after explaining this to the testator and intimating that the writing on the card should be regarded merely as a memorandum, they erased their initials. After the patient's death the card was found in a handbag which he kept at his bedside, and evidence was adduced that he had shown it to a lady whom he had intended it to benefit, and begged her to take it. The Court adjudged that, in spite of the mutilation in that most vulnerable part of a will—the attestations—the document was not revoked.

It may be added that, if as many even as a baker's dozen of wills be found, it cannot be assumed that the last one only is operative—unless it expressly revokes all previous ones; for, generally speaking, a later will cancels an earlier one only so far as it is inconsistent with it.

None of us is so ignorant of the ways of English law as not to know that if we neglect the troublesome formality of paying our rent we may be hurled neck and crop into the street; but very few of us are aware of the pedantry of the ancient common law which fetters our landlord's drastic powers. In every properly drawn lease, after the landlord has granted the property to you for a certain term of years at an agreed rent, and you have bound yourself and those mysterious and unapprehended persons, your 'executors, administrators, and assigns,' with several reams of legal phraseology of unintelligible complexity, you find at the tail of the deed, where the sting is, a clause which provides that if you fail to pay your rent, *whether it be legally demanded or not*, the landlord may eject you and terminate the lease. In those italicised words there reposes unsuspected power, for if by inadvertence they should be omitted from the deed, mark what the landlord is constrained to do ere he may move the machinery of the law.

He must formally demand payment of the exact sum due, and on precisely the day when your delinquency places the lease on the brink of forfeiture; and even of that fateful day he cannot choose any one of the twenty-four hours, for his demand must be presented at such convenient hour as will give you sufficient time to count the money before sunset. It is of no use for him to come clamouring for his due whilst you are at breakfast—you do not need the live-long day to count out your gold; hence the landlord must possess his soul in patience until the sun dips down towards the horizon, and he must watch that orb, whose gilded hues will no doubt present themselves agreeably to his sight, and see that it does not dip too far before he has delivered his ultimatum, or he will have to wait until the next quarter. Should he make his demand, say, ten minutes before sunset, he must

continue to do so until that daily feat has been duly achieved. And it is of no use for him to whisper his importunities through the back-door keyhole: he must appear boldly at the most conspicuous part of your house, which probably is the front-door, and declare his requirements there. Moreover, should he, after all his care and trouble, be so unfortunate as to find no one at home, he must nevertheless request payment from the unresponsive door, for it is required of him that he shall obey the very letter of the law and make his demand though there be no ears to hear but those of the letter-box. Furthermore, if your memory should so far have betrayed you as to leave two quarters' rent outstanding, your landlord must require payment of the second instalment only or his demand will be wholly bad.

This is the ancient common law of England, and though every landlord in the land jointly and severally lifted up his voice in indignation at its pedantry, the venerable god would have its inexorable way.

THE KILLING OF A SHIKARI

By F. C. C.

I.

FOR a hundred years or more it has always been the unwritten law among sportsmen in India that no two *shikaris* should hunt in the same valley at the same time. This law holds good in Kashmir, Tibet, Chamba, and generally throughout the Himalayas. The reason is obvious. Big-game shooting cannot, in those parts, be carried out by two guns in the same valley; the rifle-shot of one *shikari* far down the valley, reverberating from rock to rock, from ravine to ravine, might well destroy the best day's stalk of another *shikari* higher up the same valley. Therefore the golden and honoured rule is: 'One sportsman, one valley.'

Only one instance do I know of two *shikaris* hunting in the same valley at the same time, and hunting the same quarry, each being ignorant of the presence of the other. Exactly how long these two had been hunting in the same valley is unknown, but undoubtedly the one who shot at and killed the other was not the legitimate owner of the sporting rights of the place. The presumption is that the dead hunter had been at work up those hills and ravines long before the other set foot in the valley or on the mountain-crests above it.

It is this tragedy of the killing of one *shikari* by another that I now relate.

II.

I was quartered at the depot at Nynee Tal, in the Himalayas, with a detachment of my regiment. It was the end of July, and the season at that gay spot was in full swing. Having got three weeks' leave, I started off with my *shikari*, Mir Singh, to do a triangular trip *viâ* Ranikhet, Malwa Tal, and Bhimtal. I hoped to get a gural or two on my way to Ranikhet, and I had previously had good sport mahseer-fishing at Malwa Tal, where I had bagged a panther also earlier in the year. At Bhimtal there was more fishing to be had, and the wooded banks of the lake abounded with kakar, the so-called barking deer of the Himalayas.

The gural is the chamois of the Himalayas. He is one of the commonest of the Himalayan ruminants, but is not much sought after by sportsmen because, generally, when in the haunts of this member of the Bovidæ family, they are either intent on larger game or are on their way to more favourite hunting-grounds. The gural, however, is by no means to be despised as a quarry for the keen rifle-shot, and gives excellent sport; though to make a bag of any sort it is necessary to be well up in the habitat and the peculiarities of the animal. Quite a small buck is he, not more than twenty-five inches at the shoulder, of a brownish-gray colour, darker on the legs, and with an almost black stripe along the spine. He is extremely difficult to see, especially when the grass is long, as it is in August. The gural, in a way, assists the sportsman by wearing a white bull's-eye on his throat, and many a time have I spotted his whereabouts by this mark alone, when otherwise, unless on the move, I should never have discovered him. The horns are like those of the chamois—very insignificant. One great drawback is that the horns of the doe, although a bit shorter and thinner, are very similar to those of the buck, and on occasions a female is shot by mistake.

There are few buck harder to get a shot at than the gural, partly because the little beast is extremely wide awake, partly because he frequents very steep bits of the mountains, and, lastly, because his protective colouration is eminently well adapted to his environment and the animal himself gives but a small target to draw a bead on.

On the whole, the gural lives a safer life than most game in India. Not being a marauder of crops to any extent, he is rarely harassed by the natives. He is very seldom shot at by the *sahib*, except in the close neighbourhood of hill-stations, and there the animal is but seldom found. His greatest enemy is undoubtedly the hill panther; but it is only on his grazing-grounds that he fears that stealthy hunter, for his sleeping-places are too steep and rocky for *Felis Pardus*. Moreover, the *Laga-Baga*, as the panther is called in the Himalayas, finds a much

easier way of filling his stomach. He haunts the neighbourhood of villages and sheepfolds, following the shepherds up to the summer grazing-grounds, and heavy is the toll these silent cat-like foes levy on the flocks and even the dogs of the sheep-watchers.

Many men go hunting the gural in the middle of the day, but they might just as well stay in bed. The midday siesta of this animal is a long one, generally in a cave or some most inaccessible spot. The only way is to look for him at daybreak, or in the evening hours when he is on his grazing-grounds in the grass and bushes of the mountain-side.

III.

On the second day out of Nynee Tal, Mir Singh woke me up at 1 A.M., and we commenced our stumbling climb along goat-tracks, up what seemed impossible precipices, with but a shaly foothold and eternity yawning on the *khud* side. By day the going was bad enough; in the dark it was a blind-man's-buff over sharp rocks and through thorny bushes. We were practically at the top of the ridge before the sun rose, and there, well covered by a projecting rock and the long grass, we threw ourselves down for a rest, and to await until real daylight made the use of my telescope possible.

To those who have lain on the open mountain-side in the Himalayas, no matter whether on active service, shikarring the wily Mohmund or Swati, or whether more peacefully employed in sport, there is something enthralling in the grandeur of it all that no words can adequately express. Half-dreamily, restfully, and wonderingly one gazes up at the vast canopy of the heavens above, with all the countless twinkling stars, and how despicably insignificant it makes a poor mortal feel! Yet how it seems to uplift one's finer senses and to envelop one's soul in a sort of peace and perplexity that is both soothing and disturbing!

The false dawn has come and gone. Soon real dawn will be shedding its gray lights and shadows over mountain-peaks and mysterious valleys. There, to the north of us, we can just dimly outline the next and somewhat higher ridge of the mountains; and beyond that, as the light gradually grows with the opening day, we discern the battlemented peaks of the Niti Mountains bordering on the land of Nari Khorsom, looking, in the shadowy distance, more like the pinnacles and turrets of some mountain sultan's palace than the result of Nature's world-forming upheavals. Far, far away, still farther north, as morning wakes the slumbering night from his long repose, and ghost-like shades and shadows dissolve in the realities of the landscape, we can see in the nether heavens, floating, as it were, in the morning mist, with apparently no earthly foundation, the great snow-peaks of the southern barriers of Tibet. The whole moving and kaleidoscopic panorama of Nature's *kinēma* is fascinating and wonderful.

See! First one, then another, of these cold gray snow-clad peaks pales with the excitement of the coming moment till each appears like a pearl of great price set in the heavens. Then a faint pink blush, first here, then there, all along the snowy range, announces the coming of the 'lord of day,' as, rising beyond our horizon and below the distant hills, as yet unseen by us mortal men crouched among the grasses and rocks, he touches with his morning kiss the virgin peaks of the 'Roof of the World.'

A few moments more, and the golden orb rises in majesty above the mountain-ranges to the east; and what we pictured in our morning meditations as turrets and pinnacles of a far-off sultan's palace are suddenly splashed with gold and disclose themselves as mountain-peaks.

'Awake! for morning in the bowl of night
Has flung the stone that puts the stars to flight;
And, lo! the hunter of the East has caught
The sultan's turret in a noose of light.'

. . . . . .

Dreaming when dawn's left hand was in the sky,
I heard the voice of my *shikari* cry:
'Awake, my lord! the daylight now is here,
And with thy telescope the gural-buck descry.'

This latter quatrain is not exactly correct according to our old friend the Tentmaker, but it embodies practically what Mir Singh said as he gently touched me on the shoulder and suggested that the *sahib* should bestir himself about the morning's work.

IV.

The mountain-ridge we had climbed at night ran east and west. The summit was mostly rocks, with here and there, just below the weather-worn crest, smooth grassy *mergs*, and lower down more grass and thick bushes. At the foot of the slope ran the *nullah*, still deep in shadows as the sun was yet low on the horizon and hidden from these depths by mountain-ridges—a long, winding, narrow ravine with many a pool and waterfall, and delightful shady nooks upholstered with maidenhair and other ferns. On either side of the stream and midway to the crest of the hill were steep precipices, overhanging rocks, and deep foliage, a secure resting-place by day and night for the nimble-footed gural.

A little higher up from where we were resting, and more to our right, was a great shelf of overhanging rock sloping upwards, from which we could obtain a fine view of the valley beneath and to our left, and also of the sloping *mergs* nearer the summit. My *shikari* decided that I should spy out the land from this point of vantage, while he crept round the southern side of the ridge to prospect the southern *nullah*. For half-an-hour I carefully scanned each likely spot, but never a sign of life did I see save what might have been a black bear nosing among the bushes at the far end of the ravine, some mile away.

Suddenly, in the centre of my glass, I detected a movement among the rocks and bushes below the grassy *merge;* then lost it; then picked it up again. Yes, surely that was a slight movement of horns I saw; and next moment, as he turned, there was the white bull's-eye on the throat of a gural. I gave a low whistle, then another, which brought the *shikari* stealthily to my side. He, like most of his kind, was blessed with the eyes of a hawk. '*Hah, sahib, beshak, gural hain, dekkhye do, tin, panch.*' His eyesight was even better than mine with the glass, and I was no mean hand at spotting game; but he had already counted five gural. There they were, far away to our left, half-way up the mountain-side, grazing slowly upwards. Impossible to tell, at that distance, if there was a buck among them; they must have been a good thousand yards off.

Our plans were soon concocted. Away westwards, along the ridge on which we were lying, just below the summit and immediately (but far) above the herd of gural, was another great overhanging rock with probably a cave-like depression underneath, similar to the one on which we lay prone. If we could get along the southern side of the ridge, then up over the top, and down as far as the outcropping rock, it would give us a good range of the grassy *merge* on the slope of the hill in front and on both sides, and, as gural feed as a rule upwards, there was every chance of a shot if we could get there before our quarry emerged on to the little grassy plots.

Quietly we slid back from off our crag and wended our way just below the crest on its southern side. The going was bad in parts, and in steep places the grass was like ice. It was well we were both shod with grass sandals. Twice during our journey the *shikari* peered over the summit, and was able to report that the gural were still below, slowly feeding upwards. At last, thinking that we had gone far enough to reach the overhanging rock on the other side of the ridge, we crept up and peered cautiously over the crest. There, sure enough, was the great flat stone just below us and to our left. Fifty yards of open country lay between us and the sheltering rock, and had to be crossed without disclosing our presence.

Stealthily we moved on our 'tummies,' like snakes, through the long grass, taking care that neither breaking twig nor falling stone should betray our advance, and we were soon under cover of the big flat rock. Mir Singh slowly wriggled himself up our side of the rock and cautiously looked over. He lowered his head, then shook it, and signed to me to come up alongside. Not a sign of any gural. We had won the race so far. There before us, for about fifty yards, stretching far away to our right and left, was an ideal grazing-ground for gural. Immediately below this small *merg* the hillside suddenly steepened towards the next plateau. If the gural grazed up as far as the grass just below us, I ought to get an easy shot either to the front or to the right or the left. If they contented themselves with the lower feeding-grounds, our point of vantage would be of no use, and we should have to work ourselves lower down the hill. It was well worth waiting where we were for a bit, as the day was still young. Very carefully and quietly arranging some grass near the summit of our rock so as to conceal our heads, we lay prone, with eyes and ears alert, but never even a whispered word between us. Thus we awaited events.

v.

Luck was evidently with us that morning. We had not long to wait. First of all we descried the head of a gural over the top of the long grass, then another. I made a half-movement with my rifle, but the *shikari's* hand detained me, and he whispered in my ear that both were does. Then, butting at one of the does on his way up, there came a buck, who, with a somewhat skittish movement of tail and horns, settled himself to graze on the actual *merg* below us, some little way to my right. The grass was so long that it concealed all but his head and the dark stripe along his spine. What a shot—barely sixty yards off! I should have bagged him then and there had not Mir Singh called my attention to a far finer buck moving up from the lower ground to our left. Then the slightest movement in the grass suddenly riveted my eyes once more on the leading buck, and I saw him nosing the air, while he gave two sharp hisses, the gural's warning sound of danger. For a moment or two he stood like a statue, the three does which had joined him on the plateau gazing steadily at him. Had he detected us? Would he bolt? I decided to have a shot at this buck instead of waiting for the chance of the larger one below. Better bag this one, I thought, than, by waiting, perhaps lose the chance of both. To do this, however, I found that I must raise myself a few inches higher up on the ledge, and in moving I shifted a small bit of loose shale on the top, which fell over the far side.

What happened then was all so sudden and unexpected that I had no time to think. As the loosened shale fell on the ground beneath our overhanging rock a panther sprang out into the air, almost touching the muzzle of my rifle in his rush. Hardly knowing what I was doing, without in any way taking aim, I loosed off the right barrel at the panther as one would at a flushed snipe.

'*Wah, wah! Ma Bap Re!*' ejaculated my *shikari* in his intense surprise and wonder. What actually happened to the panther I did not know. He just seemed to disappear over the ledge where the gural had been standing.

Mir Singh, in spite of his excitement about the panther, did not lose his head for a moment. He shook me by the arm, and pointing to my left, shouted, '*Gural, maro, maro* [kill], *sahib*.'

There they streamed across the open. There must have been some seven of them in all. My surprising adventure had quite driven the thought of buck out of my mind. Meanwhile away went the quarry. Mir Singh made a peculiar whistling sound, as I have known *shikaris* to do when trying to stop the running oorial in the Salt Range. The leading buck suddenly stopped and stood stock-still for about five seconds, showing his flank and giving me an easy shot from a prone position at not more than 180 yards. I missed him! I felt at the time, when pressing the trigger, that I was not over steady; but, then, one does not put up a live panther under foot every day, and so there was some excuse. We got up and ran across the open in the direction in which the gural had gone, I loading my rifle on the way, hoping for a running shot at the disappearing buck beyond the next ridge of the *merg*, but never a glimpse of a gural did I see again that day.

Then we walked back, just to have a look at the ground below the ridge over which the panther had bounded, and there, in the grass, not dead, but paralysed by a bullet-wound in the lower spine, lay the panther, not fifteen yards from the place where we were standing. He raised himself on his forelegs at our approach, gave an angry growl, and tried to drag his body down the hill. A bullet through the heart put an end to his sufferings and to his hunting, in this world at any rate. '*Wah, wah!*' cried Mir Singh, with a pleased smile on his face. 'He too, your honour, got up with the rising sun to hunt gural, but the *Laga-Baga's* hunting-days are now over. *Shabash!*'

Little had I or Mir Singh thought that another *shikari* was out hunting in this valley, and lying in wait for those very same gural; but such had undoubtedly been the case. The panther knew as well as we did the probability of the animals grazing up towards our rock, which provided good cover 'for man and beast.' He was watching his prey from underneath the rock, I from above it. So intent was he on his sport that his acute ears did not detect our stealthy crawl towards his rock. He was waiting till the buck came a bit nearer to make his deadly spring. It was only the falling shale that either frightened him or caused him to make his leap for breakfast sooner than he had intended.

'The panther, in all its varieties, is a true cat. It stalks its prey, and kills it by suddenly springing on it from some hiding-place.' Thus did this *Laga-Baga* of the Kumi valley. He was a fine specimen of a hunter, this panther whom another hunter had deprived of his breakfast and his life. He measured over six and a half feet—not a bad length for a hill panther—and his coat was in the pink of condition, and glinted golden in the morning sunshine. I stood and gazed at the unexpected bag my morning's stalk had brought to my rifle, and marvelled greatly at the pure luck for me and mischance for the beast that had lodged my aimless bullet in his spine. Undoubtedly he was the real proprietor of the hunting-rights of this valley. He had fixed his bivouac in these parts long before the arrival of the white-man-usurper, and his was the melancholy fate to be shot at and killed by another *shikari*, both hunting the same quarry.

God rest the soul of this gallant *Felis Pardus*! Dogs, some folks say, have a heaven; if so, why not the cat-like sportsman of the East? I *salaam* to the spirit of the spotted hunter of the Himalayas, and wish him 'good hunting' in the Elysian Mountains.

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ROSE-GARDEN.

FANCY a rose-garden eighty miles long and several miles wide! The imagination reels at the idea, and yet that is what might have been seen any summer in Bulgaria before the war broke out. Even the war has not destroyed the industry, and with the restoration of peace the scene will once again be possible.

The world's largest rose-garden is situated on the Thracian plain, with the little Bulgarian town of Kasanlik as its centre. There are 173 villages in the district, each devoted entirely to rose-culture. Where in other lands the peasants would be growing wheat or rye, the Bulgars of this area devote themselves wholly to the growing of roses.

The industry dates back two centuries, and is a legacy from the Turks, who first discovered the special quality of the soil—a soil which produces roses capable of yielding a more exquisite essence than the blooms of any other country. From the chance planting of a single rose-tree by a wandering Turk at the end of the seventeenth century there has grown up an industry which employs a whole country-side, and is one of the mainstays of Bulgarian trade.

These miles and miles of rose-gardens are established with one object—the production of that delicate perfume known to the world as attar of roses. The plantations are arranged in high parallel hedges, a hundred yards long or more, and growing to the height of a tall man. When the rose-harvest begins, about the middle of May, the plantations present a busy scene. Gathering takes place each day, and all the villagers right down to the young children work from dawn to dusk. Production varies, but the average yield is about 6,250,000 roses per acre.

The collected blooms are despatched to the various centres for distillation. The operation of distilling the rose-water occupies from one to one and a half hours, and it is essential that all the petals picked on a particular date shall be distilled on the same day. Twenty-four hours' delay in distillation means a considerable loss in the yield of the perfume. To extract the attar from the rose-water a second distillation is necessary, and in this process the liquid first obtained is reduced to one-eighth its original volume. Thus, from forty quarts of rose-water not more than five quarts of attar can be secured.

Some idea of the necessity for such huge rose-gardens can be obtained when it is stated that the yield of perfume is never more than one-twenty-fifth of 1 per cent. More than 4000 pounds of roses are required to produce one pound of attar. Imagine it for a moment—over 1,500,000 roses to make one pound of the precious attar!

In 1904 no less than 8147 pounds of attar of roses was produced at Kasanlik. That meant the distillation of something like 13,657,312,000 roses, all of which were grown on the surrounding plain.

The traveller in Bulgaria at the end of May or in early June can ride for eighty miles and feast his eyes on damask blooms, breathing all the while the scent of millions of roses. But the miles of bloom are not comprised in one or more great gardens. The flowers are almost all the product of the humble peasant tilling his own little plot. There might be an advantage in large gardens, but the risk would be proportionately greater. Under the existing arrangement, if a crop is damaged the peasant bears the loss; if it is a success, the merchant comes along and buys, and since some two or three buyers have a monopoly of the trade, the peasant has to sell at whatever price they fix.

THE STORY OF LOCHAN-NA-CHEAIRD.

By C. C. Maconochie.

I.

I TELL this story, as nearly as may be, in the words in which it was communicated to me.

. . . . . .

An August sun beat fiercely on my back as I left the road which creeps up the heather at the bottom of the glen. A rise of 900 feet or so in about half a mile on a moor which slopes to the south is about the hottest place on earth, and before I reached the top I was in a state of heat comparable with that in which the immortal Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs found herself on a celebrated occasion. So it came about that I sat down to rest and cool myself under the shadow of a friendly rock, and it may not be unfitting to seize this opportunity of explaining how I, a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, chanced to be climbing the hills which lie between Loch Chon and Loch Katrine on a day when my regiment was still actively engaged with the enemy on the Flemish front. To do this I must go back two generations in the family history.

My grandfather, as a young man, was a crofter in the Loch Ard valley, and my grandmother was born under the shadow of the Eildon Hills. After their marriage, in the earlier part of last century, they emigrated to Canada, and there my grandfather, like many hard-headed Scotsmen, flourished exceedingly and made his pile. He was thus enabled to bring up his only son in a way which he could never have done in the Old Country. His son—my father—married in his turn, but he and his wife both died shortly after my birth, and so it came about that I was reared in the house of my grandparents. How they gave me the best education money could ensure is a matter of no relevance; but one element of my home-life must be noted, as it is possible that in it may be found the clue to the story I am about to tell.

Though neither of my grand-parents ever revisited Scotland, in spirit they remained Scots of the Scots, and clung to the history, traditions, and legends of their native land; their bookshelves contained many volumes of the poetry and prose of the Borders, of Highlands and Lowlands; and, needless to say, in the Waverley Novels the dweller in the land of Thomas of Ercildoune and the descendant of the cattle-lifters of the debatable land in the Graham country found a common and congenial hunting-ground. This antiquated lore they both delighted in handing on to me, and thus, through my grandmother, I early became familiar with the ballads and tales of the Border reivers, and with the legends of the fairies and bogles who were wont to haunt the valley of Tweed; while from my grandfather I learned about Rob Roy and his broken clan, and heard the sombre traditions and eerie stories which seem to spring up naturally in all places where rugged mountains and desolate moors predominate.

From my grandfather I heard the authentic history of the Rev. Robert Kirk, minister of the parish of Aberfoyle, who ventured to write an elaborate treatise on the laws and customs of the Fairy Commonwealth, and was as a punishment taken prisoner by the Little Folk, and

dragged beneath the earth on the Fairy Knowe (as it is still called) near his manse, where, if all tales be true, he remains in captivity to the present day. From my grandfather, too, I heard the mysterious prophecy that when no Graham shall live in the glen, and when the Duchray Water (that is, the infant river Forth) shall run round a certain rock in the Comer valley, riderless horses with fog on their saddles and bridles shall run wild on the sides of Ben Lomond. The river runs round the rock, and no Graham lives on the banks of Loch Ard; but the Great War has come and gone, and Scotland has been spared the battle which some of the old inhabitants of the glen feared would lead to the fulfilment of the prophecy.

Then he told me of the water-bull which lives deep down in Lochan-na-Cheaird—the little loch of the tinker—and lures travellers into the black water, there to be devoured at his leisure; and the less legendary story of the poor woman who lived near Rob Roy's Well, above General Wade's road from Aberfoyle to Inversnaid, whose little son was kidnapped by a caird or tinker and carried off into the wild hills to the north and never heard of more.

Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Morris the gauger, creations of a wizard's brain, were to my grandfather as real as Rob Roy and Helen Macgregor, and little less real to me when a child.

Thus my infant mind was steeped in romance. But some years on a high stool in a merchant's office, followed by nigh on four years of the Great War, with all the grim reality of the trenches, the dirt, the danger, the rats and 'waur beasties,' and the eternal noise of guns and shells, had driven all that romantic rubbish (as I then deemed it to be) out of my head. So, when I was sent back from France, in the last summer of the war, on a month's sick-leave, much shaken and slightly wounded by the explosion of a high-explosive shell, I was about as prosaic and unimaginative a member of the Allied forces as you would meet in a day's journey.

II.

I feel that I have been an unconscionable time in coming to the story which I set out to tell, but now I need only add that my first thought after I crossed the Channel was that I must visit the homes and haunts of my ancestors as soon as possible; and so it came to pass that I found myself in the first week of August lying panting on the heather under the shadow of the great rock, with a fishing-rod (borrowed from a friendly inhabitant of the glen) as my only companion.

The path to the Tinkler, as Lochan-na-Cheaird is familiarly called, leaves the main road at Rob Roy's Well, near the east end of Loch Chon, and for a few hundred yards winds westwards along the lower slopes of the hills. At the point where it turns northward to breast the main ascent there stand the ruins of an old cottage, the home of some crofter long passed away. As I walked past I stayed for a few moments to look at the ruin, but saw nothing more interesting than four crumbling outer walls, and a crumbling hearthstone on which, as in the Rhymer's Tower at Ercildoune, 'the hare might kittle' in peace and quietness. As I turned away, however, a queer thing happened. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I saw—or thought I saw—a woman run out of the ruined door, and look wildly up the path on which I was bound. I swung round in a moment, but a steady gaze at the ruin showed nothing but the bare roofless walls, as deserted and melancholy as before. I was certain that I had caught a glimpse of something living and moving, but now, though I could see the whole of the interior of the cottage, there was evidently no living thing within or near it.

A strange shiver ran through my body, and for a moment a sense of something unnatural overcame me; but the feeling soon passed off, and, till hours afterwards, I never gave the matter a second thought. When, rested and to some extent cooled down, I left the shade in which I had been sitting, and resumed my toilsome climb, none of the eeriness which had seized me remained, and before long I reached the point 'where wind and water shears,' and entered a narrow glen, carpeted with moss and withered grass. There not a sound met the ear, not a grouse stirred nor a sheep bleated, only the moisture rising from some marshy ground near at hand danced weirdly in the great heat.

As I passed on the loneliness and the desolation seemed to enter into my very soul, and I experienced that feeling of being crushed by the immensity of the solitude of the moor which is so powerfully depicted by John Buchan in his terrible story of 'No Man's Land.' In vain I whistled, and even sang aloud, those songs, from 'Tipperary' and 'Pack up Your Troubles' downwards through an endless series of sentimental and futile ditties, with which we soldiers of the Empire had cheered our spirits in the face of death and discomfort for four long years. All was of no use, and every step I took the feeling grew stronger.

> A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
> And said as plain as whisper in the ear,
> The place is haunted.

Like the schoolboy in the sombre poem, 'The Grave,'

> I heard, or thought I heard
> The sound of something purring at my heels.
> Full fast I flew, and dared not look behind me;

and I confess it was with a sigh of relief that at last I sighted the waters of the lochan, black, but glittering in the sun, lying beneath me in a cup or valley between the rocky summit of Ben

Venue and the lower hills above Stronachlacher. All remained still as death as I descended the path to the water's edge.

A glance was sufficient to show that fishing was out of the question. The surface of the loch lay calm and polished as a shield of blue-black steel; not a trout stirred, and only here and there was the uncanny stillness of the water broken by the bursting of oily bubbles of gas generated by the heat in the decaying vegetation with which the bottom of the loch was clothed.

As I sat idly gazing over the water I fancied that for a moment I caught sight of something big and black and shining which rose to the surface; but I did not see it clearly, and I lazily thought that what I had seen was caused by the release of a larger volume of gas than usual from the bottom.

Gradually the heat and the oppressive heaviness of the atmosphere overcame me, and I lay back upon the heather and fell fast asleep.

III.

How long I slept I know not, but it must have been for some considerable time, as when I awoke my teeth were chattering with cold, and I found that my clothes were wet, owing to a heavy fog which, coming up from the east, had obscured the sun. Any man, however, who has served in Flanders is too well accustomed to being wet through to be greatly inconvenienced by a few drops of clinging mist; but behind the mere discomfort caused by the rapid fall of the temperature there was an uneasy feeling in my mind that I was not alone—a feeling which was in no way dispelled by a hasty glance behind me. A sense of the unseen pressed upon me and overcast my spirit like a cloud. Perhaps my fears were due in the main to the knowledge that to be caught near nightfall in a persistent fog among the rocks and wastes of these desolate moors is no laughing matter, even in summer, and I was relieved to find that, for the moment at least, the mist was thinning perceptibly.

As I stood wondering in which direction I ought to go to get out of the valley, the wisp of fog which had surrounded me cleared off sufficiently to enable me to see the water on one hand, and, at a distance of three or four hundred yards, the sheep-track down which I had come from the watershed, where a dark thunder-cloud seemed to hang. I rapidly took my bearings, preparatory to starting for home immediately. Glancing round, I saw that another fog-wreath was already crawling over the water, but before it completely covered it I saw—this time quite distinctly—a shapeless and gleaming black mass rise to the surface, roll over, and then slowly disappear within a few yards of the spot where the path touched the margin of the loch, and the sound of a sullen, heavy plunge reached my ear. Then the mist closed again, and with a strange feeling of disquietude I hurriedly made preparations for a start directly I could see a few steps before me.

Once more the chilly breeze which had risen blew the fog aside, and fixing my eyes on the path which would lead me away from the gloomy loch, I took a step forward. As I did so, to my astonishment I saw two figures come out of the cloud high up the side of the hill, and I confess that by this time the sense of eeriness, and the uneasy feeling that close at hand an unknown and horrible thing was wallowing in the water, had so settled down upon me that the mere sight of two human beings acted as a charm upon my nerves. No thought of the supernatural remained, my one thought being that if the worst came to the worst I should have companions in my long and dreary wanderings through the increasing darkness.

The glimpse I got of the two travellers was but a short one, but it sufficed to show me that one was a small boy, whose arm was grasped in the hand of his companion. As he went he hung back, as if unwilling to go farther; but the man who dragged him on seemingly took no notice of his reluctance, and I attributed the reckless speed at which he came down the steep descent to a natural wish to get out of the thickest of the fog as quickly as possible. I could see that the older wayfarer was heavily laden with a pedlar's pack, on the outside of which were slung what looked like pots and pans, and I remember thinking that in these days a travelling packman was an anachronism, however common his kind may have been in the days of my grand-parents.

Partly from joy at having secured companions in my misfortunes, and partly in the fear that, as the fog was again thickening, the pedlar might fail to see the loch and run blindly into its black depths, I waved to him and shouted at the top of my voice. As they were again blotted out of view I stood quite motionless listening for an answering shout, but not a sound broke the deadly stillness. I was so close to the two that I fully expected to hear their footsteps, or the clatter of the pots and pans, and I could hardly imagine that in such a place and in such circumstances no notice should be taken of my cries; but so it was.

IV.

Blindly I staggered forward through peat-hags and rank grass and heather, and when I was not more than twenty yards from the path I caught a glimpse of the two standing on a rock which projected over the water. To my dismay, I saw that the man had torn off his boots, and that his pack lay on the rock beside him. Just before I lost sight of him I saw him stoop down and snatch up the boy from the ground, and I shouted wildly again, as I knew that at that spot the water was deep up to the edge of the rock. It flashed across my

mind that the man's idea was to wade through the water and so save himself the long detour round the head of the loch—a path which he had to take if Loch-Katrine-side was his goal. I knew that to make the attempt was sheer madness, but a moment after the fog came down I heard a heavy plunge, and then scream after scream broke the silence. As I stumbled forwards there came a horrible sound of a struggle in the water, and then the cries died away in the inarticulate gurglings of drowning men.

By this time I was so close to the scene of the tragedy that by stooping and looking along the top of the water I could see that not ten feet from the rock the surface of the lochan was still bubbling, and that wave upon wave of mud-stained water rose from the bottom as if the struggle were still being carried on in the depths below. Then, as I gazed, in the middle of the troubled waters there rose the shapeless mass which I had twice before seen; it turned slowly over, and sank quietly and heavily to the bottom. In my horror I ran forward and plunged as deeply as I dared into the muddy depths, but the bank shelved so suddenly that I could advance but a few steps, and looking in front of me, I quickly realised that I was too late to be of any assistance.

Hardly had I struggled back to the bank when, as though Nature had drawn a veil over a tragedy too ghastly to be enacted in the light of day and withdrawn it when all was over, the freshening wind cleared the fog for a time out of the whole valley, and I was able to satisfy myself that neither the man nor the boy was still visible in the water, and that neither of them had escaped to the other side.

So obsessed was I with the fear of the unknown, and so horrified at the terrible scene which had been enacted before my eyes, that it must have been some minutes before I recovered my senses sufficiently to realise that I was searching every cranny in the rock for the pack which the man had laid down before he took the fatal plunge, and peering into the black water for any signs of the two or of their baggage. Needless to say, I found nothing. Then, like one in a dream, I struggled along the muddy peat which covered the margin of the loch, looking for the footprints of the two victims, but though I could trace my own footmarks deeply embedded in the mud, there was not a mark to show that any other human beings had ever crossed it on the way to the rock.

It was then, and not till then, that the full horror of the scene seized my mind—the stories which I had heard years before of the lost boy and of the bull of the lochan flashed across my brain, and I knew that what I had seen was the supernatural re-enacting of a crime and of a horror that had been committed on that spot possibly centuries ago. Blindly I staggered a few steps up the path, and the last thing I remember before I swooned away is that the mist again enshrouded me, and that in the midst of it I saw wreaths of fog which took the form of noisome beasts that gibbered at my torture.

I must have fallen forward in my desperate endeavour to escape from that valley of death, for when I came to myself I found that I was lying shivering with deadly cold, with my face buried in the heather and my fingers in my ears in my endeavour to shut out the whisperings and mutterings of the invisible phantoms that surrounded me. With one despairing bound I leaped from the ground and shouted aloud for help, but no help was at hand. Still the deadly silence surrounded me (I no longer heard the whisperings), but from the precipices of Ben Venue echo flung back my shouts.

Madly I turned my face to the hill and raced for safety and the sight of human beings, and as I went I recognised with deep thankfulness that the higher I ascended the less I felt that the power of evil had got a hold upon me. At last, after what seemed to me an age of running, I reached the top of the pass between the two valleys. There the fog had collected in black clouds, caught in its flight before the wind by the high tops, and just as I emerged into bright sunshine on the slope above Loch Chon an old cock-grouse, perched, as is their wont in fog, on some isolated knoll near at hand, called loudly to me out of the mist, 'Go back, go back, go back!' Even now I remember that, such was my joy at the thought of what I had escaped from, I called back with hysterical courage, 'Go back, you old devil! I'll see you damned first.'

That is a bald and accurate account of what I went through on that terrible day, but I feel that it is too much to expect that you should believe that what I have told you actually happened. To you the only possible explanation of my story will be that my nerves had been more completely shattered by shell-shock than I realised, and that I was merely the victim of temporary hallucination; but I know beyond all question of doubt that I saw and heard all that I have described. A vast and lonely moor in Scotland is one of the most eerie places on God's earth, and I am not the first who, in such desolate places as the valley of the Lochan-na-Cheaird, has realised the nearness and the terror of the Unseen, and gone through experiences seldom dreamt of in the philosophy of ordinary men.

SHADOWS.

VANISHED shadows leave no trail
On the mountain or the vale;
But they lent refreshment sweet
In the noontide's fervent heat.

So, if sorrows press thy heart,
When, in good time, they depart,
May their only ling'ring trace
Be that heart's yet finer grace.

A. MILNE.

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SEVENTH SERIES

BRASSFACE AND SILVERTONGUE.

By IGNOTUS.

PART I.

I.

WHEN Julius Lothar Schneider left his father's house in the Rhine Province in the early eighties of last century, and emigrated to England in search of fortune and such fame as he might happen to achieve in the process, it must not be thought that there was anything discreditable in the affair. Schneider *père* was a country parson of a type now so extinct in Germany that it would seem fit to rank with the characters in Grimm's Fairy Tales. Kindly and tolerant, profoundly ignorant of the world beyond his own immediate parish pump, and quite content to remain so, he cultivated his glebe, lived on terms of the utmost good-fellowship with his parishioners, and brought up a healthy family on an income so small that it required a magnifying-glass to make sure it was there.

Needless to say, with such a handicap he could hardly launch his boys in the world, and when young Julius mooted in a hesitating, tentative way his desire to proceed overseas, he found, somewhat to his surprise, his father's blessing awaiting him.

The railway in those days had not penetrated the wilds in which he was bred. He consequently performed the first stage of his journey in the carrier's cart, and arrived in due course, somewhat lachrymose and sentimental, as is the nature of Germans, at the ancient cathedral city of Cologne, whence he took train, and in the fullness of time found himself at Flushing.

Julius had formed but a very hazy idea of the sea, and when, descending from the train at the water-side, he saw what appeared to his morbid fancy a small paddle-boat awaiting him, his spirits sank to zero. When at last the packet cast off and encountered a nasty choppy sea in the Channel, he discovered they could sink still lower. Not to put too fine a point upon it, he was very violently seasick, and did not enjoy it, particularly as, being a third-class passenger, he was confined to the deck, where sheets of spray washing over him soaked him to the skin. However, his trials came to an end at Queenborough, where the packet, with a final coquettish toss of her heels, tied up, and an exceedingly miserable and bedraggled young German made his way ashore, to be confronted by a Customs man with the inquiry as to whether he had anything to declare.

To this inquiry he returned a blank stare, coupled with the usual foreign addition of a comprehensive wave of the hands, and his sole sheet-anchor, 'No spik Eenglish.'

''Ere, pass the word for Vanderloo,' said the Customs man authoritatively, and the polyglot Dutch interpreter made his appearance. '*Haben Sie etwas steuerpflichtig?*' ('Have you anything dutiable?') For all reply, Schneider tendered his little portmanteau containing his scanty outfit, and was allowed to pass. Exhausted with his experiences on the pitching packet-boat, he fell asleep directly the train started, and so saw nothing of the typical English scenery as they made their leisurely way westwards. The shriek of the engine woke him from his uneasy slumber as the train entered Victoria Station, and, cold, cramped, and hungry, he found himself decanted on to the platform at six o'clock of a typically drizzly London morning.

Julius was, however, a stout-hearted lad, and having breakfasted frugally at an adjacent coffee-stall, in the course of which he was handsomely skinned owing to his ignorance of the language, he deposited his luggage in the cloakroom, and after a satisfying wash, made his way with some difficulty to the City, where a stool in the office of a compatriot had already been bespoken him.

What he saw of London on his way absolutely amazed him. The endless array of shops, gradually yawning themselves awake to the day's labour; the increasing crowd of foot-passengers all hurrying eastwards; the unending procession of knife-board omnibuses filled to the brim, with a pair of splendid horses taking their load along as easily as if it were made of straw; the enormous country wagons leisurely wending their way westwards from Covent Garden, their day's work already done—these gave some indication to the boy of the unimagined size and prosperity of the city to which he had come to struggle for a footing.

He had taken the precaution, before leaving

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home, of having the name and address of his new employer, Herr Theodor Stresemann, legibly inscribed in English on a slip of paper by the village schoolmaster, and armed with this 'Open sesame,' found himself without much difficulty in a dingy turning off St Mary Axe, where he solaced himself patiently with the company of the office-boy and a couple of clerks till nine o'clock signalled the arrival of Stresemann himself.

'Aha, you are Schneider, *hein?*' asked Stresemann, in brusque Prussian fashion. Then, seeing the boy did not understand, he continued in German, 'I expected you yesterday.' Giving Julius no time to reply, he explained that the new-comer would start at the princely salary of fifteen shillings a week, and adding that further rises depended on his exertions, handed him over to the clutches of the head clerk, and promptly immured himself in a gloomy dungeon to go through the morning's post.

The head clerk, a lantern-jawed individual, who looked as if he never had enough to eat (which, in view of his salary, was true enough), and who had picked up a little German, immediately set Schneider to index a letter-book, and so his first day's work began. At one o'clock the promptings of hunger stirred him, and after obtaining guidance, he made his way to a near-by chop-house, where he was introduced to the English 'bifschteak,' as he termed it, and returning full-fed, settled to further work with ardour.

The question of where to sleep suddenly obtruded itself upon him, and with the thought he approached the chief clerk. 'Sleep where you like, Schneider,' he said in his halting German. 'You 'll have to find a lodging, like everybody else, and be here at half-past eight in the morning;' and turning to the office generally, he asked, 'Would any of you care to help this young chap? He don't know what he 's going to do for a bed.'

''E 'd better come 'ome along of me. My mother takes in lodgers, and one left last week,' said Briggs, the office-boy; 'an' then 'e can see about it.' And with that the subject dropped.

The bell rang from the inner room, and the head clerk looked round. 'Sharp 's the word with those letters; you know what the governor 's like if he 's kep' waiting,' he said, as he disappeared into the lion's den, whence an uproar immediately proceeded.

The door was flung open and Stresemann stalked into the outer office. 'Why de letters not ready, *hein?*' he demanded explosively. 'You do nozzing here but waste your time. I shall get all Cherman clerks if I haf dis nonsense again.'

The unfortunate lads cast their eyes ceilingwards as he disappeared, and a murmured 'Any one can have *my* job' was the only result the outburst provoked.

At seven o'clock their gentle employer exploded himself out of the office, which forthwith closed, and, with much brushing of hats and changing of coats, they sallied forth.

II.

'Come on, Snyder; we 've got a bit of a way to go, unless you 've got yer kerridge waiting,' said young Briggs, as he skilfully piloted the young German, still goggle-eyed at the traffic, over the dangerous crossing at the Bank of England.

A thousand questions rose to Schneider's lips which he could not ask, and he registered forthwith his first wise resolution—namely, to learn English without delay. Tongue-tied by their inability to understand one another, they swam onwards, insignificant units in the stream of foot-folk travelling northwards, and brought up finally at a small stationer's and tobacconist's in Clerkenwell.

''Ere 's a new lodger come, mum, and 'e can't speak no English acause 'e 's a German,' was young Briggs's airy introduction to his mother, a plump person in cap and apron, who stood behind the little counter.

'Give 'im a chair, Charlie, and run across and fetch Mrs Sibley's lodger to 'elp me; 'e 's a German too.'

With the help of the spectacled Herr Strauss, who arrived in response to this solicitation, terms were agreed upon, and Julius found himself boarded and lodged at what, with his German frugality, he considered a scandalous rate; but it would still leave him an inconsiderable trifle of pocket-money each week.

At an early hour next morning he set forth with Briggs for the office, and the only drawback to the exercise of walking down was that it left him with an inconveniently voracious appetite, which he had grave difficulty in keeping under control till luncheon-time arrived. A few days of this routine served to make him feel as much at home in the office as if he had been born there. And meantime he had not forgotten his determination to learn the language. Every single article he saw he asked the name of, and at once wrote down the word in a pocket-book, till Mrs Briggs showed signs of restiveness at being turned into a perambulating dictionary. Thereupon, undefeated, he addressed himself to the spectacled Herr Strauss, who lent him what books he had, the more readily as he foresaw therein a means of getting rid of the insatiable student.

The English Sunday was Julius's greatest stumbling-block. Accustomed at home to a day of simple pleasure and rejoicing, an afternoon in a *Biergarten*, with his mother knitting, and, perhaps, some music to listen to, the austerity and gloominess of his surroundings in Clerkenwell nigh overcame him.

The unnatural quietness of the streets after their past six days' bustle, the shuttered shops,

the absence of all traffic, with only a solemnly pacing policeman to relieve the empty vista, were almost more than he could endure. One Sunday, having departed for his usual lonely stroll, he heard to his surprise the sound of music, and hastening in its direction, expectant of what he mentally described as *militär*, saw to his amazement a motley brass band, clad in red jerseys and blue peaked caps, advancing up the roadway, while behind them marched a mixed company of men and women, the leading pair carrying a banner, while the remainder uplifted their voices in some hearty chorus that to Julius was unintelligible.

As he watched, the procession executed some sort of military movement which brought them into a circle at the roadside, and a service began, punctuated by a good many ribald interruptions from the bystanders, for these were the days before the Salvation Army had established its hold on the public.

Returning, Schneider endeavoured without success to make his landlady understand what he had seen, and therefore sought out the now frankly bored Strauss, who advised him to join the *Deutscher Turnverein* (German Gymnastic Society) recently established in London, if he wanted society and companionship in his spare time.

'That wouldn't do,' said the practical Schneider. 'For one thing, it costs money; and, also, I should speak German there, and I must learn English.'

'Well, don't you always talk German to me?' returned Herr Strauss unanswerably as he closed the door.

The idea, however, took root, and having been some ten months in England, and speaking the language fairly fluently, Julius thought a little relaxation permissible. He therefore approached the *Turnverein*, only to stagger back appalled at the subscription demanded. Nevertheless, being a practical lad, and having a pretty shrewd estimate of his value, he determined to beard the redoubtable Herr Stresemann on the subject of a rise.

'What!' shouted that worthy, on the subject being broached; 'you want more salary, after being here only a few months? Why, you ought to be paying *me* for all the chances of learning you get here.'

'I find it very hard to live in this London,' replied Schneider meekly. 'Everything is so dear.'

'Nonsense!' interrupted the autocrat. 'You are extravagant; and as for salary—pouf! go back to your desk.'

So ended the interview; but it resulted in Schneider searching the advertisement columns of the daily papers till he succeeded in getting another situation at a rise of five shillings a week.

When Stresemann received notice his indignation knew no bounds, and, like the petty tyrant he was, he refused to furnish a character. But Schneider, having put the matter fairly before Mr Watson, his new employer, was absolved from the obligation of producing a reference, and entered on his duties forthwith.

He was now at liberty to join the *Turnverein*, which he did without delay, and found himself in very congenial company. The gymnastics served to strengthen his muscles, rendered rather flabby and atrophied from his long confinement at his desk, while it was almost like a breath from the Fatherland to find himself amongst German-speaking folk again.

It was not long before he began to make friends, and what struck him particularly was the attitude that most of the young fellows there adopted towards England. Like himself, they were almost without exception employed in business houses in the City, either on exiguous salaries, or as volunteers in order to learn English, and while picking up all the hints possible with a view to starting eventually for themselves, openly avowed their intention, when they did so start, of trying to divert their present employers' customers to themselves by rather shady devices. In addition, it grew upon him that a kind of Commercial Intelligence Bureau, very informal, but none the less thorough for that, appeared to exist in the *Turnverein*, for a certain member was noted ('notorious' would perhaps be a better word) as being always ready to pay for items of news that could be turned to account—items regarding a firm's customers, its bank balances whenever ascertainable, its profits, and even intimate personal details of employers' private lives, especially if these were inclined to be vicious or loose.

Such an environment undoubtedly corrupts, none the less surely for being so subtly poisonous, and very slowly, but very certainly, Schneider began to acquire a contemptuous and disparaging opinion of the country that was giving him his daily bread, looking upon the English people as a whole as simpletons only fit to be despoiled, and, according to the estimate drilled into him, unequal to keeping what their forefathers had died to gain.

III.

Some three years thus passed quietly by, Schneider rising steadily in the esteem of his firm through his industry and application, the while he patiently sought to acquire as many of that firm's secrets as came his way. His only official connection with the Fatherland was a visit every May to the German Consulate to know whether his turn for army service would fall that autumn. At the third application he received instructions to present himself in the following August at the recruiting-station nearest to his home for the usual medical examination. He was by this time in a position of some responsibility, trusted and thought well of by

Watson's, and it was with considerable regret they received the news of his impending departure. When the actual time for leaving came, the head of the firm wished him a cordial farewell, and, while unable to promise to keep his berth open for him, professed his willingness to do his best when the young man returned, and concluded the interview with a hearty handshake, in the course of which a five-pound note found itself mysteriously transferred to Julius's palm.

To say that Schneider was glad to go back to his native land would be to understate the case. More than four years had gone by since he had seen his home, and though his pleasure was somewhat damped by the thought of the experiences he was about to undergo, he was unfeignedly happy to find himself in the Fatherland once more.

After a fortnight in the bosom of his family, where he was made much of, he presented himself to the authorities, and his training began. It was then that he first commenced to appreciate the difference between the English character and the German; for, if a worse tyrant exists than the German non-commissioned officer, reinforced and supported as he is by the German officer, he has yet to be discovered.

Up at dawn, bullied and dragooned till nightfall and often beyond, Julius dared not call his soul his own; and many a contrast did he draw between his present experiences and his past four years as he stood, stiff and straight in the ranks, cursed to perdition in the rasping German manner for the slightest mistake, while the ever-ready cane of the drill-sergeant whistled across his shoulders, or brought the smarting tears to his eyes as it descended heavily on his knuckles, did he so much as move on parade. Moments of solace there undoubtedly were, as he sat with his comrades in some pleasant *Biergarten* or homely *Kneipe*, lustily roaring the sentimental choruses beloved of the Fatherland; but they served only to emphasise the distinction between the barrack-square and outside, as the following morning saw his torture recommence.

Let it not be thought, however, that he was entirely unhappy, for a strong spring of patriotism wells up in every German heart, and Julius realised that he was but rendering his country the service due to her, though he wished it were not made so unpleasant in the rendering. Not having had the necessary education, he could not claim to be treated as an *Einjähriger Freiwilliger*, or one-year's volunteer, and his heart sank at the end of his first year as he saw the lucky graduates disappear, and realised that two more years of purgatory would be his ere he could depart.

Schneider was somewhat solaced on being made a *Gefreiter* (lance-corporal), and set to work with hearty goodwill to repay on the new levy of that year something of what he had undergone. He was engaged in this pleasing occupation one fine frosty morning in December, when he was summoned to his major's presence. His knees trembling under him, he obeyed the summons, and found his battalion commander closeted in intimate conversation with a strange major, whom he had never seen before.

Punctiliously saluting, he reported himself '*Zu Befehl*' ('At your order'), and awaited the next move.

'Zo, you are the Lance-Corporal Schneider?' said the stranger curiously.

'*Ja wohl, Herr Major*,' was the reply.

'And you 've spent some time in England?'

'Yes; I was there for over four years, till I was called to the colours.'

'What would you say to going back there now, instead of finishing your time here?'

'I should like it very much,' replied Julius.

'You know, of course, that you still have two years to serve?'

'Yes, I understand that.'

'So that, if you were allowed to go, it would be an act of grace on the part of His Imperial Majesty the Kaiser.'

'God protect him!' said Schneider fervently.

'Of course, if you returned to London, you would be required to render some service in return for this gracious concession; do you understand?' said the strange officer raucously.

'*Zu Befehl, Herr Major.*'

'Very well, I 'll explain matters to you. There is a certain Herr Anton Bassewitz of the *Deutscher Turnverein*, in London, whom you know.'

'*Ja wohl, Herr Major.*'

'*Maul halten!*' ('Hold your tongue!') ejaculated the officer viciously. 'And he has reported well of your capacity and industry there; too well, I should think, from the look of you—but that 's his affair. You would be required to go back to London, establish yourself in business as an agent (for which funds will be furnished you), and carry out this Bassewitz's instructions, which, shortly put, are that you are to ferret out what he tells you regarding your trade rivals, and any other details needed. You can open up communications with your former employer, this Englishman Watson. Tell him you have come into money, or any other lie that Bassewitz suggests, to account for your being back before your three years have expired, and in all things you will obey Bassewitz as your superior. Is that understood?'

'*Ja wohl, Herr Major.*'

'Then,' said the stranger, turning to Major von Stramm, 'I understand you will dismiss the man without delay, and he will report himself to Bassewitz at once.—Remember,' he added, turning menacingly to Schneider, 'all this is secret. You can go.'

Utterly bewildered, Lance-Corporal Schneider saluted and left the room. That afternoon he was sent for again, provided with a civilian outfit, a ticket to London, and a small sum of

money, given three days' leave to see his family, and bidden to report himself to Bassewitz in five days' time.

With his head still in a whirl, Julius arrived at his father's house about nine o'clock that night.

'*Was gehl los?*' ('What's the matter?') was the surprised ejaculation that met him as he entered.

'That I can't tell you,' replied Julius. 'All I can say is that it is nothing disgraceful. I have finished my term of service, and start back for London the day after to-morrow to go into business again.'

The time passed all too quickly, and at the end of the three days the entire family convoyed him to the railway station, which had been established since his first departure, and saw him off.

As an experienced traveller, the journey had neither terrors nor novelties for him, and he arrived in London without incident. He had taken the precaution of writing to Mrs Briggs, and was met, when he arrived at Clerkenwell, with the warmest of welcomes.

'Well, I *am* surprised,' said that good woman, 'but pleased, mind yer. You was allus one of my best lodgers, and it so 'appens I 've got your old room empty, so you 'd best go and 'ave a wash at once. Brekfus 'll be ready in 'arf-an-hour.'

(*Continued on page 809.*)

CONCERNING STATE TRIALS.

MOST people (out of Germany) must have heard with satisfaction that the ex-Kaiser will be tried in London. If one dared mention in connection with such an august and formidable proceeding a certain sound piece of advice of culinary import, it would only be in order to anticipate an always possible disappointment.

Not only all his enemies, but even his few friends, must wish that at last Wilhelm's guilt or responsibility should stand a fair chance of being publicly debated, and that any doubts there may be on the subject should be finally disposed of and set at rest; but the question is most intricate, and bristles with difficulties. Whatever hopes one may entertain, it will not be by any means easy to come to a satisfactory conclusion. Former State trials in London, such as those of Strafford, King Charles, or Warren Hastings, are not of much use as precedents, for the world has become vastly more complicated since then, and far more relevant material, conflicting or otherwise, is now available for the judges to sift and weigh.

With the passing of secret diplomacy, and with the ransacking and spoiling of so many European Chancelleries, more may be revealed than is at present expected or, it may be, desired. We know that in the seventeenth century the Chancelleries of Dresden and of Vienna held compromising and disgraceful documents (forged not excluded) ready to be used for or against as circumstances might require; and with the best will in the world one cannot believe that the Cabinets of the twentieth century are of a more child-like innocence in that respect.

The perversity of our age may not be quite so thorough as that of the fifteenth or the sixteenth century, when most prominent statesmen must have kept private forgers on the premises. Sometimes the work was clumsily done, sometimes so artistically that it has defied detection to this day. For example, of two letters still extant attributed to Mary Stuart, one is admittedly genuine—only, it is impossible to say which of the two it is! Deception can no further go, and, to our credit, we must conclude that we are not so infernally clever to-day — witness the clumsy workmanship of the so-called Anglo-Belgian Treaty which the enemy has not been ashamed to put forward as genuine.

Early in the nineteenth century it was decided not to try Napoleon publicly or privately. It was then already considered too difficult an undertaking. Tolstoi was of opinion that Napoleon's responsibility for the campaign of 1815 was not greater than that of the merest drummer in the army or of the smallest man on the Parisian boulevards. For a clear view of the present question it would repay any one the trouble to reperuse the chapters of Tolstoi's *Peace and War* which deal with this particular aspect of the matter.

We do not always find power where we expect to find it. It is told of Louis Philippe that, driving one day through Paris with his aide-de-camp, His Majesty was annoyed by a disturbance caused by some unruly cabmen, at that time a troublesome class of men. 'If I were Prefect of Police,' said the helpless king, 'I should soon put a stop to all that!' But the king was not Prefect of Police. In like manner, an emperor is not a council of generals. The power of camarillas to stultify or nullify the wishes or the actions of a weak ruler is too well known, and William Hohenzollern is not strong. Bluster, vanity, and a love of theatrical pose are not compatible with real strength. The silent, strong man is proverbial.

Frederick the Great *was* strong. He, and he only, was answerable for the Silesian Wars. He had no Parliament, not even a 'Tobacco' one, like his father; no camarilla would have had a chance against him; he did not allow any

general—not even 'the old Dessauer'—to have one word to say in the matter. His trial, if he had been caught (the Austrians once were within an ace of capturing him alive), could have been disposed of in half-an-hour. But how much do we know of the intrigues, the cabals, and the secret forces at work at the Court of Berlin in 1914?

Theoretically, of course, the Kaiser, as an autocrat, must bear the blame and the punishment; we really cannot go outside this theory without being involved in an inextricable mess. For the same reason we tacitly admit the altogether different theory of Tolstoi by inflicting severe punishment on the whole German population collectively. Where, indeed, should we be without our theories?

The wholesale punishment being now settled and disposed of, what is to be that of the ex-Kaiser, on the admirable principle of making the punishment fit the crime? Not all the judges and lawyers in the universe could make this anything except approximate, falling terribly short of what such a fearful crime against humanity deserves. The Chinese have a genius for inventing unheard-of retribution, but even their fertile imagination would here prove inadequate.

We must dismiss as merely a newspaper *canard* the report that it is the intention of the Great Powers to inflict only a formal reprimand. All the Germans, including the ex-Kaiser, could at a pinch put up with that. At the other end of the scale we are limited by the death-sentence, which is not such a simple matter as the 'Hang the Kaiser!' people seem to imagine. Hanging is ruled out by a number of objections, at which we may give just a passing glance. Such simple, downright, or ignorant people do not take account of the many diplomatic, traditional rules and trammels which perhaps only the College of Heralds could properly explain.

The matter not being yet *sub judice*, we may be allowed to hint at the fact that capital punishment can be inflicted in many other ways, all regulated by precedent, and in this country we are taught to consider precedent as an infallible guide. The most terrible of all is the block and axe, but not everybody is entitled to undergo this dreadful ordeal. It is considered an honour which divests a public execution of the degradation usually attached to it. Beheading is therefore, strange as it may seem, a coveted distinction, in the past eagerly and tearfully implored.

Broadly speaking, it has been considered the legal right of a traitor, on one condition—he must be noble. They were going to hang Chastelard out of hand in 1563, when his justly offended queen, offended in her honour both as a queen and as a woman, gave way, 'tis said, to his entreaties, and at the last moment allowed him the axe, as, though only a poet, he was also a noble—of sorts. The ex-Kaiser, being noble beyond other men—strictly in the heraldic sense, of course—could not, perhaps, be put to death in any other way.

But here again certain distinctions are made, decided by the nature of the crime, which must be of a high-class description—as some of the crimes laid to the ex-Kaiser's charge undoubtedly are not. Lord Lovat was beheaded in 1747 for high treason, and another lord was simply hanged for a vulgar murder—though even in his case he was allowed the singular grace and the sorry consolation of a silk rope instead of the usual vulgar hemp. How any one in such a wretched plight could be, if the expression may for once be allowed, so d—— particular passes comprehension, though the indifference of some criminals in the face of death is certainly remarkable. When the Three Lords were taken from the Tower to be sentenced at Westminster, some discussion arose at the Tower gate to decide in which of the three coaches the dread axe should be carried. 'Oh, put the d—— thing in here,' said undaunted old Balmerino. 'I don't care!' King Charles looked calmly at the fearful blade, and only hoped no one would meddle with the sharp edge—not at all a superfluous anxiety, as many instances have proved.

If on all counts it should finally be decided and deemed expedient to make a striking example, the ex-Kaiser's trial, though inevitably the most impressive of any within living memory, will probably be shorn of that most harrowing detail which was thought necessary at the trial of Charles I. There will not now be an axe placed in sight of, but facing away from, the accused, only to be turned with the sharp edge towards him to denote that the evidence begins to be undoubtedly unfavourable. One cannot help wondering by whom this supreme instance of theatrical display was first invented and legalised.

The ex-Kaiser is said not to be over-courageous, and accustomed though he is to all sorts of military implements of destruction, a sharp naked axe is a nasty thing to consider if one stands in fear of making a closer acquaintance with it; it would undoubtedly unnerve him. Probably there is still a serviceable axe in the Tower of London, but is there a man who would now care to wield it? Even the executioner of former days, using the instrument almost daily, often bungled dreadfully with it. Monmouth, on the scaffold, gave the man a handful of gold to ensure his doing the business at one blow; but the precaution did not help him, for the executioner had to hack several times before the head came off!

Our forefathers took all this quietly, much as a matter of course. There were no evening papers at that time to tell the public how dreadful it all was. The callousness of former ages is almost beyond belief. Mary Queen of Scots, so the story goes, looked from her window at the

execution of Chastelard; and Darnley, who rode into Edinburgh that very day, reined in his horse to look at the gruesome spectacle, and only asked in a casual way 'who the fellow was.'

Students of human nature and of history must look forward to the coming trial with intense interest. Do eminent and great men, fallen from their high estate and tried for their lives, display this greatness by any special composure and dignity? In very many cases this has been so. King Charles was a gentleman always, and never more so than at his trial. The same may be said of Louis XVI. The trial of the French king and queen does not deserve the august name of a State trial; but the answer of Marie Antoinette to the scoundrels who sentenced her to death was simple, courageous, and thoroughly queen-like. With the immeasurable contempt of an aristocratic woman, a haughty daughter of an empress-queen, for the rough, ill-clad rabble into whose hands she had fallen, she did not deign to discuss their right to judge her or the validity of their verdict. In six short, stinging words she told them what she thought of them. '*Vous êtes tous de profonds scélérats!*' ('You are nothing but a lot of scamps!') And with this, without another word, she swept out of their presence.

Mary Stuart, always vehement, quick, and passionate, but now aging, gray-haired, met her doom calmly, quietly answering and herself interrogating her judges. Was her dignified conduct a proof that she felt herself to be innocent? Hardly that; but women have a wonderful power of deceiving themselves, and as twice a queen she denied to any one on earth the right to judge her. Charles Stuart and Louis Capet made the same ineffectual protest. Without doubt William Hohenzollern must honestly be of the same opinion, and, contrary to the general idea, he would have some right on his side. Human wisdom, for what it is worth, has for ages past invested royalty with an inviolable sanctity, above all laws. And the Kaiser could go even a step further — he could advance the plea of his vaunted partnership with the Almighty, which (if admitted) should absolve him of all blame. This claim may have had its use where, and as long as, the imperial *ipse dixit* was accepted as final; but a court of law is the most sceptic of bodies, and, as William will find, does not accept unsupported testimony.

THE BROWN NABOB'S MONEY.

CHAPTER III.—HIGH SPHERES.

WHEN Bellamy had left him, Petherfield carefully fitted a cigarette into the long holder which he always affected, smoked thoughtfully for a moment, exclaimed, 'God bless my life and soul!' once or twice, and then, putting on his overcoat, went quietly downstairs and slipped across the street to Haddlesey's office. With the freedom of old acquaintanceship, he walked straight into his fellow-practitioner's private room. Haddlesey, hatted and overcoated, and evidently about to depart, was drinking a glass of sherry. Without a word, he pushed the decanter towards Petherfield, and took a glass from a cupboard in the corner.

'Thought you'd be coming in,' he remarked laconically as he set down the glass before his caller. 'Of course, he's told you?'

Petherfield poured out the sherry and took a thoughtful sip. 'No mistake about it?' he asked. 'No possibilities of anything arising to upset it, eh? No relations likely to turn up, you know?'

'So far as I'm aware, the will's as sound, and your clerk's as safely established, as St Eanswythe's Church,' answered Haddlesey. 'I'd some sort of notion this was going to happen. The old man kind of hinted at it when he gave me the will. He'd already made provision for the housekeeper and the servants—gave 'em their little bits in cash, a fortnight ago, when he was taken ill.'

'Much?' inquired Petherfield.

'Gave the housekeeper a thousand, the two women two-fifty each, and the boy fifty pounds,' replied Haddlesey. 'The housekeeper, who'd known him many years, says it's a fact he hadn't a relation—even distant—in the world. No; young Denton's safe in the saddle, my lad!'

'And the amount he mentions is right — a hundred and sixty thousand?' asked Petherfield.

'Under the mark, if anything,' said Haddlesey. 'Nearer one hundred and seventy. Shillito has the whole lot—first-rate securities: Indian railways, Home railways, Government stock, and so on. Nice thing, Petherfield! And—what's he going to do?'

Petherfield set down his empty glass. 'We must make something out of him,' he said. 'He's raw and simple. He'll want coaching.'

Haddlesey winked. 'Well,' he observed, 'there's nobody better fitted to play that part than you! He's been with you—how long?'

'Took him in as office-boy ten years ago,' answered Petherfield. 'He was fifteen then—came out of the Board school. He's like the old man—no family to worry him. Don't know of any relatives of his.'

'Ay, well, he's one of the richest men in Normansholt now,' said Haddlesey, picking up his umbrella. 'Strange change — from a few shillings a week to six thousand a year!'

The two men parted outside Haddlesey's door, and Petherfield turned off in the direction of Hedgwick, a tiny hamlet on the borders of the town, where he had a villa residence, in which it rejoiced him to keep a certain amount of pretentious state. Kittie Parker had only voiced prevalent sentiment when she referred to the Petherfields as snobs. There were four of them—father, mother, a daughter, a son. Petherfield himself was a person who had sprung from obscurity. He had come to Normansholt as managing clerk to an old solicitor, whose daughter he married, and had done very well for himself. He was naturally inclined to grandeur; and his wife was an able second to him. As for his daughter Edytha, famed as the prettiest girl in Normansholt, she was one of those young persons who measure men by their bank balances. The son, Norman, was of like sentiments, and thanked his stars every day that to belong to the professional classes is next door to kinship with the do-nothings. Norman, at nineteen, sported a dinner-jacket every evening, and if he met an acquaintance at five o'clock in the afternoon bade him 'good-morning'—thereby signifying that he was not one of those who commit the unpardonable sin of dining in the middle of the day.

Mrs Petherfield and Edytha were already in their dinner-dresses when Petherfield walked into the drawing-room at The Acacias. Edytha, a willowy blonde, whose prettiness would have been remarkable if she had possessed any character or intelligence, was lazily turning over sheets of music strewn about the top of a grand piano; her mother, a little, sharp-featured woman, was trifling with some fancy-work near the fire. Pretentious as it was, the house was not too big, and a smell of roasting game floated from the kitchen. In ordinary circumstances, Petherfield would have sniffed and approved; as it was, he shut the door carefully behind him, tiptoed across the room, and drew his wife and daughter together with a glance.

'Whatever do you think's happened?' he asked with a knowing wink. 'You heard that the old man they called the Brown Nabob was dead—old Farmadale? Do you know?—God bless me!—I never heard of anything like it!—he's actually left that clerk of mine, Bellamy Denton, all his money! Every blessed penny of it!'

Edytha's apathetic eyes gleamed curiously as she suddenly turned on her father; as for Mrs Petherfield, she dropped her work on the floor, with a sharp exclamation. 'Tot!' she gasped, using a curiously inappropriate but well-known pet-name. 'You don't mean it! How much?'

'Getting on for two hundred thousand pounds,' replied Petherfield, who knew the charms of slight exaggeration. 'Every penny his! The fellow'll have—no, has!—some seven thousand a year!'

'At his own disposal?' asked Mrs Petherfield.

'All's his—lock, stock, barrel,' declared Petherfield. 'That fine old house—everything in it—and all the old chap had to leave. He's whole and sole master. And, by-the-by, he's coming to dinner. Be good to him! Two hundred thousand pounds—who wouldn't be good to it?'

Mrs Petherfield rose, laying her fancy-work aside. 'Cook's got two pheasants,' she said musingly. 'But there's another in the larder—there's just time. And we've soup and fish. I think we shall manage.'

'Manage!' laughed Petherfield. 'Do you suppose he ever sat down before to anything but plain roast or boiled? We'll manage!'

Mrs Petherfield left the drawing-room, and Petherfield glanced at his daughter. 'Two hundred thousand!' he repeated, with a wink. 'Case for your best bib-and-tucker, miss.'

Edytha, however, was already looking over herself, with the aid of the mirror.

'Not at all a bad sort of chap either,' remarked her father. 'The sort that a pretty woman could twist round her little finger.'

'You said you preferred me in pink the other night,' suggested Edytha. 'I've time'——

'Fair-haired women always look best in pink,' said Petherfield. 'Get into it! By-the-by, where's Norman?'

'Gone over to Silbridge,' replied Edytha. 'He'll stop the night there.'

'Thank the Lord!' remarked Norman's father. 'Denton'll feel more at home with us than with Master Norman's supercilious airs. Make yourself agreeable, my girl—to seven thousand a year!'

He went off chuckling, and vanished into his cellar as his daughter turned up the stairs to her room. Petherfield was famous as an epicure, and as a judge of wine. He was going to find some wine now that would warm Bellamy Denton's heart without getting into his head. Presently he emerged, carrying various bottles, and he had just set these on the sideboard in his dining-room when the parlour-maid brought Bellamy into the house.

Petherfield welcomed Bellamy as unconcernedly as if he had been used to seeing him in evening-clothes every night for a year. Secretly, he was amazed at the transformation, and at Bellamy's improved appearance; he was glad, too, to see that the young fellow was too genuinely innocent to betray self-consciousness. He shook him warmly by the hand and drew him into the dining-room. 'Glass of sherry after your walk, my dear fellow!' he said hospitably. 'Just time before I go up to change. Fine old stuff this; but,' he added, with a wink, as he thrust a glass into his guest's hand, 'I reckon there'll be some better in the cellars at Friargate House, eh?'

'There is some there, Mr Petherfield,' answered Bellamy. 'Yes, Mr Farmadale used to give me a glass or two of his old brown sherry when I

went to play chess with him. He said it was such as you couldn't buy nowadays.'

'Well, I shall be glad to try it with you, my boy,' said Petherfield, and raised his glass. 'And once more, my dear friend, a thousand congratulations, in which,' he continued, as Mrs Petherfield came swiftly in, 'my wife—and all of us—join heartily.'

Mrs Petherfield had hold of Bellamy's hand and was flapping it mildly before he fully realised that she was there. She smiled all over her face at him, and Bellamy grinned widely at her. 'My dear Mr Denton!' she gushed. 'As Mr Petherfield says, a thousand congratulations—from all of us, of course. So nice for you—so kind of the poor old gentleman! You must be so pleased!'

'Yes, ma'am—thank you, ma'am,' said Bellamy. 'Yes, I suppose so, Mrs Petherfield—I—I—the fact is, I don't quite realise it yet, ma'am.'

'Doesn't know whether he isn't dreaming,' said Petherfield. 'Very pleasant reality, I'm afraid, my boy. Take him into the drawing-room,' he went on, giving his guest an affectionate push towards the door. 'I must change.'

Bellamy followed Mrs Petherfield into the drawing-room with fear and trembling. He was mortally afraid of Edytha. Since her return from fashionable schools in London and Paris, three years before, he and Herbert Judd had looked upon Edytha as something utterly beyond their reach—a young goddess upon whom it was almost sacrilege to gaze. And now, as Mrs Petherfield graciously conducted him drawing-roomwards, he was remembering that Miss Petherfield had never given him more than a cool nod when he opened the door of her papa's office to her, and that she invariably cut him and Judd dead in the public street. Now he was actually going to sit at the same table with her; perhaps to pass the salt to her—he might even sit at her side.

'Of course you know my daughter,' Mrs Petherfield said off-handedly. 'All old friends, to be sure. Consider yourself entirely at home, my dear Mr Denton—so pleased to see you.'

Bellamy found Edytha's hand in his, and he held it for a moment as if he scarcely knew what to do with it. He heard Mrs Petherfield murmuring something about the cook, and saw her slip from the room, and then—then he suddenly discovered that Edytha had somehow steered him into a lounge close to the fire, and was sitting by him and talking.

'. . . . Such a delightful surprise it must have been for you!' Edytha was saying. 'And such a kind old gentleman! I suppose you'd been kind to him, of course—very nice of you.'

'Well—er—ah—I don't know,' replied Bellamy. 'I—I hadn't thought of it in that way, miss; I only used to play chess with him now and then.'

'You play chess?' said Edytha, throwing a world of admiring awe into her violet eyes. 'Oh, how very clever of you! I should love to play chess—but I fear it's beyond me. Only very clever people play chess.'

Bellamy was wondering if it would be polite manners to offer to play tutor, when Petherfield bustled in, having effected a lightning-artiste change in his dress. He caught his daughter's last word.

'You must teach her,' he said to Bellamy. 'You'll have lots of time on your hands now, my boy—lots. Unless, indeed, they persuade you to go into Parliament!'

'Parliament! Me, sir!' exclaimed Bellamy. 'I'——

'Ah, don't you make any mistake, Denton!' interrupted Petherfield. 'You'll soon find it out, my dear sir. The town will expect great things of you—now. Young man—ample, nay abundant, means—leisure—talents—abilities—oh, of course, Parliament! I see you, my dear young friend, on the very edge of a career!'

Five minutes later, however, Bellamy found himself on the edge of a chair in the dining-room, very bolt upright, and endeavouring to be very proper. He had never been in such company or surroundings in his life. Mrs Petherfield had inherited fine stores of silver, glass, and linen from her father; Edytha had a pretty taste in table-decoration. Bellamy found himself gazing at her across a mass of flowers. His own and Petherfield's glossy linen helped to give an air of brilliancy to the scene which confused him. Nor was he accustomed to eat his meals in a succession of courses, with an amazing multitude of knives, forks, and spoons, and a small array of glasses as weapons, and with a couple of deft parlour-maids dancing attendance upon him. But Petherfield cleverly kept him at his ease by a flood of small-talk and a constant supply of jokes and stories, and Bellamy began to feel that there was not so much stateliness and ceremony in these grand affairs as he had feared. Yet, would he be expected to do all this sort of thing in his newly acquired house? Would he have to dine in state every night, with a parlour-maid at his elbow watching every mouthful? Well, if so, he would take care that he always had company. But, even then, the irksomeness of having to do it every day would be awful. Why, on hot days in summer Mrs Parker and the Misses Parker made no objection if he and Bert Judd ate dinner in their shirt-sleeves!

The dinner came to an end at last, and Mrs and Miss Petherfield gracefully retired. The handmaidens drew the cloth, and solemnly placed before their master a decanter of port and a bunch of glasses.

Petherfield gave his guest a knowing look. 'I'm an old-fashioned fellow, Bellamy, my boy,'

he said. 'I like my port! And I've never had a suspicion of gout, either. This is some of my old '42. Try it.'

He had been careful not to press his claret on Bellamy at dinner, not being certain what the neophyte could stand. He put more faith in the port for warming Bellamy's heart.

'What do you think of that, now?' he asked as Bellamy sipped. 'Like it?'

'Seems beautiful, Mr Petherfield,' said Bellamy. 'But I'm no judge.'

'That'll come,' remarked Petherfield. 'I dare say you've some fine stuff at Friargate House. Ah, what you want to do, my boy, is to feel—already—that you've been in possession of that desirable residence, and its contents, and of your fortune all your life, eh?—to feel—yes, accustomed. You'll soon get into that feeling! Realise your luck, my boy—and live up to it! Of course, you'll want a few tips. Well, you know where to come. Myself—and my son Norman—are at your service—any time, Bellamy, my friend.'

'Thank you, sir; it's very kind of you,' responded Bellamy. 'I—I don't think I should like the Parliament idea, though. I'm—I'm all for a quiet life, Mr Petherfield.'

Petherfield laughed, and refilled his glass and pushed the decanter across.

'With your means, my boy,' he said, 'you can be for any mortal thing you fancy! A quiet, gentlemanly life, then—nice old house, a few thousands a year; ah, you'll do very well, my friend. When you get a wife, of course!' he added with a wink. 'And—mind what you're about in that way. You want a lady, you know—something to befit your position. Responsibilities of wealth and station, my boy, can't be avoided!'

He saw a slight look of alarm pass over Bellamy's freckles at this suggestion, and hastened to change the subject. And after the second glass of port he proposed the drawing-room, and music. Bellamy followed meekly—to hear Edytha sing French songs and play things that he didn't understand. And so the evening passed, and at ten o'clock he went home, warmed by a parting glass of Petherfield's very old whisky, and sucking absent-mindedly at one of Petherfield's best cigars. He was still in a whirl of wonder when he reached the Parker house and quietly let himself in—to find Evie, all alone, in the homely little living-room.

(Continued on page 804.)

MODERN METHODS OF RAILWAY ROBBERS.

By S. T. James.

I.

A SERIOUS item on the debit side of the balance-sheet of all big railway companies is the amount paid out to the public as compensation for the loss or the pilferage of goods whilst in transit. In addition to these amounts paid out in hard cash, the railways have to maintain a numerous and costly staff of clerks and inspectors for the investigation and settlement of merchandise claims.

This is an item of expense which might be very materially reduced if the demands sent in were as a rule just and reasonable ones, or if they were not in many cases actual breaches of commercial morality. For even if we set aside such claims as are made by people who live by their wits, and constantly infringe the Eighth Commandment in doing so, it would really seem that many persons who would scorn to rob their neighbour of a penny become strangely perverted in their views when dealing with a corporate body like a railway company. It is an old saying that a Board has no conscience; but there are many thousands of business people who appear to think that a railway company has a purse, and a long one, too, and that if they can succeed in putting their fingers into it without detection, they are to be congratulated as having done a smart thing for themselves without any one being the sufferer.

The trickery resorted to is astounding. There are various multiple firms who, two or three times weekly, forward large consignments of eggs by different railways to their branches all over the country. At one of these branches there are received, say, three consignments, each delivered by a different railway company. From one consignment perhaps twenty, maybe fifty, broken eggs are taken and put in a bucket. Then the manager adds to the bucket all his accidental breakages during the week, and presently rings up the London and North-Western Railway Company to tell them that a hundred eggs in the consignment just delivered are broken. Soon the London and North-Western claims inspector arrives to see the breakage. He is shown the bucket, and retires. Then the Midland Railway people are telephoned by the branch manager: 'Your drayman delivered us six cases of eggs yesterday from Brigg.' 'Yes!' 'There are a hundred of them broken. Will you send round to inspect them?' So the Midland claims inspector comes and sees the bucket. After he has gone the Great Western Company are communicated with in like manner. In due course the firm will receive settlement of three claims!

The railway companies have discovered, by co-ordinated tests, that when consignments delivered are unpacked in the presence of their representatives the claims are reduced to about a fifth; but, of course, it is impossible to have a railway representative present every time eggs are unpacked. This remedy would prove more expensive than the disease it cured, so that the 'inspection' method can only be resorted to periodically, when a particular firm's breakage claims become too frequent and outrageous. One Yorkshire firm was found out quite by accident. The railway claims inspector and the manager came to high words, and the railwayman, getting the worst of it, vented his rage on the bucket of broken eggs. Taking a kick at it, he upset the contents. Instead of a bucketful of broken eggs rolling on the floor, there fell out about twenty — and quite a lot of straw from underneath!

Many false claims are made for damage to castings and machinery. A firm of manufacturers making a piece of machinery find that during the process some crack or flaw has developed. This means a good deal of extra expense, and in addition will cause delay, and consequently annoyance, to their customers. So they seek a way out. The machinery is completed and loaded into a railway wagon, a consignment note is handed in to the station agent, and the traffic goes forward. The crack has been covered up so that it is indistinguishable to the unexpert eyes of a railwayman. The probability is that the railway journey enlarges the crack or makes the flaw more apparent, but whether it does or not, the consignees' experienced buyers soon see that all is not well; the railway company's delivery-sheet is endorsed accordingly, and afterwards a claim for the damage is sent in. The railway company have to admit that they noticed nothing wrong when the casting was accepted at the sending-station for conveyance, and as it was undoubtedly cracked on delivery, they have no alternative but to pay the sum demanded.

Another trick of a somewhat similar nature, and one that is often resorted to, consists in placing broken or defective articles in cases or boxes—anything to hide them from sight. Then, after delivery to the consignees, the damage is discovered, and the senders say it must have taken place during rail transit, as the article was certainly in good order when despatched. Railway companies have the right to open and examine any receptacle, and do so in dealing with 'suspects;' but obviously they cannot afford to break open every case or box handed to them for conveyance, as, besides the expense, there would be also the time and the trouble involved, and the annoyance caused to innocent firms. So, although breakages are occasionally discovered, detection does not do much good, since the railway authorities are quite unable to prove intent to defraud. The senders can always allege that they were unaware of the damage, and blame the carelessness of one of their employees.

II.

A trick which is often tried, and which sometimes, if not always, succeeds, is that of the rogue who addresses his goods to one place and consigns them to another. The consignment note is dealt with by clerks in the office; the goods are dealt with by loaders in the goods-yard; and although the two should be compared by the checker, this is often done very perfunctorily and carelessly, particularly at big depots where hundreds of consignments are handled hourly. Railway checkers have always been overworked, and until recently were badly underpaid, and it is not surprising to find that they often slip through their duties in the easiest possible manner. There is thus good chance of a discrepancy between the label and the consignment note passing undetected. Then, of course, the goods are sent to the place to which they are addressed, and are delivered there. After a little time the sender complains to the railway company that they have not delivered the goods consigned to So-and-so on such a date. The railway company turn up their consignment note, obtain reference to their invoice, and in due course find out that the goods have not been delivered to the address to which they were consigned. So they are called upon to pay the value. Even if they are suspicious, it is impossible to expose the trick unless the trickster can be trapped into supplying the evidence of his own guilt. If the sending-station checker discovers, on the goods being tendered for conveyance, that the address on the consignment note differs from that on the label, even then it is impossible to prove conspiracy to defraud, for the sender simply pleads that it is a *bona-fide* error!

A typical instance of the roguery that is rampant to-day was exposed recently. A trader had an empty wagon put into his works for loading, but asked for the wagon to be tared first; and this was done. When the vehicle was loaded up it was again weighed, and the tare previously obtained being subtracted from the gross gave the net weight of the contents, on which the trader demanded payment for the goods. He was selling sand to the engineer of the railway company. It happened that there was already grave suspicion in the minds of the railway people as to the honesty of this trader's dealings, and on close investigation it was discovered that he had been systematically loading up wagons with a greater tare than those weighed empty for him to load. In the instance which led to the discovery of the trick, the empty wagon placed at his disposal for loading had a tare of four tons. He had put the sand into a truck with a tare of five tons. The gross being fifteen tons, he thus obtained credit for eleven tons, whereas there were only ten tons in

the truck! Of course, there had been considerable laxity on the railway company's part to allow such a swindle, for, had they recorded the number of the wagon they tared, no such trick would have been possible.

When a railway wagon is first put into commission it is carefully weighed, and the tare is painted on the side. This is to obviate the necessity for weighing the empty truck every time before it is loaded. It has been found that privately owned railway trucks have for years carried a painted tare nearly a ton different from the actual. Carriage is, of course, charged only on the net weight of the goods contained in the wagons, and by making the painted tare a ton more than the actual, the trader gets a ton of goods carried free on every journey the truck makes.

III.

Even more amazing are the tricks resorted to by people who desire their goods carried free. They seem to think that a railway company is a philanthropic institution which should require no payment whatever for services rendered, and since the railway companies cannot agree with them, they seek to do by stealth what it is impossible to do openly. A favourite trick of a certain dishonest section of the community is to bring their goods to the depot fully addressed to the customer, with a carriage-paid label, but they take care that no sender's name is shown, and no consignment note is handed in. If any one asks for a consignment note, some excuse is made—'left it at the office,' or 'given it to another man.' The goods are duly sent forward, but through the absence of a consignment note, no charge is made for carriage. The paid label prevents consignee having to pay at the other end, and the result is the goods are carried free. The only way to expose this trick is to enlist consignee's help, and obtain from him the name and address of the sender; but naturally the consignee is not often willing to help in this way, since to do so would be to endanger trade relationships.

Owing to the carelessness of carters in delivering goods, it very often happens that no signature is taken admitting receipt, as should always be done. This gives the dishonest person a further opportunity. In a few weeks' time he will call at the railway station and say he has not received his box or his bag, and when the railway company turn up their delivery-sheet, they find themselves quite unable to prove that the box or the bag has been handed over to him. Accordingly he declines payment of the carriage; and although the railway company may be morally certain they effected delivery, they cannot prove it, and so dare not take action to enforce the payment.

Where traffic is carried at station to station rates, and has to be fetched from the depot by consignee himself, a slightly different method is adopted. On hearing that his goods have arrived, the swindler goes to the station and fetches them away unostentatiously, and without calling to sign for them. At a big goods depot this is not too difficult, for there are several entrances and exits, often with no check whatever on comings and goings. A few days later he goes again, and this time calls at the office, produces his letter or card of advice, and asks where the goods are. Naturally they cannot be found. If any one happens to remember seeing them fetched away, the caller is reminded of the fact. Then he makes a plausible excuse. 'I thought it was another lot,' or, 'My man must have fetched them away and never told me.' Only too often everything passes off favourably, and the trick remains undetected, or at any rate unproved. The rogue can safely decline payment of the carriage charges, and probably gets partial payment of a claim for the value of the goods.

There are other people who, whilst not denying the right of railway companies to payment of a carriage charge, consider that those made are too heavy, and seek to obtain some rebate. A favourite dodge of theirs is to put various commodities in hampers, bales, or baskets—anything to screen them from sight—and then declare them as something for which the rate will be less; for, of course, different classes of goods are carried at different rates, and for an equal journey a box of straw paillasses would cost less than a box of equal weight containing straw hats.

Another little trick practised as often as is consistent with safety is that of the man who fills in a false name and address on the consignment note, carriage to be paid by the consignee on application. When the collector calls for the money, it is found that there is no such person at the address given.

The 'part lot' trick is one adopted chiefly by large firms. Let us suppose that a Birmingham firm have thirty small consignments, each weighing one or two hundredweights, for delivery in different parts of London. Each is fully addressed, and each should, of course, be consigned to a different London station — the one nearest the address. If this is done, carriage on each is charged separately; and as the rate per ton for a small weight is larger than that for a big weight, it will be seen that the thirty separate consignments will cost more than would one large lot. The Birmingham firm would, therefore, like to send the goods in one lot so as to take advantage of the cheaper rate, but if they do this they must consign all to one London station, which may be many miles from the addresses to which some of the lots have to be delivered. This means that extra charges would be incurred for cartage across London, and these would amount to more than had been saved in carriage. The way in which the difficulty is overcome is as ingenious as it is unfair. The senders simply consign all the goods to London, and throw upon the railway the onus of selecting a station or stations in London. If

all the consignments are sent to one station and charged at the cheaper rate, the firm decline to pay cartage and delivery charges, alleging that the railway people should have sent each consignment separately to the nearest London station, when no such charges would have been incurred. On the other hand, should each consignment be forwarded to the station nearest the address, the senders decline to pay the higher rates on each separately, holding that all the goods formed one consignment and should have been forwarded to one station, being charged at the cheapest rate. So that, whatever the railway people do, they are wrong. The obvious and only remedy is for them to insist upon each consignment being separately ordered to a particular London station; but unfortunately this may not be practicable, for each day there are certain restrictions on the forwarding of goods to London stations, some of which are always closed owing to congestion.

These tricks and dodges, both to obtain payment of false claims and to obtain free conveyance of goods, are especially easy to private-siding firms. Such people load and unload, sort and count, everything that goes into or comes from their works. The railway company very often do not even see the goods, and have to rely solely upon the firms for a list of what is put into or taken from a truck. Thus they are entirely in the hands of the traders, and unless the latter are absolutely honest the railway company can be defrauded to an unlimited extent.

IV.

Turning from the railway swindler to the railway thief, we find that there is equal difficulty in operating against dishonesty. There is a whole army of railway police and detectives employed against the pilferer, but still the losses go on to the extent of thousands of pounds annually, for fully three-quarters of a railway company's staff are employed in handling goods and merchandise, so that the temptation to steal is constant.

Cases that should contain beer, wine, and spirits arrive, with depressing frequency, containing nothing but empty bottles. Eatables of every kind disappear with a regularity that becomes monotonous. Chocolates and confectionery always suffered a high percentage of loss, but since women became employed as goods porters the percentage has increased! Such thefts as these do away with the necessity for 'lifting' the spoil, and are therefore less risky, and, in consequence, much favoured.

Many robberies are perpetrated at sidings and junctions where trains are stopped for shunting purposes. The *modus operandi* of the thief is to cut a slit in the sheets covering the truck, and creep through. Once he is inside, the contents of the vehicle are ransacked and such articles selected as are likely to be of some value and yet are not too bulky to be carried away. These are pitched out of the wagon, and the thief follows, readjusting the sheet so far as possible. Afterwards the stolen property is rolled down the embankment and hidden in some dry ditch or hedge-bottom until it can safely be taken away. Despite the watchfulness of guard and driver, innumerable robberies of the kind are committed at lonely sidings, especially during the long, dark nights of winter.

A short time ago, at a large goods depot in the north, the mysterious disappearance of various goods became almost a daily occurrence. Each lot was received at the depot, checked, and placed in the shed, being left there for a few hours whilst waiting to be loaded into the wagon, or, in the case of received traffic, awaiting loading on the drays for delivery. When the time for loading came, parcels could not be found. At length the losses became so serious that watchmen were set day and night, but still the pilferage went on. Although extra watchmen were placed in hiding behind large piles of goods conveniently left for the purpose, it was all without avail. Whilst walking about the goods-shed one day, a police-officer noticed that in a certain place some of the planking which faced the space between the ground and the floor of the platform looked loose, as if it had recently been disturbed. On trying the planks he found that he could move them aside without difficulty, and there was revealed to him a dark cavity between the ground and the floor of the platform. He crawled in, and found several recently stolen parcels. Late that night the policeman secretly crept into the cavity, and in the cramped, confined space spent the most uncomfortable night of his life. But between three and four next morning, when the first signs of the coming day's work were beginning to be heard, his patience and suffering were rewarded. Footsteps approached, and stopped outside the hiding-place. There was a moment's pause; then the loose boards were pulled aside. Hands holding a stolen parcel were thrust inside the hole. Already the policeman had his handcuffs out, and knocking the parcel aside, he put on the bracelets in a twinkling. The thief turned out to be a man who came on duty early to help with the fish, &c. He had taken the parcels whilst the watchman was absent for a few minutes opening the offices.

PEPITA.

A DAUGHTER OF THE PAMPAS.

By H. HUNTER.

PART I.

I.

'HOW late the men are!' said Pepita, turning from the window; and Tonia Perez, smiling a crafty smile, chuckled to herself.

The window overlooked the trail to the nearest town—San Gregorio; and Pepita, if she had gone to it once that afternoon, had gone twenty times.

'The men!' exclaimed Tonia, a leer on her lips. ''Tis only of one man you are thinking, my dear Pepita—Don Jamie, the young *caballero*, with eyes blue as the heavens, teeth whiter than milk, and a smile always on his lips. He loves you, and'——

'How dare you?' broke in Pepita, her face scarlet.

'Tut-tut! Haven't I eyes in my head? And a fine, handsome husband he'll make, as well as a rich one. But don't forget that his father, the old Don, is said to have a wife already picked out for him.'

Biting her lip, the girl turned again to the window. 'What can be delaying them?' she said. 'They should have been back this morning. Señor Liddell has asked about them quite a dozen times.'

'Been robbed, p'r'aps—robbed and murdered,' suggested Tonia, who knew that Don Jamie would be bringing back with him a heavy sum from San Gregorio. 'Been met by Black Michael and his band of desperados.'

A shiver ran through Pepita, who started at the mention of the name; while Tonia curled her lip. There was no love lost between the rough, coarse woman and the pretty, dark-eyed girl who managed the rancher's household; and the woman was wondering what Don Angus would do when she told him something she had heard on a recent visit to the town.

'But Don Jamie took five men with him,' said Pepita.

'Ah! but San Gregorio is a three-days' journey with the cattle; and there are places on the road where one determined man could easily hold up twenty.'

'Hark!' The girl ran eagerly to the window. 'Yes,' she cried, clapping her hands, 'they're coming. Hurry with the supper, Tonia.'

'Pepita!' roared Angus Liddell, a great, shaggy Scot with the frame of a giant. 'Did I hear you say they were coming?'

'Yes, señor. They've passed the turn in the trail, Don Jamie leading, and the five *gauchos* strung out behind him.'

A few minutes later the men had pulled up; and Pepita, flinging a shawl over her shoulders, went out.

'Hello, little one!' said young Liddell, laughing.

'How late you are!' she said. 'It's nearly dark. Don Angus has been worrying about you.'

'And my little girl? Hasn't she?'

'Yes,' she answered simply. 'I went to the window so many times that Tonia'——

But James Liddell had slipped his arm round her slender waist, drawn her to him, and was searching for her lips.

'And what did you think?'

'That you had been robbed—killed.'

'My poor, dear, sweet, gentle, soft-eyed Pepita, however came you to get such a ruddy-coloured idea into your pretty head?'

'Well, Tonia kept on talking about Black Michael and the awful things he had done. But what did make you so late? Something, I'm sure.'

'Our horses strayed from camp last night, and we had a long search for them.'

She was trembling; and drawing her closer to him, Liddell was about to kiss her again, when she twisted round in his arms, holding herself away. 'Don't, please! Don't, Jamie!' she whispered. 'Let me go.'

But he held her the tighter. 'Why? Haven't I told you many times that I love you—that'——

'Yes, but'—she drew a long breath—'your father! I am only his servant; and you'——

'I am his son. But he must give his consent, or I'll marry you without it.'

The men had gone to their quarters. The two were alone under the vast dome of the dark blue heavens dotted with silvery stars. For a moment James Liddell—Don Jamie—regarded her in the uncertain light. Then he crushed her in his arms, his face working with conflicting emotions, his cheek laid against hers. And this time she made no struggle. Something primal and compelling stirred within her, and with a sob she clasped her arms tightly about him.

'Core of my heart—my other half,' he murmured as he covered her burning face with kisses, 'say you love me. Say you love me, Pepita.'

'Love you! I would die for you, Jamie,' she sobbed. 'I've nothing to give you but myself; while you—if you don't anger your father—you'll have money and land, flocks and herds.'

'Money and land!' he scoffed. 'And what good will they be if I haven't got you? Do you

think I value you less than the horses and the cattle? No; I can rub along without them if need be, same as dad did when he first settled out here. But you I must have, or go to everlasting smash. Now, will you be ready to come with me if I have to leave here?'

'Don't ask me, Jamie. It would break my heart to part with you, dear; but I could never be happy if I thought that I'd separated you from your father.'

'But you wouldn't be to blame,' he insisted. 'It would be his fault.'

'Jamie!' she exclaimed hurriedly, 'there's Tonia at the door. She's missed me. If she sees us together she'll tell the master. Go into the house, quick!'

'Well,' he said, his jaw grim with determination, 'I'll go now; but I'll have it out with the old dad before I sleep.'

II.

Supper was over, and the ranchero, Don Angus Liddell, had withdrawn to the room where he spent most of his time indoors, to indulge in an hour's meditation, &c., before retiring.

The meal had afforded Don Jamie no opening for broaching the subject nearest his heart; and, after soothing his nerves with a cigarette, he sought his father to pay over the money realised from the sale of the cattle.

'You ought not to keep your money in the house, father,' said Jamie, when the old man, after examining each note and testing each coin, had locked them up in his strong-box.

'Why?' snapped Angus, who was evidently in a surly mood.

'Well, nobody else does. Banks are the places in which to keep money.'

'Are they? Dinna ye ken that I've had ma fill o' banks?'

He had lost heavily through a bank failure some years before.

'Anyhow, it's bad to have it known that you keep large sums in the house,' persisted Jamie.

The old man frowned at the young one for a moment without speaking, and then abruptly changed the subject. 'What made ye so late in getting back, Jamie?'

'You asked me that half-a-dozen times at supper,' said the young man irritably. 'The horses strayed. Don't you believe me?' he said, flushing under the sharp look directed towards him by his father.

'It's queer how them horses could have strayed, if'——

'Tell me I'm lying, then.' Jamie's own mood was not conciliatory.

'It's easy to blame the horses. I hope ye hanna been wastin' your time and injurin' your health in them low roadside groggeries which are the curse o' the country. Remember, Jamie, remember'—a stern lecture in his eyes and in the lines of his rather thin lips—'what I'm feart you sometimes forget—that you come of a respectable Scots family; and'——

'Look here, dad!' cried Jamie, who guessed that Tonia's tongue had been running, and whose temper was now properly alight. 'I may as well tell you here and now that I'm fairly fed up with being treated like a brat in short breeches. I've had enough of it, and I'm not going to stand it any longer. I'm a full-grown man, and the manager of this ranch; yet you bully me as if I was the stupidest *gaucho* on the place. Well, understand, this is the end of it.'

For the moment Don Angus was so astonished that he was bereft of speech. The next he had jumped to his feet, and pointing at Jamie, 'Man!' he roared—'man! you're naught but a moonstruck calf hanging on to the skirts of yon Argentine co'——

'Father!' For a full minute the two men stood glaring at each other like tigers about to spring. 'Remember Pepita's in the kitchen, and may hear you.'

'I hope she does,' exclaimed Don Angus. 'Anyway, I'll make sure.' And raising his voice, he continued: 'To-morrow that scheming hussy—that dirty Mexican cat—clears out of here, bag and baggage. Now, I hope she's heard that.'

Something like a spark flashed in James Liddell's grayish-blue eyes, and then was gone. 'Father,' he said quietly, 'Pepita has promised to be my wife.'

'Eh?'

'Pepita has promised to be my wife.'

The old Don looked as if he was going to have a fit. He turned purple in the face. The veins at his temples swelled. He frothed at the mouth.

'W-wife!' he stammered, an ugly sneer on his lips. 'Wife! A girl of the pampas! A'——

'Stop!' thundered Jamie, clenching his fist and advancing a step. 'Stop! before I forget you're my father, and remember only the insults heaped on the woman I love.'

'Marry her, and I'll cut you off with a *peso!*' Jamie shrugged. 'Going in for melodrama, eh? Going to play the faithful unto death stunt. Well, you won't get a cent of my money, or a foot of my land. You ought to go on the stage.' Jamie stood motionless, his arms folded, and a scowl in his blue eyes. A black anger overwhelmed him. 'Nothing more to say?' The tone was exasperating.

'Yes. You can keep your money—and your land too; and I'll keep Pepita. I wonder if you ever loved my mother.'

The old man's head went up, and fire flashed from his eye. Then his mood changed abruptly. 'Jamie, lad,' he said wistfully, 'you wudna lea' your old father for yon slip of a girl? Tell me you wudna.'

'Not unless you force me.'

'Ah!' And Don Angus sank down in his chair, stern-faced and angry. Was this strong, bronzed six-footer, with the square jaw, firm mouth, and steady eye, really his little Jamie—the bairn he used to carry on his shoulder and toss in the air?

Don Angus glanced up at him furtively. Then suddenly he flung down his trump card. 'Marry her, and you marry into a family of thieves, cattle-lifters, and cut-throats. If that's the kind of folk you want to mix up with, do it; but out of my heart and home you go for ever.' Jamie was silent. 'Do you know who she is?' barked Don Angus, a marrow-chilling smile creeping over his face as he watched the face of his son. 'The sister of that bluidy murderer, robber, and ravisher, Black Michael—an outlaw with a price on his head. And that's the woman ye want to gie me for a daughter, is it, boy? Shame on ye, lad!'

Jamie paled a little. His amazement was genuine. The old man laughed derisively and reached for a cigar. The laugh maddened the 'boy.' He shot a short, sharp question. 'Who told you that?'

'Tonia!'

Jamie struck the table with his clenched fist. 'It's a lie! Do you hear, father? It's a lie! That woman 's been jealous of Pepita ever since the girl came here.'

'Well, some of the *gauchos* have been saying the same thing.'

'The *gauchos!* Tonia and the *gauchos!*' said Jamie scornfully. 'And you stoop to listen to the scandal and gossip of the ranch!'

Don Angus's nose twitched slightly. 'Well, anyway,' he snarled, 'understand that no sister of Black Michael stays under my roof, either as servant or—otherwise. I may think mysel' lucky that I hanna been robbed and murdered in my bed before this. But I'm taking no more chances. She shall clear out to-morrow.'

His teeth clenched on his cigar till it was bitten in two. He threw the ends into the fireplace, slewed round in his chair, and turned his back on his son.

'Then—you'——

'I'll listen to no more love-twaddle.' The old man threw the words over his shoulder. He had hardened again. 'The girl goes to-morrow—sure! And if you *will* tie yourself up to her tail, you can go with her. But you'll take my curse wi' you, lad, instead o' my blessin'. I'll nivver forgie thee, Jamie,' he cried, suddenly swinging round, his strong face set in hard lines, 'Nivver—nivver! To lea' me to go with that'——

But it was a face as strong and stern as his own which confronted him. If anything, the corrugations were deeper, the powerful features more rigidly set. A rush of righteous anger swept over the younger man; but with a splendid effort he checked its expression.

'I have made my choice,' he said quietly, and slowly left the room.

. . . . . .

In the kitchen he found Pepita bent over the table, her head resting on her arms. She trembled when he touched her.

'You heard?' he said briefly.

'I couldn't help hearing. Oh Jamie!'

'There, don't cry, Pepita—don't cry! I'm through with him, anyhow. I shake the dust of the ranch off my feet to-morrow. We'll go down to San Gregorio, you and I, get married, and start'——

'Married!' She looked up quickly. 'The son of Don Angus to the sister of Black Michael!'

'I don't care whose sister you are. But I know you're the woman I want—the woman I love; and—we can cut out Black Michael, anyway. Will you marry me, Pepita?'

He moved to take her in his arms, but she held up her hand. 'Leave me now, please, Jamie,' she urged. 'I'm glad you came in—that you didn't go up to your room without—without coming in.'

'I love you, Pepita,' he said, stooping and kissing her.

'Yes; but I want to be alone for a while to think this matter out.'

'Well, don't forget,' he urged, grasping her hand and squeezing it till her fingers cracked, 'that I'm ready to marry you as soon as we can find a padre to tie the big knot. You'll give me your answer in the morning, girlie? Sure?'

'Yes, in the morning, Jamie'—she turned away her head so that he did not see the quiver of her underlip—'you'll get it in the morning.'

(*Continued on page 814.*)

BOGLES.

THE bogles that they tell us of lived very long ago;
So when our cousins come to stay we take them out to show
The standing-stones where warlocks danced, where roared the water-bull,
The Ghaistie's Mill, the Bodach's Road above the Witches' Pool.

That is by day. Indoors at dusk the passages and stairs
Seem full of shadows, strange and grim, to trip one unawares;
And later, when we are in bed and nurse puts out the light,
The fire then shows us curious things—they only come at night.

Dark shapes keep moving on the walls; some spring, some dance, some creep;
And many eerie sounds are heard. How can one go to sleep?
It would be very easy if one really just could *know*
That wraiths and kelpies and such things lived only long ago!

MARIA STEUART.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE SINGAPORE MUTINY AND OTHER WAR EXPERIENCES.

By E. D. Ward.

I.

ON 4th August 1914 I was employed with a firm of merchants in Singapore and leading an ordinary civilian life. By 5th August I had been caught up in the cogs of the military machine, from which I was not to be released for four and a half years.

The most striking aspect of those early days in Singapore was the prevalence of rumours—I understand that we were not unique in that respect. Regularly every few days the German Fleet was destroyed; occasionally it was the British Fleet that suffered. For the first week or two our duties were mainly composed of manning the forts, guarding cable-ends, &c., and very dull it was, but at least we were able to visit our offices occasionally and make up arrears of work.

Later on the regular battalion stationed in Singapore—the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry—was sent home, and almost simultaneously it was decided to intern all Germans in the colony; consequently we had far less time on our hands. The Germans were interned on the quarantine island, St John's Island, which lies about three miles out of the harbour.

It is a delightful place, and was entirely uninhabited except for our prisoners and ourselves. There being no means whatever of escape, strict guard was unnecessary. We all remained on the island until December 1914, when it was decided to move the internment camp to the mainland, and utilise for the purpose the barracks vacated by the K.O.Y.L.I. This was a very unwise move, as events were to prove.

On 15th February 1915 the 5th (Native) Light Infantry, who had been sent from India to assist in guard duties, mutinied, and one of their first acts was to release the German prisoners, a number of whom got clear away to Java and other Dutch islands. It has since been definitely established that the prisoners had in some manner contrived to 'get at' the native regiment, and had, in fact, engineered the whole business. The matter was the more regrettable in that the regiment was one of those that remained loyal during the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

Very little is known in Britain about either the causes or the events of the Singapore mutiny; indeed, there are many points about it that will not bear very close investigation if reputations are to be saved.

As has been said, the affair started on 15th February—a date carefully chosen because it was the Chinese New Year and a general holiday, and the European population would certainly be scattered at golf, tennis, and the like.

The mutiny broke out in the early afternoon at the native barracks, and the first move of the mutineers was to shoot down such of the British officers as were on parade, and seize the ammunition store. The alarm was promptly given, and a scratch force hurriedly got together. By a stroke of good fortune two organised bodies of troops were immediately available. A river gunboat—H.M.S. *Cadmus*—happened to be in port, and by utilising every available man was able to provide a force of about a hundred trained men, with two Maxim-guns. It also chanced that the Machine-Gun Detachment of the Singapore Volunteers was doing a field-firing test on one of the islands in the harbour, and was able to furnish about forty trained machine-gunners, with two guns. It was largely due to the prompt action and the skilful handling of these two units that a very serious disaster was averted.

The composite force assembled at the P. and O. wharf at the west end of the city, and immediately pushed out strong patrols to establish touch with the mutineers, whose barracks were about two miles farther west. Prior to this offensive movement a party of mutineers had made their way to the internment camp, which lay to the north of the city, had shot down the guard, and—as has been told—released the Germans interned there. Another party went over the Straits into Johore, but they were dealt with by the troops of the Sultan, and had no influence on the operations in Singapore.

It should here be noted that no Germans actively sided with the mutineers or bore arms against us. Whether they had sufficient delicacy of feeling not to side with mutinous natives against white men, or whether they feared the ultimate consequences, history does not relate.

It was during the first few hours, and before a sufficient force could be assembled, that most

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of the British casualties occurred. The mutineers indulged in an orgy of murder, and about forty unarmed civilians were, at various times and places, shot down in cold blood.

On the night of the 15th-16th a strong defensive line was formed between the city and the native barracks. Had an attack in force been made the situation might well have been critical; as it was, we were left in comparative peace. During the night the British force was considerably augmented; most of the remainder of the Singapore Volunteers were able to make their way up, a few regular gunners and sappers were drawn from the forts, and a number of armed civilians reported for duty. Meanwhile the authorities in the city had not been idle. All the women and children were put aboard such ships as were available and were sent out to sea, wireless S.O.S. messages were despatched broadcast, and the principal entrances to the city were barricaded and guarded by 'The Veterans' (men over military age).

At daybreak the force numbered about 350, and a forward move was made, mainly with the object of relieving the commanding officer of the native regiment, who, with several ladies, some other officers, and a party of about twenty of the Malay States Volunteer Rifles, had been besieged all night in the C.O.'s bungalow.

The action became general, and was entirely successful. It was, indeed, the only severe fighting that took place. The mutineers were driven back in disorder, and split up into scattered parties. Several hundred surrendered without further ado. The British casualties were light.

In the course of the next few days help arrived from all quarters. A half-battalion of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry (T.) was sent down from Rangoon, and French, Japanese, and Russian warships arrived and landed parties; while the Sultan of Johore sent over some of his personal troops. It is interesting to note that the Russian boat was that five-funnelled cruiser afterwards so well known in the Dardanelles under the sobriquet of 'The Packet of Woodbines.'

Although these units were too late for the heavy fighting, their assistance was invaluable in rounding up the scattered parties of mutineers. It would have been an impossible task for 350 men.

II.

The rounding-up was a most unpleasant business. The island—as distinct from the town—of Singapore is largely under cultivation for pine-apples. For the benefit of the uninitiated, it is permissible to explain that the pine-apple grows on a shrub similar to those one calls in England by the generic name of *cactus*. It can well be imagined that to walk through a cactus plantation in thin drill shorts, with bare knees, and with the chance of a desperate native with a loaded rifle suddenly bobbing up, is *not* an enjoyable experience, either physically or mentally. Such parts of the island as are not under cultivation are still jungle, and abound with leeches and mosquitoes, and occasionally snakes—again not a region one would explore for pleasure.

By the middle of March all the parties had been accounted for, and after the necessary court-martial proceedings, about fifty mutineers were sentenced to be shot in public.

The memory of those executions will always remain with me. They took place outside the jail, the wall of which made the background, while every point of high ground in the vicinity was crowded with spectators. It is estimated that 50,000 natives were present at the first execution. The usual hollow square was formed, with the wall as the fourth side, and the firing-party in the foreground. The prisoners were led out, and placed at regular intervals along the wall. Their hands and feet were bound, but, at their own request, their eyes were left unbandaged; nor were they supported by chains or other means. Cold-blooded murderers though they were, they died bravely. The provost-marshal read out the sentences in various native dialects, and finally in English, ending with the fateful words, 'Thus justice is done.' The officer in charge of the firing-party then proceeded with the execution. In this connection it may be noted that there were five rifles—all loaded—to each mutineer. The prevalent idea that only a certain proportion of the rifles of a firing-party are loaded is, I believe, a popular fallacy. When the volley had been fired there was a pause of a minute, after which the medical officer, accompanied by an officer with a loaded revolver, visited each body. In the unlikely event of any body showing signs of life, it was the duty of this unfortunate officer to administer the *coup-de-grâce*. I am thankful to say that his services were not required at any of the four executions at which it was my lot to be present. Finally the bodies were removed on stretchers by those mutineers who had received terms of imprisonment only.

Thus ended the Singapore mutiny—a very small event, as it happened; but had not H.M.S. *Cadmus* been in port at the time of the outbreak, it is impossible to say what the consequences might have been, not only in the Straits Settlements, but also in India. It is much to be deplored that the War Office do not recognise Singapore as a 'theatre of war,' as the troops engaged in the suppression of the mutiny are, therefore, not entitled to wear the 1914–1915 star, nor does their service count towards the award of a war chevron.

III.

To those of us who were anxious to tackle the Hun in Europe the mutiny came as a great setback. The authorities very naturally were averse

to men leaving the country, preferring to retain them for local defence in case of further need; and so the old routine of guard duties continued for another year.

In the spring of 1916 the situation was much easier, and I managed to get permission to leave, and reached England without mishap. Whilst traversing the Mediterranean each man on board was made personally responsible for a lady—to put on her life-belt, see her into a boat, and so forth, in case of accidents. The particular lady who fell to my lot had passed the first slimness of youth, and I can recall to this day the trouble I had, at a dress rehearsal, in finding the suitable words in which to tell her that the tapes of her life-belt would not meet at the back.

After a few months' training in England I was sent on draft to Salonika, much to my annoyance, since in my ignorance I hankered after France. The Salonika front in those days was not very exciting; in fact, it never was until towards the end.

The ordinary Bulgar soldier (as distinct from his officer) is, on rare occasions, not a bad sportsman at heart.

In order to understand the following story, it must be borne in mind that the trenches in Salonika, unlike those in France, were often as much as a mile apart, sometimes more. Consequently raiding on a small scale was never so popular as in France; large raids, with considerable artillery preparation, were more in favour. It was after one of these raids that a certain artillery officer, searching the landscape with his glasses for evidence of the damage done by his guns, noticed a conveniently large and deep shell-hole within a few hundred yards of the Bulgar lines. The idea immediately occurred to him to run out a telephone-wire by night, and lie 'doggo' in the hole by day, the while directing his guns with accuracy on suspected M.G. emplacements, &c. The scheme naturally involved some risk; the hole was over a mile off, and he might easily bump into a patrol, in which case, encumbered with the necessary apparatus, he stood a poor chance of getting away. Even when safely established in the shell-hole, he might be spotted during the day. Eventually he obtained permission to go alone and take his chance.

He decided to make two journeys—the first to pay out the reel of wire, the second to carry his instrument, rations, and other things. The night was luckily dark, and forth he sallied, paying out the wire on his way. All went well, and he arrived safely at the shell-hole, dumped the reel, and went back for his second burden. On setting out again from his own trench he naturally let the paid-out wire run through his fingers to guide him. He had gone only a few hundred yards when, to his utter astonishment, he encountered his original reel of wire. When he stooped down to examine this remarkable phenomenon, his eyes were attracted by a notice, written in good English and fastened to the reel: 'With the compliments of Bulgaria'!

The solution of the mystery was then obvious. A Bulgar sentry had seen or heard him on his first trip out, had found the wire, guessed its meaning, and rolled it up again behind him as he went back. Nothing would have been easier than to have ambushed the unfortunate officer on his return and shot him down. But nothing so banal appealed to this sentry. From his knowledge of English, it would appear that at some time he had had the opportunity of appreciating and cultivating an Englishman's sense of humour.

The shell-hole remained unoccupied!

A further instance of Bulgar methods shows considerable traces of German training. A characteristic of Macedonia is the number of tortoises to be seen. During trench-raids, what were apparently tortoises were frequently to be found in the bottom of the enemy trench. No man likes to tread on an animal, and the natural instinct is to kick it aside. Unfortunately numbers of seeming tortoises were merely painted metal caps of cylinders of poison-gas. An ingenious trick, but one which was soon guarded against.

IV.

In March 1917 the powers that be decided to send me home to take a commission, and I shook the dust of Salonika—it was dust by that time—from off my feet with thankfulness. I say thankfulness advisedly. While we were waiting at Summerhill Camp for embarkation it was heavily bombed by enemy aircraft, and over 150 casualties resulted. Once again I reached England without mishap.

After the usual cadet training I was sent on draft to Palestine, again to my great annoyance, as I was still pining for France. Let me here confess, however, that of all my campaigning the period spent in Palestine was the most enjoyable—if such an epithet may be used of war. There was none of the forced inactivity of Salonika, and none of the organised murder of France. It was a soldiers' campaign—a campaign of movement and tactics.

I joined my unit just before the final attack on Jerusalem. The night before the assault I was bivouacked on the very spot from which Richard I. is said to have looked down on Jerusalem and then turned away, saying that his heart was broken because he could go no farther.

Jerusalem looks beautiful from a distance with its white domes and towers silhouetted against the green of the Mount of Olives, but it is only too true in this case that distance lends enchantment. On closer inspection, the city is, or, rather, was—we have cleaned it up considerably—every bit as dirty and squalid as any other Eastern town. To the antiquary and the parson it may indeed be a city of gold, but to the commonplace British soldier it is a town of

dirt and smells, inhabited by thieves with a marked German accent. As for milk and honey—well, in December 1917 the only milk available was that put up in tins by Messrs Nestlé and Co. for the use of the British Army; while the honey had been made in Germany, and each pot had a bee floating in it as a guarantee of good faith!

Not only was the campaigning in Palestine interesting, but leave in Cairo was probably more keenly appreciated than even Blighty leave by those in France. There were no restrictions at all as regards light, food, or drink, except that, officially, no intoxicants could be sold before midday or after 9 P.M.—but I never heard of any one being seriously inconvenienced by this regulation. For those on pleasure bent there were the weekly dances organised by Lady Allenby, the races at Ghezireh and Heliopolis, and any amount of theatres and cinemas; for the sight-seer the Pyramids, the Sphinx, the Citadel, and the various mosques and bazaars; while those with more energy and money could go up the Nile to Luxor and the temples of Philæ.

My abiding recollections of the Palestine campaign are the first sight of Jerusalem; Christmas Day, 1917; and 'Hannibal' of Shepheard's Hotel. Any member of the E.E.F. will understand the allusions.

V.

The big German push in France began in March 1918, and my stay in Palestine was abruptly cut short, as the division to which I belonged was moved over as reinforcements. For the fifth and last time during the war I traversed the Mediterranean unharmed, although one of the other boats in the convoy was torpedoed. Luckily she made the coast of Africa and ran ashore without loss of life.

In France we did our part in repelling the push, and finally in pushing forward ourselves until the Armistice saved Germany from complete military disaster. From my own observation, I do not think that the news of the signing of the Armistice was received with any great enthusiasm by the British troops in France, tired of war though we were. We all felt that at last we had got the Hun on the move, and that trench warfare was finally ended, and it seemed cruel indeed to dash the cup from our lips after over four years of weary waiting. On 11th November we were marching along the usual French road in column of route, when a staff officer galloped down the line, shouting out that the Armistice had been signed.

Not a cheer, not a smile, greeted him. It was not apathy; it was sheer disappointment. It is popularly reported that at 11.10 (the Armistice was signed at 11) on the morning of the 11th a patrol of British cavalry under a sergeant met a German patrol similarly commanded. After consultation the two sergeants both put their watches back fifteen minutes and fought it out. A pretty story, but probably untrue; one cannot imagine a Hun doing anything of the sort.

Now that it is all over one is apt to forget the horrors and the discomforts of war and remember only the brighter side—the good times one had in rest and on leave, and, above all, the good fellows one met. In civilian life a man knows just as much of his fellow-man's real qualities as is apparent on the surface; in war, when men live in the very closest proximity and under the common risk and fear of death, a man's character is an open book, and his friends can sympathise with his weaknesses and appreciate his strength. Courage and unselfishness are the qualities that really matter. When all is said and done, those who have passed over may well be considered fortunate in the manner of their death. Major Hesketh Pritchard wrote very truly in a recent article where he told of a friend who died, 'as in a few years, at any rate, all of us will wish we had died, a man's death in the full tide of our strength and in a great battle.'

THE BROWN NABOB'S MONEY.

CHAPTER IV.—TERROR.

EVIE stood in the middle of the room, with a candle in her hand—the only light that was there, save for a faint gleam from the dying fire. She gave Bellamy a curious, half-appealing look, and he pulled himself up on the threshold and gazed questioningly at her. She moved away at that, and going to a shelf, took down another candlestick and handed it to him in silence.

'I'm back,' said Bellamy. 'Not so late, either. Where's everybody?'

'They've all gone to bed,' replied Evie. Do you want anything?'

'Me?' exclaimed Bellamy. 'Lord, no! Had enough—there—to last me a week.'

Evie lighted his candle and turned to the door.

'I hope you enjoyed it,' she remarked dully.

'Oh, well,' said Bellamy, 'not exactly my line, you know. I say!'

'What?' asked Evie.

Bellamy drew nearer, watching her.

'Haven't you a word for me, Evie?' he asked anxiously. 'We—we haven't had a chance'——

'You went off—there,' she murmured.

'Had to!' said Bellamy. 'I couldn't refuse Petherfield, could I? But, Evie, what d'you think about it all? Say! Haven't you anything to say? Because—Lord!—I've been

wondering—off and on—all night—what you would say.'

Evie's candlestick began to waver in her hand, and she looked at Bellamy out of eyes which were more sorrowful than otherwise.

'What is it?' demanded Bellamy.

'Oh, I don't know,' said Evie. 'It's—it's awful! You can't be what you were any more, Bellamy—you know you can't! You're a rich man—and you'll go amongst rich people—and it 'll all be different—and'——

Bellamy thrust his hands deep into his borrowed trousers pockets and set his jaw. 'Look here!' he said in a low voice. 'Aren't we—you and me—going to be as we have been? Aren't we—oh, hang it, Evie, ain't you going to marry me?'

Evie backed away from him, staring. And Bellamy made no attempt to follow; he stood fixed, also staring. Suddenly she retreated to the door. 'Oh, Bellamy!' she whispered. 'I—I couldn't live up to it! All that money—oh!'

Bellamy made a dart at her then. But Evie was too quick for him. She slipped quickly through the door and up the stairs; he heard a faint 'Good-night!' and she was gone. And presently Bellamy picked up his candle and climbed to a higher region of the house, where he and Bert Judd shared a big bedroom.

Bert was already in bed. But he was awake, and lay on one elbow, reading the evening newspaper and smoking a cigarette. He looked up as Bellamy entered, and tossed the paper on the floor.

'Hullo, old man!' said Bert. Then his mouth opened and his eyes widened as he realised Bellamy's grandeur. 'Gad, you are a toff, old man!' he cried. 'Shouldn't ha' known you!'

Bellamy took off the dress-coat and flung it aside. His gesture suggested that he was discarding something other than the coat; but, suddenly remembering that that article belonged to Mrs Parker, he picked it up again and tenderly hung it on one of a series of pegs by the side of his bed.

'Where did you land all that finery?' demanded Bert.

Bellamy nodded at the door. 'Mrs P. dug it out,' he answered. 'Belonged to the old man. She said I'd have to go like that. So I did. Of course, they were all togged up. Always are—so Kittie says. Do it every night. Lord!'

'Well?' asked Bert.

Bellamy continued to undress. 'Seems to me I shall have to spend half my time getting in and out of suits,' he grumbled. 'Norman—if he's anything to go by—generally appears in three a day.'

'Norman!' sniffed Bert. 'Lawks! Norman's nothing to go by. Where he's one suit, you can have twenty. You'll have to spend a few hours with the tailor to-morrow, old man. Makes a difference! What?'

Bellamy pulled off his trousers, carefully folded them over a chair, and growled. 'Difference!' he muttered. 'Should think so! I'd a word or two with Evie downstairs. *She* sees a difference—already. Here! I'll tell you, Bert. I said we'd be married. And—she hooked it!'

'No?' exclaimed Bert. 'What! without a word?'

'Well, she said she couldn't live up to it,' replied Bellamy. 'The money, she meant. Money! I didn't ask her to marry the money! I asked her to marry me. I ain't no different.'

Bert carefully dropped his cigarette into the fireplace and watched its spark die out before he spoke again. 'Yes, you are, old man,' he said at last. 'Oh yes, old man—you aren't what you were at four o'clock this afternoon. You were Mr Bellamy Denton, Petherfield's second clerk, then; now you're B. Denton, Esquire, of Friargate House—a big, a very big, pot. Lord, old man, you don't know what you are, nor what's in front of you!'

What was immediately in front of Bellamy at that moment was an old-fashioned nightgown, and he presently got into it and into bed, where he sat with his knees drawn up under the clothes and his chin resting on them. 'I ain't going to alter myself,' he said defiantly. 'A pound or two more or less isn't going to alter *me*!'

'Can't be done, old man!' replied Bert. 'Ain't a question of a pound or two; it's tens o' thousands. Lord! do you suppose Petherfield 'ud have asked you there to-night if old Farmadale hadn't left you that fortune? Not likely, old man!'

Bellamy made no answer, and Bert turned on his pillow and blew out the candle. Silence reigned for a time in the ensuing darkness; then Bert spoke again, in a whisper.

'Old man!'

'Well?' demanded Bellamy.

'Very likely Evie was upset because you spent your first evening at Petherfield's,' suggested Bert.

'Had to!' growled Bellamy. 'Couldn't refuse.'

'There's Edytha, you know,' said Bert. 'She's a girl. So is Evie. Girls are girls. Kittie'd ha' had the hair off my head if it had been me. Besides'——

'Besides what?' asked Bellamy.

'Girls,' continued Bert, 'are rare and sharp. Evie's a nice, slow-going, comfortable sort; but she's brains. She can see ahead. Evie sees that Petherfield's after you for Edytha.'

'Rot!' snorted Bellamy.

'Straight tip, old man,' said Bert solemnly. 'Correct card! Don't we know Petherfield, you and me? Lay you a fiver Petherfield's married you to Edytha within six months. Stylish lady she'll make for you, too, old man. She'll show you how to spend the money!'

Bellamy rolled into his pillows and his voice

came muffled from beneath the counterpane. 'I ain't going to marry no Edythas,' he announced. 'She 's not my sort at all!'

'She may marry you,' retorted Bert. 'A fellow hasn't much chance against a family like that. Lawks, old man, do you think Petherfield 's going to let the chance slip? A son-in-law with six thousand a year! He 's no fool, our guv'nor!'

Bellamy made no answer. He was thinking. He was quite sure that he was the same Bellamy that he had always been—not one whit different from what he had been yesterday, and the year before. Now, yesterday Edytha had passed him in the street with her pretty nose in the air, and had taken no notice of his humbly raised hat; to-night she had been all smiles and sweetness. Why? Was it really because of his suddenly acquired riches? And certainly Petherfield had never as much as asked him into his house before. As for Norman—well, Norman invariably bullied his father's clerks as if they had been slaves.

'Oh Lord!' he groaned suddenly.

'Yes?' said Bert sleepily. 'What is it, old man?'

But Bellamy said no more. Bert presently snored. Bellamy lay awake and heard St Eanswythe's clock strike midnight. It had struck again before he slept; and when he slept it was only to dream that he was struggling for life in a stormy sea, the waves of which were made of money—gold sovereigns, beating him down, stifling him. . . . .

Next morning Bellamy was fast asleep when Bert got up at the usual hour. Bert left him sleeping. A man who is worth a hundred and sixty thousand, said Bert, can sleep the clock round if he likes. And it was past ten o'clock when Bellamy went down. The girls had gone to their school long since, and Mrs Parker had kept his breakfast hot.

'I expect it 'll be the last you 'll eat here,' she said mournfully, as Bellamy sat down. 'You 'll go into your new home at once, of course?'

Bellamy made a non-committal reply. He hurried over his breakfast and hastened to the office, half-expecting to be blown up. But Petherfield waved him away with a laugh.

'Your job 's across the street, my friend,' said Petherfield. 'Haddlesey 'll have plenty for you to do—probate, and all the rest of it. Go and attend to your affairs. Never mind us.'

'I 'd like to have attended to one or two things, Mr Petherfield,' said Bellamy, to whom work was second nature. 'There 's no hurry'——

But Petherfield motioned him off, and Bellamy went across to Haddlesey. Haddlesey first talked to him in private; then he dragged him across to the bank. Before noon Bellamy's head ached with the new burdens heaped upon his brain. And then, Haddlesey insisting, he had to take formal possession of his new abode.

Bellamy was afraid of all the grandeur that had come upon him. He found himself wondering whatever old Farmadale had done with all those rooms, through which he and Haddlesey wandered. It was a somewhat gloomy old house, heavily furnished. The idea of having to live in it, doing nothing, struck Bellamy like a sudden chill.

'You must settle down at once,' said Haddlesey. 'Start out as you mean to go on. You 're Mr Denton of Friargate House now.'

And presently Bellamy found himself alone with the housekeeper, a very grand person whom he had feared greatly in the past. He had to go into all sorts of details with her, and he quickly recognised that he was going to be part of the furniture. She fixed all his arrangements for him—breakfast at one hour, lunch at another, dinner at a third; he foresaw that, for a few days at any rate, he would have to borrow the deceased Parker's dress-clothes. It was all going to be ceremony and grandeur and loss of the old, careless, happy liberty. And what on earth was he going to do with himself when he was not breakfasting or lunching or dining?

But he got over that afternoon fairly well. Norman Petherfield came in, and dragged him out to the tailor, and the hosier, and the boot-maker, and the hatter; it seemed to Bellamy that he was a sort of lay-figure which Norman was carting round to be dressed up. He had little to say in matters himself; Norman, who was one of the ultra-fashionables of the town and neighbourhood, simply gave orders right and left as he pleased. Bellamy, on reflection, could not recollect that he had chosen one cloth or selected one necktie. But he was very sure that the bills would run into what he would once have considered vast amounts. Nor did Norman stop at clothing. He led Bellamy to the jeweller's shop, remarking sententiously that there was nothing by which a gentleman was known so much as by his jewellery. And here again he treated Bellamy as a nonentity and bought just what he fancied, merely telling his companion that he must have this, that, and the other. So went two or three hundred pounds more.

Norman Petherfield was in high feather when these commercial transactions were over. He told Bellamy they had done a fine afternoon's work, and suggested that they should return to Friargate House and crack a bottle of champagne. Bellamy dared not refuse, but he asked for the wine with fear and trembling, not knowing if the stern-eyed housekeeper would think it proper. The champagne came up at once, and Norman grew joyous over it. He would introduce Bellamy to some rare good fellows; they would have high old times within those walls. And he would put him up at the club, too—Bellamy should be elected next week, by gad, or he 'd know why! He swore eternal friendship to Bellamy; and Bellamy, after two glasses of champagne, asked him to stop and dine.

Norman's face fell. 'Wish I could, old chap,' he said. 'But—impossible! We 're booked, all four of us—pa, ma, sister, and self—worse luck! Got to dine at the Vicarage to-night. Rotten do—lukewarm food, sour wine. But, by gad, I 'll come another night—lots of nights! Whenever you 're wanting me, old chap, say the word.'

In his heart of hearts Bellamy knew that he did not want Norman. He heartily disliked Norman; he had wit enough to see that Norman was going to be a parasite and a toady—to six thousand a year! But he wanted somebody. He wanted somebody more than ever when, Norman having gone, the second parlour-maid entered the gloom to light the gas, and turned to him after its glare was fully on.

'Shall I lay out your dress-clothes, sir?' she asked. 'Mr Farmadale never kept a valet, so I saw to his things for him.'

'Oh—er—I 'll—I 'll see to it,' answered Bellamy. He snatched up his hat, which lay where he had thrown it on entering with Norman, and rushed out, red and ashamed. He knew that the Brown Nabob had always put on old-fashioned dress-clothes and a clean shirt every night; he also knew that the demure parlour-maid probably wondered if he, her new master, possessed such things. 'Damn!' he growled as he fled towards Trinity Terrace. 'It 's like a blooming play!'

He besought Mrs Parker and the girls to return and dine with him—almost with tears in his eyes. Ladies, said Bellamy oracularly, were dressed for dinner if they wore nice blouses, made high. Mrs Petherfield had something of that sort on. Let them come for love of him—to have a house-warming. But Mrs Parker thought not, Evie gently shook her head, and Kittie said it was much too early to give dinner-parties; and Bellamy, having once more arrayed himself in the deceased Parker's dress-clothes, went forth alone, sad at heart, and nervously afraid of dining all by himself in that big room with two women servants to stare at him—perhaps to wink at each other behind his back.

In the street he met Bert Judd, and seized upon him, insisting that he should go back to Friargate House. But Bert shook himself free.

'Can't be done, old man!' said Bert. 'Don't you remember? It 's the cricket club dinner at the "Dog and Pie." I 've only just time to do myself up and get there. Some other night, old man—if such a humble individual'——

'Don't talk bosh!' growled Bellamy. He stood for a moment looking after Bert's retreating figure. He was longing to go back to Mrs Parker's, change into his own old tweeds, and go with Bert to the 'Dog and Pie.' But a cold thrill ran down his spine. What had occurred had cut him off from all 'Dog and Pie' meetings and convivialities. He was no longer plain Bellamy Denton; he was B. Denton, Esquire, of Friargate House.

And to Friargate House he went, and ate his fine dinner in solitude, and passed a lonely evening. It was no use going to Mrs Parker's; Evie and Kittie had gone to a concert, and Mrs P. was in one of her lugubrious moods. So he sat and smoked and sipped port—Petherfield having advised him to cultivate a taste in that way, in moderation; and now and then he looked at a picture of the Brown Nabob which hung over the fireplace, and wished that Mr Farmadale had lived twenty years longer.

(Continued on page 820.)

SOME ODD THINGS ABOUT LONDON.

I.—THE CITY.

By C. G. Harper.

PERHAPS the oddest thing about London is that this great imperial city, capital of the world's greatest Empire, is not the capital (or 'county town,' as the school-books would say) of the county of Middlesex, in which it is chiefly situated. That distinction belongs to Brentford. Thus we have the quaint fact that, while the London County Council is the chief authority, and after it the County Council of Middlesex (whose Guildhall is at Westminster), Brentford has a 'capital' dignity all its own.

But any one familiar with Brentford will readily acknowledge that the place does not wear that dignified air we associate with a county town. In fact, Brentford has always been associated with dirt and squalor, and the road through it (which is the great western highway out of London) is notoriously narrow, and more like a lane through an obscure provincial town. Among the reasons given for Brentford owning its 'county-town' status are that it is the oldest place in Middlesex, that it was from 1700 the polling-place for the Middlesex elections, that it has a very old-established trade, and that the markets date back to 1307.

For dignity one must look to the City of London—'The Square Mile,' as it has been termed, from the extent of the City area proper. Do you know which is the most dignified and beautiful view of it? It is from outside the City itself, and may be obtained by standing by the Thames on the south side, between Blackfriars and Southwark Bridges, or between Southwark and London Bridges. Few ever go to see the City from thence, but it is one of the most inspiring views in the world, with St Paul's rising

grandly above the wharves of Thames Street, and the many spires and towers of the City churches clustered round about.

The Tower Bridge itself is a great spectacular sight, particularly when the hinged leaves of the roadway ('bascules' they are technically called) are opened by the hydraulic machinery to permit the passage of tall-masted ships. The annual cost of maintaining the Tower Bridge is about £17,000, and each time the bascules are raised and lowered, the cost is over £2. Dogs sometimes find themselves on the roadway when it begins to rise, and generally exhibit every sign of terror, making a panic-stricken rush to the rising end, only to find themselves rolling back as the gradient becomes too steep. But a tale is told of a fox-terrier which succeeded in reaching the edge of the rising bascule, and sat there shivering with terror until the bridge was sufficiently lowered to permit of its walking down again.

Pigeons make their nests and rear their young at the very points of the bascules—building their nests in such a manner that neither the eggs nor the young birds fall out, even though these ponderous iron leaves work through an angle of 81 degrees.

But, after all, the most curious thing about the Tower Bridge is perhaps the claim made by the Germans to have destroyed it in a Zeppelin raid. A medal was struck by the Huns illustrating this highly imaginative exploit, of which nothing is known by the Bridge Estates Committee, who have the great erection in their charge.

The City itself is a place at once of the infinitely great and the insignificantly small, often in the closest relation. In the courts and alleys round about where the banks and the financial houses may be found, you may in the same glance perceive some money-magnate passing, his thoughts immersed in vast operations, and a street-merchant on the kerb, peddling pennyworths of toys, collar-studs, or such cheap delicacies as office-boys love. And the world is of an equal seriousness to the financier and to the hawker on the kerbstone; and success or failure in his operations to the one is exactly on a par with success or failure to the other.

Which is the oldest-established shop in the City? Many would declare it to be the confectioners', Birch, Birch, & Co., in Cornhill; but they would be wrong. The oldest is that now bearing the name of Davidson, Newman, and Co., in Leadenhall Street. The business was founded so long ago as 1650 by Daniel Rawlinson, the first English grocer to sell a pound of tea. The existing shop is by no means of that age, but still above the entrance hangs the original sign of three sugar-loaves, while within are Rawlinson's old canisters and scales, and the oak counter at which he stood. An old business indeed, and with some old customers. The London Hospital has dealt here since 1754.

The shop-front of Messrs Birch on Cornhill looks older than it really is—a charming old front, its three heavily framed windows surrounded by carvings in wood of festooned fruit and flowers. This eminent confectioners' and caterers' business was founded in the reign of George I. by one Horton, who was succeeded by Lucas Birch, whose son, Samuel, became Lord Mayor. 'Mr Pattyman,' as he was irreverently called, died in 1840. For a very long time Messrs Birch were almost exclusively the Mansion House caterers.

The Monument! Where is the 'country cousin' who does not, on arriving in London, expect to be taken up to the summit of that tall landmark? No need to ask, 'What monument?' for where London is concerned there is only one possible monument meant—although there are thousands of others! I mean (and you mean, too) that Monument in the City erected to commemorate the Great Fire of London in 1666, and the rebuilding of the City.

In normal times the Monument is open between 9 A.M. and 4 P.M., and the small sum of threepence is (or was) sufficient to provide the visitor with the liberty of ascending its circular stone staircase of 345 stairs. It is an ugly interior and a weary climb, in semi-darkness; and as you climb up and round and round those clammy walls the idea haunts the mind, with a dreadful fascination, that between the clumsy cork-screw railings there yawns a pit so deep and horrible that it may well be compared with the bottomless one of Scripture. Nerves! Yes.

And then the gallery on the abacus of the proud pillar, the 'tall bully' of Pope, rising 202 feet. Ere you reach it, you agree with the keeper quoted in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, that visitors 'don't know what a many steps it is. It's worth twice the money to stop below.' Yet the City accounts show the Monument to be a source of profit. In 1910, for example, its income was £660, as against £590 the year before, derived from visitors' fees.

There is an iron cage enclosing the platform on the summit, placed there many years ago to ensure that would-be suicides or people overtaken with an irresistible impulse should not leap over. The last suicide from this place was in 1845.

'Many visitors?' said the keeper, in answer to an inquiry. 'Yes, a good few on fine days. Dull ones—well, what do you think? A good many ladies and children go up. Sometimes a woman faints coming down. She sits down here, and I bring her to. Don't get much thanks for it, though.'

The site of the Monument was determined by the proximity of Pudding Lane, where the Great Fire started. The cause of the fire was at the

time said to be a popish plot, and when the Monument was completed—after six years' work on it, between 1671 and 1677—an inscription to that effect was cut on the plinth. It was erased in the reign of James II.; recut, deeper, in that of William III.; and again erased in 1831. The column is crested by a metal vase from which issue flames. In the course of repairs undertaken in 1905 the flames were regilded.

The figures relating to the income of the Monument are set forth in the City of London accounts, known as the 'Private Purse' of the Corporation. These accounts themselves contain some quaint items. For instance, in recent years is a credit of 2s. 6d. for the loan of committee-rooms at the Guildhall, and £479 for 'Key Register Suspense Account.' This item represents the sum received from City firms who deposit with the City police keys of their premises, to enable the buildings to be entered in case of necessity. This, of course, is a practice largely followed, the City being a region very little inhabited after business hours. A strange item is that of £245 paid by omnibus companies for the privilege of pulling up at the Mansion House to set down or take up passengers.

Further, the supply of 'livery cloth' to officers of state—a custom centuries old—costs annually about £119; and the Corporation, it is found, contributes £123, 14s. 3d. towards the fees of preachers at St Paul's Cathedral. The salaries of the Ale Conners come to £40; and the cost of the private vestry allotted to the Lord Mayor in the Cathedral is £5, 8s., with an additional rate of £8 to the chief verger.

A long story might to written about the curiosities of St Paul's Cathedral alone. The cost of building it was largely defrayed by a tax on coal entering London, and it has wittily been said, seeing how blackened is a large part of the exterior, that in this way the taxed coal has had its revenge. The late Dean Milman carefully calculated the cost of St Paul's, and found it was exactly £736,752, 2s. 3½d.

St Paul's, now freely open, was not so until after 1841. The proposal to open it was then opposed by Canon Sydney Smith, who was of opinion that in such an event it 'would become, as it had been in times past, a place of assignation for all the worst characters in the metropolis; it would be a Royal Exchange for wickedness, as the other Royal Exchange is for commerce.' But his views did not prevail, and his fears were not realised.

Among the odd things about St Paul's, the story told by Sir George Birdwood is perhaps the oddest. In September 1907 he observed a group of women rubbing their backs against a pilaster in the nave. A lady, among a number of interested spectators of this singular act, asked the reason. 'Lor', ma'am!' replied one, 'don't you know that if you don't come up to London at least once in your lifetime and rub yourself against St Paul's, you'll live childless and die a fool!'

According to Sir George, a very similar popular rite is observed in the Saiva worship of western India, and he assumed the St Paul's superstition to have been transmitted from the days of the very earliest pagan temple on this site, and perhaps of a still earlier pillar.

Before we leave St Paul's, it is to be noted that St Paul's Churchyard is easily and notoriously the windiest place in London.

BRASSFACE AND SILVERTONGUE.

PART II.

IV.

WITH caution quite foreign to him, but induced by his recent interview with the ferocious major, Schneider judged it wiser to keep out of sight till he had seen Anton Bassewitz, and therefore spent the day at home till evening opened the doors of the *Turnverein*.

'*Ach ja*,' said Bassewitz as Schneider introduced himself. 'We are going to work together, *nicht wahr?* Well, nothing now. Amuse yourself, and come to my office'—giving him the address—'at nine o'clock to-morrow morning.'

With somewhat mixed feelings Julius presented himself in Moorgate Street next morning.

'Well, do you know why you are here?' queried his new master.

'No, *mein Herr;* the major told me only that I should be set up in business, and that I was to obey you as my superior officer.'

'That's well,' replied Bassewitz. 'What I am going to do is this. I shall open a credit of £500 with the Deutsche Bank for you here, and hire you an office in Cheapside, where you will start as a commission agent for German merchandise. You will push various articles, effecting genuine sales whenever possible, and building up the nucleus of a respectable business, while at the same time you will spend frequent week-ends for your health at places I shall indicate. For the present, they will be Dover, Folkestone (which is near Shorncliffe Camp), and Chatham. You can push your wares in those towns as well. Business is important, but more important still is it to make an impression as a respectable young business man, in order to be unsuspected when I send you to ferret out other points, such as the number of troops at these stations, the ships in dry dock or building, new steam trials, gunnery results, and so forth.'

'But this is spying!' exclaimed Schneider, horrified.

'Exactly, this is spying, as you say, though I prefer the expression "secret service" myself; but'—and here Bassewitz leaned forward, waggling impressively to and fro a fat forefinger, which eventually came to rest alongside his nose—'never forget, this is work for the Fatherland.'

'But to what end?' asked Schneider.

'That is not your business,' Bassewitz rapped out. 'Well, what do you say? Are you going to do it or are you not? I warn you, if you don't, you can never go back to the Fatherland again; and you might find England very unpleasant,' he added with a leer.

'All right, I'll do it,' said Schneider desperately. 'But what about my prospects? I sha'n't be building up a business if I run about like this.'

'Oh yes, you will; all the profits of the business you do will be yours, and when you want more capital, I shall advance it, subject, of course, to an inspection of your books.'

'Very well, I agree; but I wouldn't consent unless it were for the Fatherland.'

'No, of course not; I understand that,' replied Bassewitz soothingly. 'Now, the first thing you have to do is to go and see that Englishman Watson. Tell him you have come into money, and have come back to set up for yourself, and would like any business he can put in your way. Say that the reason you are back so soon is that you were discharged, medically unfit, owing to the strain of soldiering. He won't know any better—these English never do—and it will dispose him in your favour. Say it 's your heart,' he added cynically, as they said good-bye.

One lie (like one fool) makes many, and at the end of the day Schneider had involved himself in such a maze of falsehood that it severely taxed his mental powers to remember what he really *had* said. He solaced himself, however, with the recollection of the friendly reception he had had from his old employer, and started work the following morning at his new offices in Cheapside.

Thorough and persevering as the German undoubtedly is, particularly the German struggling for a foothold, it was not long before Schneider had commenced to build up the framework of a business connection. In every direction in which he thought his business interests pointed he wormed his way, and with the hide of a buffalo, impervious to snubs and rebuffs, he began to be known in his immediate entourage as a pushing business man. The Deutsche Bank had instructions to refer to Bassewitz before refusing a cheque, even if the £500 account were overdrawn, and Schneider therefore figured as something more than the man of straw he really was.

Directly Julius began to be better known, Bassewitz urged upon him the desirability of moving to a lodging slightly more in accord with a rising business man than Clerkenwell, and in due course apartments were taken in Highbury, and Mrs Briggs was ruthlessly jettisoned.

Schneider also paid his first week-end visit, which was not a success from his standpoint. Hopelessly out of touch as he was at that time with English life, apart from the commercial side, he put up at a boarding-house in Sandgate, thinking thereby to scrape acquaintance with the officers from Shorncliffe Camp staying there. To his surprise, he discovered that the guests were of much the same social stratum as himself.

Meantime his English improved, and with it his knowledge of English life, so that when he visited Folkestone the following year he made no mistake, selecting for his occupation one of the biggest and best hotels on the sea-front. He was very free with his money both in the bar and in the billiard-room, but hardly achieved his object, for the individuals who so readily responded to his generous invitations could scarcely be described as officers, or even as of the officer class.

It was then that Schneider made his first serious mistake, for, strolling on the Lees after listening to the military band playing there, he ran across the bandmaster sunning himself in all his glory, and accosting him with rather a fulsome compliment, made acquaintance. Followed naturally an invitation to dinner; and eventually, in return, Schneider found himself a guest in the Sergeants' Mess of the 100th Dragoons; for the bandmaster in the British Army does not, except in certain well-defined instances, hold a commission, whatever he may do abroad. Julius's questions here, however, were so pointed and tactless that they awakened the suspicions of the regimental sergeant-major, who, after a quiet talk with the adjutant, dropped a hint that Schneider was not to be invited inside barracks again.

With the naval officers Schneider was to a certain extent more successful. There is something breezy, unsuspicious, and open-hearted about a sailor, due perhaps to his spending so much of his time afloat, and at Chatham, where he began to be quite well known, Julius numbered many friends among the cheery crowd using that port.

He gave excellent dinners at the best inn in the town, beloved of Dickens, and in return was asked off to a good many ships, till his unfortunate propensity for asking questions began to betray itself, and his hosts here, too, received quiet hints to drop him.

A worse handicap, also, came into existence, for he was very unobtrusively shadowed back to town by an un-uniformed member of the Metropolitan Police attached for duty to Chatham Dockyard. But here the far-sighted cunning of Bassewitz showed itself, in that the particulars gleaned by the City Constabulary for their

Metropolitan confrères were so uniformly consistent regarding Schneider's respectability and business standing that the force was fain to put him down as a harmless Paul Pry. Nevertheless, with a caution for which that much-maligned department is not always given credit, they allotted Julius a number, a page in a big book, and added, for decorative purposes doubtless, the distinguishing insignia of a cross in red ink.

V.

So the years passed, Schneider growing ever in importance and worldly wealth, and becoming ever more barge-built in appearance as his girth increased, till the fatal 4th of August broke that ushered in a madman's bid to dominate the world.

Needless to say, the shock that surprised humanity was no shock to either Bassewitz or Schneider, who had been expecting the storm to break every summer since the Agadir incident in 1911, and who had heaved a sigh of heart-felt relief as each succeeding autumn sank quietly to rest. It was now a time of great and disturbing energy for these worthies. Schneider, a naturalised Briton, was despatched to Chatham, and thence to Dover, till a hint from a member of the Criminal Investigation Department who had quietly arrived from London caused the hotel-keeper to inform Schneider that he would have to vacate his room, as the whole hotel had been requisitioned by the Admiralty for naval officers.

With an inward curse upon the policy of Britain, which could not let a simple nation, allied to her in blood if not by treaty, work its will upon Europe without interference, Schneider shifted to another hotel, only to be met with the same excuse; whereupon he decided to return without delay to Chatham, where he was better known.

He was now sending daily reports to Bassewitz of all facts he could glean, cunningly disguised as commercial letters under a code which he carried in his inside pocket; and his notification of his having had to shift back to Chatham, and of his reason for doing so, was conveyed on the under-side of the postage-stamp affixed to the envelope, a little device that had hitherto escaped the notice of the authorities.

Bassewitz, undaunted, and entirely deceived by the turn of affairs, directed him to continue his daily reports from Chatham, and sent another fly from his great web to Dover. All continued to go well till Schneider was notified to bring his next report to London in person, in order that certain instructions might be given him by word of mouth. He duly arrived, and shaking hands with Bassewitz with a hand that felt more like a slice of Turkish delight than human flesh and blood, stated that the strain was telling upon him, and that, dearly as he would love to continue a member of the German Secret Service, he could no longer do so, for he feared the future more as every day went by. He was, moreover, strengthened in his attitude by the knowledge that his business was now on a firm footing, war risks apart, and when the war closed victoriously, as he fully expected it would, in a few months' time, he desired to be rid of the inconvenient curiosity of Bassewitz prying into all his affairs. This, however, he was canny enough not to commit to words.

Bassewitz, seeing his plight, and deeming the occasion a suitable one for a dose of his soothing syrup, fully sympathised with him, and sending him out on some unimportant errand, made a copy of the latest report. When Schneider returned, Bassewitz handed him the copy, carefully folded, and remarked, 'I 've been thinking over what you have been saying, my dear Schneider, and perhaps you 're right. You don't seem to have the nerve requisite for these undertakings in a time of such danger as this; so, on the whole, it would be as well to withdraw. Here is your last report'—handing it over—'and perhaps it might be as well to destroy it, for, should the code ever come to light, it is pretty compromising, as you are aware. For safety's sake you had better burn it, and I will tell off some other man to undertake the business I was going to give you.'

Schneider, rather surprised at the turn of events, but extremely relieved, willingly consented, and burned the compromising document on the spot; whereupon Bassewitz, changing his tone, exclaimed in a rasping voice, 'Now, *du Schweinhund*, I 've got you! What you have just burned was not your report, but a copy of it. The original is now locked away in my safe, and if I have any more of your damned nonsense, I 'll send your name, this report, and a copy of the code under registered cover to Scotland Yard, and then we 'll see what will happen!'

'That cuts both ways, *mein lieber* Bassewitz, for I should at once denounce *you*.'

'Yes, no doubt; but you forget that these reports were never made to me by name, whereas yours are signed. Likewise, you have nothing of mine in writing, but I have a good deal of your stuff. However, if you care to risk it, try it by all means; if not, go back at once to Chatham and wire me your arrival. Go, you dog!' he added fiercely as Schneider still hesitated. The discomfited rogue turned pale, and went.

VI.

Unobtrusively though he alighted from his carriage, chewing the bitter cud of the day's events, Schneider was none the less met, and, strange to say, by that quiet member of the C.I.D. who had had him under observation on many previous occasions. 'Good-afternoon, Mr Schneider,' he observed cheerfully as he edged up close to him. 'Could you spare me a minute?'

'No, I can't; and I don't know you,' was the reply.

'Never mind; I'm a detective, if you want to know, and I hold a warrant for your arrest. Shall I read it here, or will you come to the station to hear it read? I've got a cab outside,' he continued persuasively as he slipped his hand inside Schneider's arm and started for the exit. And for the second time that day the miserable wretch turned pale, and went.

Thereafter the fog of war closed over him, and he was seen no more. Bassewitz, not really quite at his ease as regards the day's events, though outwardly he appeared so, considered the situation in the light of a good cigar, and deciding the game was up, so far as he was concerned, made a careful copy of the documents most compromising to the wretched Schneider, and sealing them up, directed them to the Criminal Investigation Department at Scotland Yard; then, pocketing his code-book and two small sheaves of papers, strolled out through the outer office, remarking as he did so to a clerk that he would be slightly later next morning, as he had to see his dentist.

Calling a taxi, he drove to Holborn Viaduct, and, after a copious meal, leisurely boarded the Continental night express for the Hook of Holland. Harwich was reached without incident; but the boat had only half-completed her journey when she was hailed by a venomous-looking destroyer, who, turning her searchlight on, bade her heave-to, as a boarding-officer was coming aboard.

Within ten minutes a cheery, light-hearted 'sub' tumbled aboard, followed by a couple of armed seamen and an unobtrusive person in mufti. In the light of the destroyer's rays, the passengers were mustered on deck, and an inspection followed, as the result of which the dinghy returned to the destroyer with one more person aboard than when she pushed off. Those previously acquainted with him would have had some difficulty in recognising in the perspiring extra passenger the erstwhile debonair Bassewitz.

A week or two later the papers contained the following pithy announcement: 'The Press Bureau is authorised to state for general information that two spies, X and Y, of German extraction, were tried on the 29th ult. at the Middlesex Guildhall on a charge of espionage, and were sentenced to suffer death by being shot. The sentence has been confirmed, and was carried out on the 31st ult.'

THE END.

SOME RUMANIAN CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

By R. CARNEGIE.

IN no country of the world, perhaps, is superstition so rife as in Rumania. This may be on account of Rumania's geographical position, 'not quite far enough east, not quite far enough west,' as one writer hath it. Through Rumania, in earlier times, ran the most direct land-route to and from the Orient, and consequently many superstitions have, from time to time, been introduced, for no disease is so contagious as superstition. The majority, however, seem to be of home origin.

From the moment a Rumanian enters this world until he finally leaves it he suffers from the ailment. It is the first duty of the midwife to attach to the infant's hair a piece of red ribbon or tape, according to the social status of the parents. Red is always supposed to guard against evil. Nor is it only in the case of humans, as our cousins across the Atlantic would say, that this custom is practised. Every horse displays its red rag in the hairs of its tail or mane. Foals and calves, when not similarly decorated, wear the bowl of a wooden spoon suspended round their neck, though whether this is merely for luck or as a safeguard against the evil eye the writer has not been able to discover. Indeed, it may here be remarked that Rumanians of all classes show a curious indifference as to the origin of their many most interesting superstitions and customs.

In the Dobrudja blue beads in the form of necklaces and collars are often worn instead by animals and persons alike, this custom having been imported by the Turks and the Tatars, who constitute a large portion of the population of this district.

At a christening the mother must not be present; she retires to an adjoining room during the ceremony.

A general custom or superstition (it is difficult at times to know under which head to classify such things) is to avoid speaking too well or complacently of anything or anybody, lest conditions be changed thereby for the worse. A stranger within the gates may quite unconsciously bring odium on himself on this account. It is for this reason that the invariable reply to the greeting, 'How are you?' is a simple 'Thank you.' To say that you or yours are well might easily bring about the very opposite. The response to inquiries as to the health of friends or relations is a species of grunt, or the word '*Asa*,' which is best translated by our expression 'So so.' When you speak to a baby you call it *urîtului* ('little ugly'), and when you look at one an imitation of a spit is made, all to guard against evil results. Indeed, in an otherwise highly educated family of good social standing, the writer was witness of the performance of 'heap big medicine' when a child was somewhat

peevish on returning from its daily outing. The cook, versed in such rites, officiated. Cloves were burned over a glass of warm water and dropped into it whilst an incantation was chanted. The sputtering of some of the burning cloves on contact with the water was taken as proof that the child had been 'evil-eyed' by some passer-by. No one thought of holding the intensely hot sun responsible for the child's condition. Finally the boy was given a little of the water to drink.

On any one's sneezing, everybody present chorusses, '*Sanatate!*' ('Good health!'), for which thanks are politely returned. This superstition may be borrowed either from East or West; it is very common in Germany, and has (or had in the writer's early-Victorian childhood) its counterpart in nurse's 'Bless you!' when a child sneezes.

Household superstitions are very numerous, and some of them are most amusing. At table on no account may a loaf be laid on its back. It is unlucky to spill wine or coffee—unless the liquid falls straight towards the spiller, which betokens the best of fortune. To hold a bottle from underneath or away from one in pouring out its contents is very terrible. The writer first learned this by seeing two women and one man dash at an unfortunate Britisher who, for want of elbow-room at a crowded table in a station restaurant, was pouring out wine in this manner for a companion. One of the ladies, a stout and perspiring Jewess, presented the much-mystified Englishman with a pin, so that no evil should result from his rash act!

Tuesday is generally considered the unlucky day in Rumania. This is undoubtedly borrowed from the Greeks, and had its origin among them on account of Constantinople being said to have fallen on a Tuesday. On no account will any one commence any business undertaking on this day, nor must a betrothal or a marriage take place on a Tuesday.

It is most unlucky to sew on a loose button for any one unless he removes it himself. The sewer may, indeed, go blind! The sure antidote, which eye specialists at home might note, is to eat a bit of the cotton employed. To sew on a button for one's self with the garment on will cause the sewer to forget all he has ever learned.

A certain charm against being struck by lightning is to think immediately of seven male acquaintances who are bald.

Hens are never put to sit on an even number of eggs, nor must one speak whilst a hen is being placed on eggs, otherwise no chickens will be the result.

It is very bad to hand any one a piece of soap. It must be placed on the table by the one person and taken up by the other. When two people wash in the same water or use the same towel, the sign of the cross is made over water or towel. A child must never be lifted through a window, or an umbrella opened in a house. It is very unlucky to stand on the threshold of a house—one must step right out before speaking to anybody. It is an evil omen to meet a priest first on going out, and people seeing one coming will turn back again. Where the meeting is unavoidable, the remedy is to scratch that portion of the anatomy immediately below the back!

Never more than two cigarettes should be lighted at the same match. This superstition, which since the war has taken root in Western soil, is an illustration of how intensely ridiculous all superstition is, since, except in countries of the Orthodox Greek religion, it is wholly inapplicable, as it has its origin in the fact that when a body in these countries is laid out, three candles, representing the Trinity, are placed round the head, these being lighted with one taper.

Naturally death is a subject for superstitions and customs innumerable. The house must not be swept nor linen washed whilst the remains are lying in the house. As the corpse is carried out of the house a plate is broken—reason or origin obscure. A large cake, made from buckwheat and poppy-seed, is carried before the hearse—food, doubtless, for the long journey to the next world. In those towns where no more modern system of water-supply exists the water-carts meeting a funeral are emptied in the road as the *cortège* passes, with the same idea of not letting the traveller want for refreshment. The water-carters present themselves the next day at the house, to be liberally rewarded.

Boots must never be placed on a table, otherwise very shortly another pair will be there—on the feet of a dead person. The only way to avert the evil is to knock, not lift, them off.

It is very general in Moldavia for servants to keep a stick across the water-tub or bucket, possibly from the idea of the cross, or to bless the water, there being a very important religious festival each January in the Greek Church, when water in general is blessed.

Charms and incantations are firmly believed in among the peasantry and the lower orders. Fortune-telling by cards is a regular and recognised means of livelihood, and even in the largest towns those practising the craft advertise freely. One may often observe, in passing through some side-street, a notice and a crude painting of three or four cards. The Gipsies naturally drive a very thriving trade in fortune-telling in various ways. Every village boasts its wise woman, who is always called in in cases of sickness in preference to a doctor, and to this fact may be ascribed the appalling death-rate among children in the agrarian districts of Rumania.

Of customs more (if not always) apart from superstition there are a great many, and to enumerate and describe all these would take far more space

than can here be spared. The prettiest, perhaps, is that of the *Martzirhoare*. At the commencement of the month of March one exchanges with girls and ladies little gifts in the way of charms suspended on little red-and-white cards. These in former times were of the most simple form and pattern; but of late years, with the march of 'civilisation,' they may be anything up to a small gold plaque inset with brilliants. They are supposed to have the effect of keeping off freckles. The string, after being worn for some time, must be attached to a rose-bush, so that the late possessor's complexion shall become 'as white-and-red roses,' like the colour of the card.

Christmas and New Year naturally are well favoured as regards customs. It is usual for poor children and Gipsies to throw rice after one in the streets for luck. (In place of rice, beans are thrown at marriages in Bulgaria.)

Whip-cracking and bell-ringing, with pistol-shots, herald the advent of the New Year; whilst ploughs drawn by teams of oxen, both gaily decorated with fir-branches and coloured-paper streamers, are driven into the courts of the landed proprietors amid much whip-cracking and jangling of cow-bells, this to ensure a good harvest to the cheerful giver of backsheesh.

Gipsies carry round a boar's head, decorated with rosettes and with an apple in its mouth, and one is asked to give something for 'Little Basil.'

Is it not very probable that these two customs have the same origin as our Plough Monday, now practised in certain districts only, and as the boar's head which a century ago formed one of the principal dishes at Christmas in England? Rumania was 'discovered,' conquered, and occupied for a long period, just as Britain was, by the Romans, and these customs may well have the same origin, having been introduced by the soldiery of Trajan in the one case, and of Cæsar in the other.

A third custom which has its prototype in England is that of the Calushar dancers, who come down annually from the mountains to perform in the towns. They are dressed in white, with coloured ribbons on their headgear and at their waists, wear bells on their ankles, and have the same dances as our Morris-dancers at home, even to the handkerchief figure.

The origin of one, if not both, is the ancient Phrygian dance of the Romans, and the figures originally were meant to portray the flight of Rhea from Cronus when the latter wished to devour their son Zeus. The shouting which accompanies the figures in Rumania simulates the cries set up to drown the noise of the weeping of the child, and lead the mythological food-hog astray.

PEPITA.

PART II.

III.

FLIGHT was the only way out that Pepita could see to save Jamie, and escape herself from the brutal humiliation which threatened her. It would be hard for him, but harder for her. Yet her love was of too fine a texture, too pure a nature, to allow her to let him imperil his future for her sake—a girl of the pampas. No, she would go.

Half-an-hour sufficed to make her preparations. There only remained for her to pick a horse out of the home paddock.

It was a moonless night, and the stars were few and scattered. A pang of fear shot through her as she stepped into the engulfing darkness; but, her bundle under her arm, she held on her way. She had almost reached the paddock, when a strong hand seized her roughly by the shoulder, jerked her round, and she found herself facing a tall figure wrapped in a heavy poncho.

'Who are you?' she managed to utter. 'If you belong to the *estancia*, it 's only me—Pepita.'

The figure gave a low chuckle, and at the same instant the girl felt a knife at her throat.

'Pepita! Sancta Maria! But this is my lucky day. Squeak, and I 'll rip you from ear to ear, my beauty!'

'Michael!' she gasped, trembling with terror.

'Yes, my sweet sister—Michael. Aren't you glad to meet your loving brother?'

'What brings you here?' she asked swiftly.

'To see you, my pretty.'

'What business can you have with me?' she demanded sharply. 'And why are you wearing that old black veil tied across your face?'

'Best not to ask questions,' Michael said sullenly. 'Sit down,' he commanded. 'I want to have a talk with you. When I found that you 'd quit Gallegos, I thought that I 'd seen the last of my dear sister. Then I heard that you were here—housekeeping for that rich old skinflint, Don Angus. Yes, and I heard something else, too—that you and the old chap's son are hand-and-glove.'

He struck a match to light a cigarette, and by the feeble flame she could see the lean, dissipated face, with its restless, wicked-looking eyes. A shudder ran through her.

'Where does the old boy keep his pile?' he asked presently.

'Is that why you 've come here—to rob Señor Liddell?'

'If you like to put it that way, sister. But, put my way, I've come to ask for a little assistance to leave the country. They're crowding me, Pepita, and I must get out. I want you to help me—to tell me where the stuff is. I bet you know. The old Don keeps it here for safety—won't trust the banks; and the youngster brought back quite a nice little toothful to-night—from San Gregorio. I'd a thought of holding him up on the road; and one of my fellows did manage to scare away the horses, but there was nothing doing. However, I'm not sorry—since it's brought me the pleasure of seeing you. And now, with a little sisterly assistance, I can clean up the lot.'

'And what am I to do?'

'Now, that's business,' he gurgled a little thickly. 'Business! What can you do—eh?' and Black Michael muttered something about 'that fox-eyed old skinflint.'

She was to go back to the house, signal to him by three flashes of a lamp, open the door, and indicate in which room, and where, the money was kept.

'But if you are caught?'

'Caught!' he shrilled, leering horribly. 'It's never been healthy yet for the man who's tried it. And it won't be healthy to-night—for the man, or—woman,' he concluded, with a meaning nod and a wry grimace.

Involuntarily she shrank away from him.

'Now, what say?'

'Well, if you will promise really to go away, and never try to see me again, I will do what I can to help you—to help you to get out of the country.'

'Shake, if you mean it,' extending his hand; 'but if you play me false—beware!'

IV.

Back in the kitchen, Pepita took down a lamp, lighted it, and shading it with her hand, looked into various rooms, and listened at sundry doors, her temples throbbing and her heart beating furiously.

Everybody was in bed and asleep—even Don Angus, invariably the last to go, for the door of his private room was ajar, as he always left it on going aloft.

Satisfied that she was the only person awake in the house, Pepita stepped into the deserted sitting-room. On the table lay Jamie's cartridge-belt and revolvers. First making sure the weapons were loaded, she took them back with her into the kitchen, unaware that another member of the household was up and awake besides herself, and that he had been spying on her from the moment she lit the lamp—Don Angus.

He was in his den, the only room on the ground-floor into which she had not peeped. Nodding over his accounts, and hardening his heart against his son, he had fallen asleep. Waking, he had found his lamp burnt out, and was on the point of going to the kitchen for a light when Pepita struck her match. Wondering, he had waited—seeing, without himself being seen.

When Pepita stepped into the sitting-room he had clenched his teeth. The look in her face told him something was wrong. When she took Jamie's revolvers, the old man had reached for his own, which he always kept loaded in his own room, taking them up to bed with him every night.

Fully persuaded that the girl, in conjunction with her brother—Tonia had told him that Michael was believed to be somewhere in the neighbourhood—was planning to rob the house, Angus levelled his own pistol, intending to shoot her dead where she stood. But before he could get a line on her, through the partly opened door, she had left the room and gone back to the kitchen.

Wondering more than ever, the old ranchero, waiting and watching, saw her sit down at the table, take something from her pocket, tie it up in a handkerchief, and put it on the table. A few minutes later she walked to the door, unlocked it, returned to the table, and picking up the lamp, flashed it three times in front of the window. When she sat down again she had a revolver in each hand, concealed under her cloak.

Breathlessly Don Angus waited for the next move. It came almost directly—a slight sound at the outer door. Then the door of the kitchen was slowly pushed open, and a masked face took a rapid survey of the room. Cautiously the body followed, and Black Michael stood revealed.

'Close the door,' said Pepita.

As he turned she drew out the revolvers, and when he turned again she had him covered. Rapping out an oath, his hand went to his knife.

'Pull it, and I'll shoot. Sit in that chair,' she commanded, 'and keep your hands on the table.'

'You'—— he hissed.

'Sit down quick, unless you want to have lead pumped into you. These pistols are automatics, and each fires eight shots.' Spitting out a curse, Michael sat down. 'Do you realise what it has cost me to be known everywhere as the sister of the outlawed murderer, Black Michael?' Every word, spoken clearly and distinctly in the dead silence of the sleeping house, and vibrant with the ring of honest indignation, was heard by Don Angus, listening with every sense alert. 'I've stayed here longer than anywhere because you lost track of me. But not a place I've ever had but I have lost through you. When I've refused to turn thief at your bidding, you've claimed me for your sister—started the lie running. For that's what it is—a lie! Coward and blackguard! You reckoned the mud would

stick, as mud always does. You guessed people wouldn't stop to inquire—to find out that my father and mother were not your father and mother—that you are no relation to me at all except by the marriage of your father to my step-mother. Yet from here, too, I was to be driven, because of my supposed relationship to the man with the vilest record in the land.' He made a show of speaking, but she menaced him with the revolvers. 'I've always had to listen to you before; now you've got to listen to me. To-night Don Jamie told his father that he wanted to marry me, and Don Angus, flying into a passion, denounced me as the sister of Black Michael, threatened to cut his son off with a *peso*, and said he would not have me on the place any longer. He would pay me off in the morning. Afterwards Don Jamie found me in here, and begged me to run away with him. I told him that he would have my answer in the morning. And I was running away by myself when you stopped me. I couldn't bear that the young *caballero* should suffer on my account, or that the old Don should feel disgraced because of his son's alliance with me. What you have done has made me an outcast, like yourself, with no resting-place for the sole of my foot. Before daylight I must be off the ranch. But I must see you off first.'

'Why not get the chips and go together? And for the insults the old skinflint heaped on you—say the word, and I'll'——

The devil peeped out of his eyes, and his fists clenched.

'No, Michael,' she said firmly, 'there'll be no robbery or murder done in this house. Move from that chair before you have my permission and you'll never move again. But I promised to help you, and I will. In this handkerchief you will find money enough to take you to Monte Video. It is my own. Take it and go. You have two minutes to make up your mind. If you're not outside by then, I will fire and rouse the men.'

Black Michael's face was haggard, and the look he darted at Pepita was full of hatred. His chagrin and disappointment were manifest in every feature.

'Oh!' he said peevishly. 'Well, sis, I guess I'll just jog along.'

He rose slowly, his left hand stretched out for the money in the handkerchief. Then, whirling round suddenly, he aimed a blow at her with his right, which held a long, keen, thin-bladed knife. Caught off guard, she yet managed to push the table against him; but her cheek was badly scored, and with a cry she fell to the floor. His arm was raised for a second blow, when there was a flash in the dark, followed immediately by the report of a pistol. The knife fell from his fingers, and Michael himself sank to the floor, a bullet in his shoulder. At the same instant a great, shaggy-bearded man burst into the kitchen, a smoking weapon in his hand. It was Don Angus.

Snarling like a dog and fumbling for his knife, Michael felt his fingers close on the hilt. If he could only plunge it between the shoulders of this man who was kneeling on him, pressing his knee into his chest and pommelling him! But the old Scot, seizing the other's wrist, wrenched the knife out of his hand and flung it across the room, narrowly missing Jamie, who, roused by the noise, had descended the stairs.

'What's afoot? What's happened? What does it all mean?' asked Jamie excitedly, staring at the now unconscious figure on the floor.

'Black Michael wanted to rob and murder your father!' panted Don Angus. Then, remembering Pepita, who lay on the other side of the table, 'Look after that poor lass, Jamie,' he said —'after Pepita. Lord forgie me for abusing her. 'Tis she has saved us the nicht—the siller, and both our lives forby. She prevented him.'

Pepita's injuries were not serious; but the girl had swooned, and the young man held her in his arms while his father went for water to wash the blood from her face.

'I saw and heard the whole thing,' Don Angus explained. 'The door of my room was ajar; and when he sprang at her, I shot him.'

Slowly the girl opened her eyes, and feebly glanced up at Jamie.

'It's all right, Pepita *mia*—all right, little girlie.'

A smile broke over her face, and with a sigh she closed her eyes again.

'Jamie, lad,' faltered the big man, 'I was wrong—dead wrong—aboot the girl. She's no relation whatever to this scoundrel. All that I said aboot her in ma haste I tak back—tak back, lad, and ask pardon for. The girl's as good as gold! True metal, boy, right through. And gin ye want her, Jamie, why, tak' her—tak' her, lad, wi' my blessing!'

THE END.

A SOUTH-WEST BREEZE IN LONDON.

HERE, mid the tumult of the city square,
A south-west breeze has caught me unaware,
And filled my heart with memories of home.
I know the loch is all a-ripple there;
The sea still rages, though the day is fair;
I hear the curlew call across the foam.

Not that the London streets have lost their lure—
They charm me still, my restless moods they cure;
But memory whispers in the breeze and thrills
My list'ning heart with fragrance fresh and pure—
The voiceless magic of the wide, wide moor,
The high, blue splendour of the silent hills.

Grandly the day begins on Suilven's ben;
The wild mist-fairies frolic in the glen,
And, passing, touch the sombre crags with rose.
My soul forsakes the crowded ways of men,
Seeking the sunlit spaces once again.
Oh, blessings on each south-west breeze that blows!

INGER A. MACLEOD.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

THE year nearly ended appears to have given disappointment in many quarters. Being a year of peace—or the peculiar nominal kind of peace that is delivered to the nations as the real thing by the conferrers at Versailles—more was expected of it. Some men and women, ignoring all the signs, and particularly that labour, having won the war, as it was said, would proceed to ask questions and demand replies, seemed to consider that now, as a victorious nation, we should advance smoothly towards a state, a little rough, perhaps, and not well garnished, that should serve as preliminary to an approaching millennium. Somewhat inconveniently for the leaders of the people, they persisted in remembering what was said in 1914 and the following years about 'the war that was to end war,' the land that should be 'fit for heroes to live in,' the right of small nations to determine for themselves, and the glowing words of love and praise that were lavished by Authority and the propagandists on the soldiers making such free sacrifice of their lives, the heroes being assured of the care with which a grateful people would attend to their future needs. But the war being won, Authority abandoned ideals and ransacked its stores for instruments of materialism, discovering first of all, to the country's misfortune and the astonishment of foreign states, a General Election. Followed an orgy of politics on the higher scale at Versailles, wrangles and disputes, territorial greed, imperial schemes, the putting of the screw on the little nations, the French temptation to give fallen Germany something to make her remember even more her wickedness and stupidity, and the disposition to inform the advocates of the League of Nations that the League was a scheme produced and praised during the horrors of war, and that, these being removed and substituted by the blessings of peace, there was no longer need to pay tribute to such a fancy ideal. As for 'the war that was to end war,' and the squashing of militarism that was declared to be a chief object of the grand struggle, the War Minister at once declared for a vastly larger and more expensive army than was ever maintained before in peace, and France decided to go on with conscription. Only Germany was to be shorn of militarism. At the same time more troops were despatched to Ireland, and a big army to Russia to conduct a new war about which little or no information was given to the people. Then in due course the Germans, feeling themselves coming to life again, started upon the Russians, and, a pianist having become the ruler of Poland, a poet took possession of Fiume, while peoples that had been allies and had proclaimed common ideals (including the abolition of war), under the banner of freedom, became enemies, sharpened their swords again, and drew blood. There was the rustle of a movement for the restoration of some old autocracies. And so on in the way of topsy-turvy. When it was realised that Europe was not only in a condition of wild disorder, but that every state in it, including the quondam richest—which was ours—was moving fast towards bankruptcy, Authority appealed frantically for private economy, and for itself, having established a magnificent bureaucracy, proceeded to practise prodigality on a scale so vast that it would have been beyond the imagination of Britain in her days of calm prosperity.

* * *

Then the people likewise; and in their delirium they donned strange garments and danced wild dances copied from savage tribes, making appropriate music with pans and kettles. Their manners and their habits were as those of people who cared not. The profiteers waxed richer, and the soldiers asked for simple justice. Demanding that all the people should work and restore industry, Authority advertised on all the hoardings for more soldiers of every description. It presented highly coloured pictures of men in the British services strolling in golden sunshine through Eastern cities—smoking the pipes of peace—gambolling in all the most delightful places, and pointed out to those attracted by these pictures that such a life was much to be preferred to that of the poor civilian grinding away at his dull duties to set industry going again. Authority invited the young men to see the world at the country's expense, asked them how they could be men of the world if indeed they did not see it, and urged strenuously on these brilliant placards that the service life was the best of all. Then it was said that, so much having been spent on war, less must now be spent on education, and there was a movement

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to house the nation in wooden huts instead of dwellings of brick and stone. Retrenchment being insisted upon, the War Minister's motor-car was put up for auction, and was seen to be the largest and most expensive possible, a most luxurious car, fitted in mahogany and silver. Not liking the appearance of things, some units of Authority went for holiday to a French resort which had earned the reputation of being the giddiest and most expensive place on earth. The people, feeling that Authority failed them, and was lacking in ideals, sincerity, and action, with a sigh concluded that an anodyne of irresponsibility would soothe their sorrows, and adopting the system of joyous materialism, laughed away the day and the night in folly, for in the morning they were to die, they said. Every form of gambling increased; sad and shameful was the decline of public morals. Art and culture generally seemed to have collapsed, though a few brave efforts were made by literature and the drama. The people felt also that the Churches —or, at least, the official Church, the Church of Authority—had failed, and did not patronise them more. Yet those who had lost their beloved in war cried for some consolation, and distrusting the Church, turned pathetically to voices and visions in the air, to imagined visitations from the Beyond, to 'spirits;' and in their belief in spiritualism they seemed to converse with their dear ones and be consoled. Great authors and most distinguished men of science supported these suppositions. It was a further sign of desperation and the failure of Authority—hiding things from the people and deceiving them—that many gave a new and earnest attention to clairvoyants, fortune-tellers, and seers of all sorts. It was declared that occultism had never had so many fervent disciples. It was announced that there were thirty-five thousand professors of this sort of thing in Paris. The Church, which had already begun to entertain certain doubts upon its own sincerity and worth, became alarmed, imagining that a finger of fate was being pointed at it. Something like a panic seized it, and in congress it devoted itself to this question of spiritualism, since it was declared that the mass of the people evidently no longer believed in God—or the God of whom the Churches taught. The serious consideration by the Church Congress of the question of what some who treat the subject very lightly call 'ghosts' or 'spooks,' and the feeling of some high clerics that there might be something in it, and that there should be an inquiry, were not the least extraordinary features of the general chaos and upheaval. But, more than that, the bishops and the parsons, profoundly stirred in their apprehensions, applied themselves also to the consideration of points regarding the birth-rate, and to debating extremely unpleasant problems of a sexual and a medical character. Parsons were feeling that their stock advice to people had been a failure, and that something would have to be done. Stern injunctions, cold commands, and soft nothings had lost their effect; the people preferred to attend jazz dances and bridge clubs. The most popular, most expensive, and most advertised entertainments were the prize-fights. The best newspapers praised them; described in close and affectionate detail the blood that was spilled, and how; said it was magnificent, the utmost art, and advocated the attendance of ladies.

* * *

At their best the people determined to make some new and free and good thing of their own lives on independent lines, disregarding the insincerities and the opportunisms of Authority, and submitting only to their own thought, reason, and conscience. For hope and protection they turned in upon themselves. They found this to be the only way to peace, and to any sort of harmony between their own existence and the eternal question of the 'why' of life and the 'whither' of the soul. Some, taking the lighter form of the new and yet thinking freedom for their principle, agreed with John Galsworthy in his autumn novel, saying, '*Life's* going to be the important thing in the future; not comfort and cloistered virtue and security, but *living*.' All the old traditions and drags on life are in the melting-pot. Regrets and repinings and repressions are going out of fashion. We shall have no time or use for them in the future. A parson in sore domestic distress gave up his parish, and besides the love of his children it seemed to him that Beauty was the only comfort left to him in the world. 'God has so made the world,' he said, 'that, no matter what our struggles and sufferings, it's a joy to live when the sun shines or the moon is bright or the night starry.' And in that was he not spendidly right; for is there not always the consolation that we seek in Nature, which is the visible God? Here at last is truth, sincerity, freedom, promise, and effort. Here is nothing little like the peddlings of Authority, which, with all its Ministerial blasts and speeches, cannot for one moment or by one compass-point move the direction of the wind that fans our face when we stride in freedom over the heath. 'There's night and day, brother—both sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother—all sweet things. There's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?' And from the elementary enunciation of George Borrow give heed to Wordsworth's appeal, listen to the throstle singing and being preacher too, and 'let Nature be your teacher.' Go and look at a silent pool with trees around and masses of undergrowth, with all manner of living things about. Truth and freedom here, if not in Whitehall! Take a fishing-rod to the river, drive a golf-ball over the links—truth and freedom again. Stand by a stream, see the sparkle of water on the stones, and hear that plash of the rill, perfect music,

that Mendelssohn tried to capture in a wordless song. Take some paints and paper and catch shadows in a lane. Man, with an exaggerated idea of officialdom, which is essentially unidealistic and materialistic, has been misled by Authority gone mad; he is lost amid complications and negations, and in his own soul he must go back to his base for a new beginning—the base of Nature. There he will find a safe foundation and sure hope. He is given the hint of it every day and night.

* * *

Some of the skies o'er southern seas are wondrous in their colouring; some sunsets one recalls by the North African coast which by their transcendent beauty seemed to make one's spirit flutter; but yet in London in the autumn there are glorious skies just as the light of afternoon is fading. Look at them across the Park towards Westminster, or, better, perhaps, up from Westminster itself along the deep shaft of Victoria Street, with—by a rare architectural cunning—the Byzantine dome of the Roman Catholic Cathedral commanding the bend of the street where it turns away from view. On most afternoons at three or four Nature brings her sky paints along this way and blends us a great effect—always one of sombre strength and depth. Pretty dapplings she keeps for the hills and the seas; here with the atmosphere of the ancient city she lays broad imperial tints. Last night she chose a favourite effect, and through strong grays and an intermediary of siennas she led to a majestic horizon laid out in deep imperial Venetian red, with the thin mist of the town washed lightly over to yield an opalescent and smouldering impression. It was a masterpiece. Now, if Authority could but emerge from its cells in Whitehall, look upon these things, and really understand them, the tremendous moral of them, how much nearer might we not approach to truth and sincerity? 'Give me the sky if I am to see God,' said Jack Senhouse in Maurice Hewlett's *Open Country*, and there is not to be found anywhere much better philosophy of the simple kind than that of this splendid cultured vagrant. One has been tempted in these last moments to reach a little volume from an adjacent shelf, and surely here are spirits doing their suggestive business, for it flies open at a page where Senhouse at Land's End writes to Sanchia about matters of civilisation, and upon the dear girl he flashes such thoughts as these: 'Are we civilised, by the way? Are we getting civilised? Are we more civilised than the Greeks were in Socrates' time? Or the Romans in Cicero's? Or the Italians in Leonardo's? Or the English in Sir T. More's? Are we more humane, you might say? We are told so, I know; but between you and me and the Atlantic, I doubt it profoundly. Individually, we certainly are not; collectively, not one atom. If we act individually like maniacs, as I've been telling you we do, we act in the mass like the hosts of Midian. Until war—to name but one public vice—is spoken of in the terms we now use to reprobate drunkenness, or gluttony, or the drug habit, I decline to recognise that we are civilised at all. But, so far from that, we devastate the heathen; we exhaust ourselves in armaments; we cause the flower of our youth to perish for all-red maps; we still teach diplomats to lie and politicians to cadge for votes like the street boys for coppers; we thieve at large, brag the great year through, bluster, howl at other people playing games for us; lift pious hands (to a heaven we don't believe in) at our rival's enormities; we cant and vapour—out upon us!—and what for? For two things only, Sanchia; for two things which are fatal to real civilisation—that money may be easy and that labour may be saved. If you will mention to me one public act of the last fifty years which has not been directed to the acquisition of money, or one mechanical invention which has not aimed at the saving of labour, I'll throw up the sponge and commence stockbroker. Now, money, I say, is the one cause of slavery, and work the one hope of salvation. Therefore our civilisation, as they disastrously term it, is a condition of acquiring slavery easily, and of obliterating the hope of civilisation. Pretty, isn't it, when you take the clothes off?' Old Jack, of course, wrote these things long before 1914. His author should tell us something of Senhouse's actions and thoughts—and Sanchia's—since then. Hewlett and Wells and Galsworthy among the tale-tellers have done the sincerest thinking in recent years.

* * *

So it seems that this expiring year has been something of an entangled disappointment. As a year of peace, of honest rejoicing, and as the beginning of a healthier and happier era, it has been a failure. There is the consolation that in national and Governmental folly we should now have 'touched bottom,' and unless human life is a creative blunder we may with confidence look forward to better things. It is necessary to be sincere, to be an optimist, and to think. Then look at the flowers, the fields, the mountains, and a little child, and you know that though gross and pagan Authority may depart, there is a Good that will for ever work its eternal way. The conscience of Authority is obviously bankrupt, and so man must turn in upon himself. Remind Authority now of its insincerities, and it merely, like a vulgar boy, puts out its tongue, and asks what you might have expected. Tell it that it promised there should be no more war and no more militarism, that life should be clean and pure and good, that the Kaiser should be hanged, that the Germans should pay for the war, and that there should be no trading with them. Authority, laughing, will tell you

that any fool could see long ago that Germany could not pay for the war, and that it would be absolutely necessary to trade with her as soon as possible. 'But why, when you promised?' murmurs John Innocent, choking back a mixture of disappointment and disgust. Authority grins more scornfully, saying that then it wanted something. If the people were fools, that was their affair. Thomas Carlyle, his works, had a bad time during the war. The class of patriots who gave a dachshund a kick whenever they saw one, and drove the poor beggar almost out of British existence (I dislike their lengthy bodies, but they have fine eyes—and all dogs are good, differing from men), grumbled that the old sage was pro-German (like Queen Victoria, though they did not mention her), but he wrote one simple thing which is the most obvious truth of modern application—about us people being 'mostly fools.' Authority holds us in the utmost contempt. Politics, insincerity, and opportunism have placed it in command, and now it could not escape from its position, built upon insincerities, if it chose. But all this could last only if it were surely believed that Antichrist would reign in the world for ever on. As we are certain that that is not the case, Authority (as we know it) will end, and happy men and women, no longer labouring half their day to support the waste of Authority and its pet bureaucracy, will lay an epitaph upon its resting-place to read: 'O what a tangled web we weave when first we practise to deceive!'

* * *

But the signs are good. The year which has so much disappointed and yielded so much evil has taught hard lessons, and helped earnest men and women to find themselves. There is heavy work to be done in the near future, but the world is really getting on. We see proofs of goodness and greatness about us. He who doubts should take a walk down Whitehall—which is the home of the politicians and the bureaucrats, though not for that would we walk this way. But raised up in the middle of Whitehall is the grandest thing in London now, grander in its meaning and solemnity than the adjacent Abbey, more potent for influence than Downing Street that comes out upon it, or the great Government departments all about and everywhere. It is *The Cenotaph*. This plain, tall pillar of stone—it will be stone—with the flag laid over it, others drooping by, the simple wreaths upon the sides, those impressive words, 'The Glorious Dead,' and, above all, the masses of tokens of remembrance from the bereaved, is the most awful, most terrible, thing in England now. I cannot walk down Whitehall without feeling an enormous pressure upon my spiritual being, a sense of mysterious forces acting, as if all the human spiritual strength that was exerted there in France and Flanders—and other places—is here massed in this solemn Cenotaph as heat is concentrated in the sun. If you have sense and sensibility, you will find that it both hurts and helps to walk down Whitehall in these times. It is a tremendous experience. Here is the monument to Sacrifice when the world was in doubt and agony. It is proof of the good of man. In the quietness of the night, when most of London sleeps, even now in winter, you will find some lonely, sorrowing soul wandering about the base of this great work of Lutyens, touching again with reverent finger a wreath laid there among the great mass of others that surround the pillar. Always green are these leaves and always fresh the flowers, like the memories they represent. Look at the labels. Passing by on one of these nights, I lingered a moment there, as is almost a custom with many of us. The little card attached to one of the wreaths had a plain inscription in just the same terms that many others had borne, and these were the words: 'In loving memory of my dear daddy.' Listen, people and Authority, to that holy, loving whisper. 'Daddy!' One thing I wonder: Why did Authority, knowing its insincerity and its many errors, permit this glorious, this terrible, Cenotaph to be erected in its own street, its own Whitehall? The answer is that Authority could not help it, and never thought of it. This was a grim, inevitable affair of Fate. It is there for a warning. Above all, it is there for a *Guarantee*. The peace celebrations were a foolish stupidity, but the raising of this Cenotaph in Whitehall was an inspiration from the soul of a great people. Amid the confusion of this year this is one thing done that gives great hope for next year and all to follow. It seems to stand in solemnity, above all the rest of London. The children's wreaths in memory of their daddies give the poignant, tremendous, the warning finish to the memorial of a nation. Yes, this Cenotaph is a Guarantee. Looking upon it, we feel, we know, that there is good to come—'at last—far off—at last, to all.'

THE BROWN NABOB'S MONEY.

CHAPTER V.—A MASTERPIECE OF STRATEGY.

BELLAMY passed a bad night in a big bed in a cavernous room. He revolved various ideas. In such fitful sleep as he got, his ideas mingled curiously with dreams. The Petherfields were in all those dreams. He saw himself captive amongst them. He was a mere nonentity in

their hands. Petherfield was his master in quite a new fashion. Mrs Petherfield presented him with a book on etiquette and gave him private lessons in deportment. Norman drank his champagne and borrowed his money. As for Edytha, in all his dreams he saw himself attached to her willowy figure by a chain, the weight of which he had to support, the links of which nothing could snap. In every phase of his dreams the Petherfields waxed bigger and bigger, while he shrank and shrank until at last he was a pitiful little atomy trembling in their midst. He woke to contrast the dreadful fancies of this dream-world with that old world in which his greatest ambition had been to get three pounds a week and marry Evie Parker.

Eight o'clock struck as Bellamy descended the stairs of his big house. The front-door was open. One of the maids stood there laughing with the postman. She had a big silver tray in her hands; the postman was piling letters upon it, not in twos or threes, but in stacks.

As Bellamy slowly reached the hall the postman went off, and the girl turned to her new master with a coy glance at her burden.

'Your letters, sir,' she said.

Bellamy's mouth opened, and his face puckered into perplexed lines. He followed the girl into the dining-room and motioned her to set the tray on a side-table. When she had gone, he plunged his hands in his pockets and stood for a full minute staring at his correspondence. He had never received more than one or two letters at a time in his life; before him lay at least a hundred. At last he began to open them.

During the hour which elapsed between that moment and the announcement of breakfast, Bellamy realised what it means to be the possessor of riches. It seemed to him that everybody in Normansholt wanted something out of him. Church funds—chapel funds—school funds—the dispensary—cricket clubs—football clubs—societies for providing coal—societies for distributing blankets—not one day had those behind these things allowed to slip before pestering him for money. He counted forty-three applications of this sort, and set them methodically aside. And likewise he put aside twenty-seven pure and simple begging-letters. Some were sent by folk who considered themselves to have claims on Farmadale, deceased; some appealed to Bellamy on the score of acquaintance. Then came suggestions, not for giving money, but for making more. Every stock and share broker in the town had sent him circulars and lists. Several individuals with ideas about patents had written to tell him that if he would invest a thousand or two with them, he would reap a reward of three or four hundred per cent. More innocent matters were catalogues and price-lists from every tradesman in the neighbourhood who had anything to sell. And Bellamy saw himself as a treasure-house, out of which hundreds of grasping and rapacious hands were eager to snatch something.

Then, right at the bottom of the heap, he saw two letters which, somehow, seemed to be of a private nature. One, indeed, he at once saw to be in Evie's rather big, rather unformed, handwriting; the other, a dainty affair in china-blue stationery, was addressed to Bellamy Denton, Esqre., in a delicate Italian style of calligraphy, with long loops and terminals. He turned it over, and saw the Petherfield crest on the back.

Bellamy opened this first. The letter inside was signed 'Edytha,' without any addition of surname. He groaned as he saw it.

'Dear Mr Denton,' ran this missive, 'we shall *all* be *so* pleased and *delighted* if you will come to dinner to-morrow evening—the usual time, of course. Perhaps you will come early, and then you can give me a lesson in *chess*, which I am dying to learn. I am sure you will be very, very *patient* with me! Be *sure* to come.'

Then overleaf, and after the signature, came a postscript: 'Come at five-thirty *if* you like. I'm always *alone* for an hour then.'

Bellamy groaned again and crumpled the scented lure into his pocket. More slowly, and half-afraid, half-hopeful, he opened the letter from Evie. He groaned worse than ever as he read. 'Dear Bellamy,' wrote Evie, 'please, *please* don't ask me again—what you asked me last night. Once, perhaps, I might have said something different, but now it's all so altered, and I'm afraid. You'll have to be such a big man with all that money, and we are humble people, and I'm not equal to such fearful responsibilities. And I am sure Miss Edytha Petherfield will be much more suitable, and will know what you ought to do with your money. And perhaps it would be best if you didn't come to see us again. And, oh, Bellamy, I hope you will always be happy!'

A gong rang somewhere in the hall as Bellamy finished reading this pathetic epistle, but it rang unheeded. And presently, when the parlour-maid looked in, she saw her master standing in the middle of the room, ruffling his red hair with one hand, while he violently clenched a letter in the other.

'Breakfast is ready in the morning-room, sir,' she announced.

Bellamy came to his senses with a violent start. He made a dramatic gesture in the direction of the trayful of letters and circulars. 'You see that lot!' he exclaimed. 'Take 'em away! Burn 'em! Throw 'em on the dust-heap! Do anything with 'em! And if the postman brings any more, tell him to save himself the trouble. I want none of that sort of rubbish here.'

'Yes, sir,' answered the parlour-maid. She seized on the offending papers, and Bellamy

stamped out of the room. But at that moment the second, or extra-local, post arrived, and the parlour-maid had to set the tray down and take in a second consignment of correspondence. 'There are more here, sir,' she said.

'Burn 'em with the rest!' growled Bellamy. 'I won't be pestered with 'em.'

Then he went in to breakfast. Now, the Brown Nabob had been a man of mighty appetite, and the table offered Bellamy a wide choice. There was a game-pie, and there was fish, and there was a dish which the deceased Farmadale had particularly affected—a certain Indian curry which would have caused the tears to flow down Bellamy's cheeks had he tasted it. But Bellamy scarcely tasted anything; he gulped down a cup of coffee, bolted a mouthful or two of toast, and then, seizing his hat, rushed into Friargate and slipped into Haddlesey's office.

Haddlesey was an early bird, as Bellamy well knew; he was always in his private room, ready for business, by nine o'clock. Bellamy, as a client of vast importance, was shown in to him at once; and thereafter strange things occurred, so Haddlesey's clerks thought. First of all, they heard what seemed to be a heated altercation between Haddlesey and Bellamy; anyway, Haddlesey's voice was heard as if in protest, and Bellamy's as if in insistence. At the end of half-an-hour Haddlesey rang his bell, and sent the clerk who answered it across to the bank for Mr Shillito. When the banker arrived there was evidently a renewed conference, which was prolonged for some time. But matters did not end there. At eleven o'clock Haddlesey himself emerged, went into the town, and came back with the mayor and the vicar. He took these gentlemen into his private room, and told his head clerk in a whisper that he was not to be disturbed by any one or for anything. And having reached the door of his room, he turned back as with an afterthought.

'If Mr Petherfield or Mr Norman Petherfield should call and ask for either me or Mr Denton,' said Haddlesey, 'you'll say that it's absolutely impossible to see me for some time—utterly impossible! Mr Denton and I have business of the utmost importance.'

Then he disappeared into his room, and his clerks heard nothing but subdued murmurs therefrom for the rest of the morning. At one o'clock the vicar, the mayor, and Mr Shillito emerged, and went out in close and whispered conversation. The senior clerk, inspecting them from his eye-corners, opined that they appeared to be in a high state of satisfaction about something or other. Then Haddlesey and his client came out and walked along to Friargate House. Evidently they lunched there. At two-thirty they were in the office again; so, too, were the other three gentlemen. The conference appeared to be resumed. The clerks outside waited and wondered, but heard nothing until four o'clock had passed and the dusk was gathering. Then Haddlesey emerged and beckoned to two of his myrmidons.

'Stephenson,' he said, 'go down to Mr Petherfield's and ask him if he and Mr Norman Petherfield will oblige me by coming here for a few minutes. Tell him who's here, Stephenson.—You, Jones, run up to Mrs Parker's, in Trinity Terrace, and tell her that the presence of herself and her daughters is most urgently requested at Mr Haddlesey's office at once. Bring 'em with you, Jones—all three. Say Mr Denton's affairs—most urgent.'

The clerks sped off. Stephenson returned with the Petherfields within two minutes; Jones, with the hastily attired and somewhat alarmed Parker family, within ten. Haddlesey, awaiting the last arrivals at the door of his room, ushered the widow and her daughters inside with a confidential smile and whisper.

'Nothing to be alarmed about, ladies,' he said. 'Merely a little announcement which his Worship wishes to make. Come in.'

Evie Parker, looking round as she entered the room, caught Bellamy's eye at once. Bellamy sat at one end of the centre table; next him on one side sat the mayor, on the other the vicar; close by was Mr Shillito; standing near the hearth were the Petherfields, father and son, each wearing a puzzled expression.

Haddlesey shepherded Mrs Parker and her daughters to chairs, and rubbing his hands together, and with a sly glance at Mr Petherfield, turned to the most important personage in the room. 'Now, Mr Mayor,' he said. 'If you'll just'——

The mayor, a rotund and somewhat pompous person, whose fat hand, as he rose, wandered upward as if in search of his chain, gazed round the room comprehensively. 'Ahem!' he said. 'Mr Vicar, ladies and gentlemen, I—this is a somewhat unusual and informal gathering of—er—let us say, Mr Denton's friends. Those of us, I am sure, who were Mr Denton's friends before will hope to remain so; those of us who have become—er—better acquainted with Mr Denton to-day will hope, I am certain, to know more of a thoroughly estimable young gentleman.' ('Hear, hear!' from the vicar.) 'The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, I have the pleasure, and indeed I may say the honour, to make an announcement on behalf of Mr Bellamy Denton. We are all aware that by the will of the late Mr Farmadale, Mr Denton, two days ago, came into a very handsome property, worth, Mr Shillito tells me, some one hundred and sixty or seventy thousand pounds. A serious responsibility, ladies and gentlemen! So serious, indeed, that Mr Denton—very wisely, in my humble opinion—feels it far too much for him to bear. He has discussed this matter all to-day with his solicitor, his banker, our worthy vicar, and myself, and,

remaining fixed in a certain intention with which he came into this office this morning, he now wishes me to make an announcement—semi-public now, fully public to-morrow. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr Bellamy Denton, in a fine, broad, handsome spirit of public benefaction, has decided to give the fortune left him by the late Mr Farmadale to the Mayor and Corporation of Normansholt in trust for the building and endowment of a modern school whereat the youth of the neighbourhood will receive, freely, the advantages of a most excellent education. Ladies and gentlemen, I most heartily thank this fine-spirited young townsman of ours for the goodness of heart and sentiment and feeling which has prompted him so generously to benefit his native town. His name will be remembered in Normansholt for ever as that of a great benefactor!'

'And as that of the most consummate ass that ever trod its pavements!' exclaimed Mr Petherfield as he snatched up his hat and turned to the door. 'A perfect fool! And I should like to know what influence'——

'Ahem!' said the mayor loudly. 'I think, Mr Petherfield'——

But Norman Petherfield was already hustling his father through the door. He, Norman, was sharp enough to know that Petherfield, senior, if chagrined, was not proof against using actionable language. Besides, the thing was done.

Ten minutes later Bellamy, pale, worn, and meek, escorted the Parker ladies into their little living-room.

Evie turned on him like a flash. 'Bellamy,' she said, 'you've given up that money because of what I said! I've robbed you! Oh, Bellamy!'

Bellamy lifted a hand—like a signal. 'Er—the fact is,' he said—'the fact is, Mrs Parker, and Evie, and Kittie, I—well, you see, the mayor omitted—or, rather, I didn't wish him to mention—one little fact. I—I—well, I haven't given up *quite* all the money. I—didn't see that I need do quite *that*, you know. The truth is, I've given the town about a hundred and fifty thousand. The rest—well, I felt justified in keeping that for myself. I've fixed things in such a way with Mr Haddlesey and Mr Shillito that I shall always have some twenty pounds a week literally fastened on me, so that no one can ever touch it; and, Mrs P. and Kittie, you'll excuse me, I'm sure, if I say that—er—perhaps you'll leave me and Evie for—er—two minutes?'

Whereupon Kittie discreetly drew Mrs Parker from the room, and Bellamy and Evie fell into each other's arms.

THE END.

SOME ODD THINGS ABOUT LONDON.

II.—THE WEST END.

HOW many Londoners of to-day know why the road past St James's Park, between Buckingham Palace and Great George Street, Westminster, is called 'Birdcage Walk'? Few know more about it than that Wellington Barracks are situated there. Here, in the time of Charles II., the royal collection of birds was kept, and Master Edward Storey was the Keeper of the King's Birds. To this day the entrance to the Park from Great George Street is called 'Storey's Gate.' There he had his official residence. It may not be generally known that 'Birdcage Walk' was not open to the public until 1828. Before that date it was used only by members of the royal family and the Hereditary Grand Falconer, whose office has long since been abolished.

For St James's Park was, until years comparatively recent, a 'royal' park in a very real sense, and by no means a democratic one. The exclusive and fashionable resort of an age that stretched from the days of Charles II. and Nell Gwynne to those of George IV. and Mrs Fitzherbert, where impromptu dances and concerts took place, where Bolingbroke and his friends won wagers by walking down the Mall in what Trilby would have called 'the altogether,' is now, of course, free to all. But, even after the Park was thrown open to the public, the authorities, in their peculiar way, were particular, and it is curious to note that until the year 1845 any person in the attire of a workman, or any one carrying a parcel, was not permitted to enter.

'Queen Anne's Mansions,' the first block of flats to be built in London (and very lofty and very ugly they are, too), stand just off Birdcage Walk. They are the place to which the cabman drove the unsuspecting fare who required to be taken to Hans Mansions—which, as Londoners well know, are off Sloane Street, and are named, with the street, after the famous Sir Hans Sloane.

'Queen Hanne's Mansions, you mean, miss,' replied the cabman, and she was driven off to Westminster instead of to Chelsea!

London streets were once a very forest of signs. Those were the times before the houses were numbered. The sign system must have been extremely cumbrous, as we may judge from the advertisement of Dr James Tilborgh, a German doctor, who, in the eighteenth century, advertised that 'he liveth at present over against the New Exchange in Bedford Street, Strand, at the sign of the "Peacock," where you shall see at night two candles burning within one of the chambers before the balcony, where he may

be spoke with alone, from eight in the morning till ten at night.'

The *Daily News* in November 1762 announced that 'the signs in Duke Street, St Martin's Lane, are all taken down and affixed to the fronts of the houses.' The City soon followed suit. But it would seem that the first idea of numbering houses arose from the practice of numbering the staircases in the Inns of Court, which were all alike, and not easily distinguished otherwise. In June 1764 the numbering system was introduced, beginning with New Burlington Street, Piccadilly, followed by Lincoln's Inn Fields. A relic of the days before numbers identified houses is found on the door of No. 45 Berkeley Square, long the residence of the Earls of Powis. There will be seen an oval brass plate (looking very professional, as though it might be that of a doctor or a surgeon) inscribed 'Earl of Powis.' This generally seems to uninstructed observers an eccentricity, but it is merely a survival of a custom once generally followed.

The 'shortest street in London' has recently been incorporated in St James's Square. This was 'John Street,' leading into Pall Mall. It had only one small house, which was, and is, the Duke of Norfolk's estate-office.

One of the broadest thoroughfares in London is that truly noble avenue, Portland Place, north of Regent Street, built by the brothers Adam in the second half of the eighteenth century. It is a retired and quiet street of noble mansions (except for those built of brick instead of stone), reminding one rather of the best parts of Bath than of London.

The roar of London's streets, so often referred to by old writers, is not what it was. The noise is perhaps less in volume, although the traffic is greater, and the sound has certainly a different note. This is because the old granite setts in the roadways have given place to wood and asphalt. Some imaginative writers have had fantastic ideas about London's traffic. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, when a youth, walking along the Strand, could imagine himself Leander swimming the Hellespont. Nothing so fresh as the open sea about the Strand to-day, now that the motor-omnibuses and the taxis rage and the scent of combusted petrol fills the air! The idea of tides, if not of the sea, was expressed by Dr Johnson in 1775 in the well-known phrase reported by Boswell: 'Why, sir, Fleet Street has a very animated appearance, but I think the tide of human existence is at Charing Cross.'

London streets have not been without their poets. Tennyson, in *In Memoriam*, is not complimentary:

> Dark house, by which once more I stand
> Here in the long unlovely street,
> Doors, where my heart was used to beat
> So quickly, waiting for a hand.

He refers to Welbeck Street, Marylebone.

But there are streets unlovelier by far than that. Gower Street, for example, is a prominent specimen of dull, drab uniformity. Ruskin, given to violent expressions, thought it like a street in hell. Since then there have been attempts (with but indifferent success) to modify this alleged satanic, but highly respectable, thoroughfare.

The why and wherefore of many things escapes notice. If you ask why the great bell of Westminster is called 'Big Ben,' most of the people who have any idea at all about it will say it was named after Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield. But it was not. It was so called because Sir Benjamin Hall was Chief Commissioner of Works when the great bell was cast. A crack in it necessitated a recasting (10th April 1858). It weighs nearly fourteen tons, and is again cracked, which accounts for its peculiar tone.

The lamp-posts of London would not seem to be a very interesting subject, but there are some quaint and curious specimens. In St James's Square, in front of No. 2, Lord Falmouth's house, are two which are fixed in the muzzles of old cannon, planted upright on the kerb. These were French guns, captured by Admiral Boscawen, Lord Falmouth's ancestor, in that naval action off Finisterre in 1747 in which the French lost the *Sérieux*, *Invincible*, *Diamant*, *La Gloire*, *Jason*, *Rubis*, and six Indiamen. The French admiral, in giving up his sword to Boscawen, evidently had not entirely lost his spirits, even though he had lost the day; for with ready wit he complimented the victor, in the brilliant, if ill-timed, jest: '*Vous avez vaincu l'Invincible, et La Gloire vous suit.*' Three of the captured cannon perform a useful part as kerbstone-posts, and are tampioned with shot. All five thus utilised are buried up to their trunnions. Leading out of Piccadilly is Sackville Street, supposed to be 'the only street in London without a lamp-post.' This seems a hard saying, but it is true that there are no lamp-posts there, because, although the street is lighted, the lamps are all bracketed out from the walls of the houses.

London has among its other innumerable curios two unique tavern signs. The first is that of an otherwise quite unremarkable public-house in Oxford Street, near Bond Street—the 'Green Man and Still.' There are, of course, many 'Green Man' signs all over the country, but there is only one 'Green Man and Still,' once literally translated by a Frenchman who had never heard of such a thing as a 'still' into '*L'Homme Vert et Tranquil.*' The other sign is the 'Running Footman,' a little house on Hay Hill, at the back of Berkeley Square. The old picture-sign displays a gaily uniformed man running, with a wand of office in his hand. The inscription beneath declares, 'I am the only Running Footman.' This is a reminiscence of the middle of the eighteenth century, when it

was as much the 'correct thing' for noble families to maintain a 'running footman' to precede them on their journeys as it was for their Dalmatian dogs to trot beneath their carriages. Those 'plum-pudding dogs,' as they were called, from their black-and-white-spotted coats, disappeared as escorts about fifty years ago; but the race of running footmen became extinct half a century earlier. 'Old Q,' the reprobate Duke of Queensberry, who lived in Piccadilly, is supposed to have been the last person to employ a running footman.

Piccadilly suggests something that many Londoners never notice—the distinct dip and rise in it, very remarkable in a London thoroughfare. What is the cause of this feature? It marks where the old Tyburn stream crossed on its way to the Thames. That stream, long since for the most part thrust underground in pipes and mains, rose in the north, in St John's Wood, and crossed Oxford Street by Stratford Place, where there is a similar dip in the roadway (where the 'street-ford' used to be). Marylebone Lane, hard by, a singularly tortuous thoroughfare, owes its windings to having been originally a country lane beside the meandering Tyburn stream.

The Westbourne stream, once crossing the Bayswater Road, was finally diverted into a sewer in 1834. This presented an engineering problem when the District Railway was made and Sloane Square station was built. Frequenters of that station will notice a very large iron pipe running obliquely beneath the roof, and forming an extremely prominent and ugly feature. It is the main in which the unfortunate Westbourne is piped.

The region of Pall Mall is Crown property, but there is in that stately thoroughfare one plot of freehold. How it came to be such is an interesting story. On it in the seventeenth century stood a house in which resided the famous Nell Gwynne. It had a garden which then ran back to the Mall of St James's Park, and over the garden wall Mistress Nelly leaned to converse with her royal lover, Charles II., just as pictured in Ward's painting, which is based on a passage in Evelyn's Diary.

Charles, thinking himself to be generous, handed her, as a present, a Crown lease of house and garden; but this did not suffice the lady, who threw it back at him, demanding a freehold —and a freehold she obtained. The modern building of the Eagle Insurance Company stands to-day on that site.

There are many quaint and interesting things about 'the old Court suburb,' the present 'Royal Borough of Kensington,' so called because Queen Victoria was born in Kensington Palace; but we must here be content with one. The visitor who enters the reading-room of the public library in High Street will find on the wall, in a glass case, an old flint-lock blunderbuss, to which belongs a curious history. For many years it was the custom for a watchman to patrol the grounds of the neighbouring Holland House at night with this weapon. At last a night came when he forgot to load it, and that night he was attacked, and being unable to defend himself, he was murdered. His successors were strictly enjoined to fire off the gun every night in front of the mansion at eleven o'clock, and to reload. Thence arose the custom, well remembered by some of the older residents, of nightly discharging the firearm. It was not finally discontinued until 1874.

AN IMMORTAL VAGABOND.

By Arthur L. Hayward.

I.

THE great and noble family of Harlequin had for many years been tumbling and rioting on the Italian stage when, on 7th November 1608, was born Tiberio Fiorelli, one day to be the greatest of Scaramouches. Turned into the streets of Naples in early youth, he and his brother Trapolin soon picked up the dissolute ways and ragamuffin ideas of that most ragamuffin of cities. With the art and training thus acquired in the gutter, Tiberio Fiorelli went out into the world and became a successful vagabond.

Of the first portion of his amazing career the narrative is apocryphal. Young Tiberio, we are told, lost his mother at a very early age, and from that event his wanderings may be said to have begun. His father, a hot-tempered captain in the Neapolitan cavalry, vainly seeking a dispensation to marry his cousin, a union within the proscribed degrees of affinity, lost his temper with one of those responsible for the refusal, and ran him through with his sword. As his victim was no less a person than the bishop's brother, nothing was left for the captain but immediate flight, and having no other belongings besides his two children, he forthwith vanished from the world of Naples.

Even at that tender age Tiberio possessed the more than hearty appetite and the exceedingly expensive appreciation of good things which characterised his long life. The family finances demanded a strict rationing, a state of affairs insupportable to such a lad. Money had to be made somehow, so he conceived the notion of stealing drugs, which his father was at that time selling, and disposing of them on his own account at half the price his father charged. Such a

trade soon thrived, and Tiberio was at the height of his success, having no expenses and making all pure profit, when his father discovered the deficit and gave him a well-merited kick out into the world. So it came about that in the winter of 1626 the promising youth, eighteen years of age, found himself, penniless and famishing, wandering in the direction of Rome.

The glories of the Eternal City appeal but little to a hungry man. Shivering in the icy wind which so often shrieks round the corners of the Roman streets in winter, Tiberio was gazing disconsolately about one day when a snuff-box was suddenly thrust in front of him. At the pressing invitation of a well-to-do citizen Tiberio took a pinch, and in doing so conceived an idea which might make him rich. Taking up his pitch outside a tobacconist's shop, he accosted every customer who issued. It was 'Captain' to each soldier, 'Your Reverence' to every monk, and any shopkeeper's wife became 'Most noble lady.' With outstretched finger and thumb—nay, rather, with all four fingers and thumb—this cunning lad helped himself from every proffered snuff-box. In this way he soon filled a large empty pocket in his jacket. By the time evening fell he had collected a wonderful mixture of snuffs of every description and quality, for which he found a ready market under the name of *Tabacco a mille fiori.*

He had been driving this trade for some days, when one morning a burly Swiss, one of the Pope's guard, from whom Tiberio had begged the customary pinch, became so enraged at seeing a whole hand thrust into his snuff-box that he seized the young man firmly by the shoulders, shook him like a rat, and concluded with a mighty kick that carried Tiberio well on his way toward Civitavecchia.

Once again penniless, Tiberio was wandering along the quays of that seaport one day, when he espied two coloured slaves huddled together, passing coins from hand to hand. This was too much for the Neapolitan. That unbelievers should possess what he so sorely lacked offended all this worthy fellow's sense of propriety. It was a state of affairs which could not be allowed to continue. His unfailing wits came to his aid in a flash. Unobserved by the absorbed couple, he snatched away the piece of rag in which they had been carrying their money and quickly substituted for it the tail of his shirt, which he had ripped off for the purpose. Then he awaited the development of the plot.

As he had expected, no sooner was the counting finished than the slaves rolled the coins up in what they imagined to be their rag, and began to hurry away. Immediately Tiberio raised a hue and cry. Who so aggrieved as he? Robbed, cheated—indeed, nearly murdered—by the two black villains who had torn the very shirt from his back to get away with their booty! Was it not scandalous? Hard that a man could not take his siesta in a sunny corner without being robbed of every penny by a couple of rascally slaves! Burning with a sense of his wrongs, Tiberio declaimed so passionately before the magistrate that the slaves, after surrendering all their money to Tiberio, were flogged within an inch of their lives; whilst that scamp, in a very short time, was on his way to Ancona, richly dressed as a gentleman of fashion, and accompanied by a servant, as befitted his new condition.

II.

Tiberio was now in the happy position of being able to eat as much as he wanted. At the first good inn they came to, he took the opportunity of ordering such a feast as hitherto he had but eaten in his happiest dreams. The best of the whole country-side, both in food and in wine, was placed before him, and when, at last, thoroughly replete and more than half-drunk, he rolled to his bed, he began to set up such a snoring that the whole inn was kept awake.

Indignant at losing a night's repose, Tiberio's servant softly arose, crept into his sleeping master's room, and emptied his pockets of everything of value. He then donned the stylish attire, unostentatiously made his exit from the inn, and quitted the town in search of rest and quiet!

Now, if Tiberio asleep was noisy, conceive of the hubbub and din of Tiberio awake when his loss was discovered! Amazed, stupefied by the uproar in the chamber above, the landlord dashed upstairs, to find his honoured guest naked and penniless. What was far more serious, he owed the bill for a dinner which four cardinals might have been proud to eat.

Finding his house more like to become a bedlam than an inn, the worthy host forgave Tiberio his bill—indeed, he could hardly do otherwise—clapped a few rags on his back, and packed him off as expeditiously as could be. Weeping at such generosity, and covertly slipping, by way of souvenir, a handsome silver tankard into his pocket, Tiberio took the road to Fano, where he soon converted his spoil into a decent suit of clothes.

A troupe of wandering players now attracted his attention. He knew absolutely nothing of acting, but with all the assurance in the world he announced himself as a well-known comedian, ready to take on any part that might be required of him. His first appearance was in a harlequinade called *La Festa di Pietro.* Tiberio chose this on account of the huge meal which is served up during the course of the play, and which the actors have to eat.

Needless to say, his success at this was great. The villagers flocked from distant parts to see him put away with placid content a mighty turkey, a brace of partridges, and an enormous

pigeon-pie! The little troupe had never made so much money before, and, emboldened by their success, they moved from Fano to Mantua, where the young duke conceived a violent admiration for Tiberio, whom he loaded with favours and gifts. The wily rascal was now in his element. He could eat well, he could dress well, and numberless opportunities arose for that type of swindling which appealed to him so strongly, and in which he was so proficient.

Upon one occasion he borrowed from the duke a magnificent black cloak, embroidered with pearls of the finest water. This was for use on the stage, and Tiberio duly made his appearance in the priceless garment. Immediately one of his brother-actors began a prearranged gag.

'Some great and illustrious prince must have lent you that splendid cloak,' said he.

'What do you mean by saying "lent"?' demanded Tiberio. 'Do you think our prince is a miserable old-clothes dealer? If you were to say a great prince *gave* it to me, you would be nearer the mark.'

The hint was not lost upon the duke, who laughed immoderately, and never asked for the return of his cloak.

By such cheery rascalities Tiberio made his sojourn at Mantua pleasant and profitable. When his ineradicable wandering instinct led him once more to the road, it was with sincere regret that the duke bade him farewell.

III.

Tiberio Fiorelli struck Bologna during Lent when all the theatres were closed. Having nothing better to do, he occupied his time with gallantries. His methods of courting, however, did not accord with the notions of propriety encouraged in that town, and an unfortunate fracas with the authorities ensued, in which he came off second best. Determined to be avenged on his enemy, the city prefect, Tiberio took the opportunity of a ceremony at the Cathedral, at which this dignitary was present, to creep up behind him and cut off the valuable silver buttons which adorned his coat of office.

The whole town was thrown into a ferment when the prefect discovered the indignity to which he had been subjected. The thief and the buttons were sought high and low. The scamp had not completed his vengeance, however; he had the buttons, but he meant to have the coat as well. During the height of the excitement be presented himself with typical impudence at the prefect's house. Announcing the news that the buttons had been found, and representing himself as a tailor sent to sew them on, he soon persuaded the housekeeper to deliver the coat itself into his keeping!

Concluding that a longer stay in Bologna would undermine his health, Tiberio took his departure for Florence that same evening. His stay in that city was profitable, but of short duration. Posing as a musician, he entertained the grand-duke with a selection of remarkable songs of his own composing, in which the braying of asses, the lowing of oxen, sundry caterwaulings, and other originalities made up for a total lack of any musical beauty. The grand-duke was so delighted, however, that he gave him a well-filled purse and many letters of introduction to other Italian potentates. Thus furnished, Fiorelli lost no time in setting off for Leghorn.

A curious adventure, which our rascal-errant did not fail to turn to his own advantage, occurred on his way to Leghorn. Two Jews, Aaron and Mordecai by name, were thither bound in the same party. To them Fiorelli introduced himself as a Portuguese, the son of a Lisbon merchant who posed as a Christian, though secretly practising the Jewish faith. The sole object of this earnest young man's journey to Leghorn was to be received into the Hebrew Church. Aaron and Mordecai were deeply moved at such singular devotion. Acting upon their advice, Tiberio adopted the name of Benjamin, and was thus introduced to the Jewish community of Leghorn, where he took up his abode, free of charge, in Aaron's house. At Leghorn he lived on the fat of the land until he perceived that his welcome had lost much of its cordiality. Moreover, whole days were passed in lengthy discussions on religious subjects which were of little interest to Tiberio. So it was with great pleasure that he learned one night that a boat was about to sail for Naples.

He had no difficulty in evolving a plan for robbing his benefactors before his departure. Presenting himself before the Chief Inquisitor, a man of great power who asked for nothing better than the handling of a case against the Jews, Fiorelli denounced Aaron and Mordecai as usurers and thieves who had threatened him with dire torture unless he abjured his baptismal faith and became a Jew. Such an opportunity was not to be lost. The couple were summoned before the Inquisitor, who would listen to nothing they might say in their own defence. After much bullying, they were finally ordered to restore to their Benjamin a quantity of baggage he professed to be his property, as well as to pay him a considerable sum of money which, he asserted, he had given Aaron when in his house. Thus set up in fortune, Tiberio triumphantly embarked, and was soon speeding before a fair wind to Naples.

The voyage gave him an opening for another piece of knavery. Seeing an elderly priest on board who was fingering a magnificent gold crucifix, the rascal adopted the rôle of a devout pilgrim who had hoped, by a visit to the shrine of St Anthony of Padua, to cure himself of fits of diabolical possession. He explained that only a gold crucifix hung about

his neck would avert the visits of the evil spirit, and easily persuaded the credulous old man to lend him the charm for the voyage. By slyly disembarking before any of the other passengers, Tiberio ensured himself against returns of the malignant spirit by retaining possession of so valuable a talisman.

IV.

At Naples, Tiberio made his appearance as a man of fashion with a fine carriage, rich dresses, and all that a golden crucifix can buy! He denied himself nothing so long as his money lasted, and when that was finished he found a troupe of comedians who received him with open arms. Engaged by the Duke of Satriano to perform before his guests, the knave turned the event to his own advantage, as usual, and, unobserved by the duke, secured a couple of handsome silver candlesticks. But this ducal party was his undoing. Whilst rehearsing one of his parts in a secluded portion of the duke's gardens, Tiberio perceived a face watching him intently from behind a shrub, and the next moment found himself in the clutches of the infuriated old priest from whom he had stolen the crucifix. Cries of 'Stop thief!' soon brought a crowd of the duke's retainers to the scene, and that same night saw Tiberio on board a vessel bound for Malta.

He was not, however, destined to pursue his adventures in that island. On the voyage he embroiled himself with the captain of the boat in a fierce quarrel for the favours of one of the lady passengers, and being a man of deeds, Captain Peresso got rid of his rival very simply by marooning him on the rocks of Sicily. After many tribulations the wanderer made his way to Palermo, where he was glad to enter the service of a famous actress, becoming her lackey, and occasionally being allowed to perform the insignificant part of Scaramouche in her troupe.

Tiberio was now twenty-five years of age. He could eat as much as four ordinary men, and drink them under the table. He was a wit, too, and was welcome at every *festa* and party his friends might give. This popularity of his led to a serious adventure with a happy ending.

A laundress of his acquaintance invited him to the wedding of her daughter. After the ceremony the party grew very merry, and none was so full of life or so boisterous as Tiberio. The warm Southern sun bathed the whole scene in joy—the lawn beneath the trees, the blue bay shimmering below, and the sparkling eyes of the Neapolitan girls as they danced and sang. One of them was an especial beauty. Every swain, including, it is whispered, the bridegroom, strove to win a flash of Marinetta's bright eyes or lead her in the tarantella. The sun, the music, the rhythm of the dance, and the touch of Marinetta's hand in his were too much for Tiberio, whose heart was aflame with wine and love. As they whirled about he suddenly stooped, clasped the girl in his arms, and kissed her passionately. The company were horrified and scandalised. The festivities stopped as at the fall of a thunderbolt. The decencies of the South were shocked. Old folks put their heads together; the matter was too serious to be passed over. Marinetta's good name had been compromised, and there was but one way out of the difficulty—she must become Tiberio's wife without delay. And so it was not long before another wedding took place, and Tiberio took away his lovely Marinetta, to whom, to do him justice, he proved a faithful and loving husband.

Upon his marriage Fiorelli left the actress's service, and having saved a little money, took his wife to Rome, where he opened a small show with wonderful success.

Cardinal Chigi stood sponsor for their first son, and it may well be imagined that Tiberio expected and extorted munificence worthy of so exalted a god-parent. But with his rising fortunes many of the old rascal tricks were abandoned, and this knave-errant now earned his living by means honest enough according to his own standards.

V.

From Rome to Milan, Parma, and Vienna Tiberio and his wife went wandering, courted by princes and flattered by the people wherever they stopped. But the splendour of the Court of Louis XIII. was lure enough for any actor with personality, and it was to Paris that the couple wended their way in 1640. The journey there was marked by a truly scaramouchian adventure. Whilst crossing the Mont Cenis, they found themselves benighted in the Inn of the Grande Croix, which in those days contained but a single guestroom, in which was one bed. This was already occupied by two bagmen. To Marinetta's disgust, she and her husband were allotted two heaps of straw. Unperturbed, Tiberio made ready to undress. 'But first pass me the soap,' said he in a loud voice. 'I want to soften the noose on this halter. I have got a man to hang to-morrow, and I cannot, in all conscience, add to his agony by using a hard rope.'

Marinetta thought he had gone mad, but not so the two bagmen. Awakened by his loud tones, and thinking they had to do with the hangman—maybe their consciences were none too clear—they quietly slipped from the bed and out of the house, leaving the faithful couple to pass a night of comfortable repose.

Our comedian made his début before Louis in character, with his dog, his guitar, and his parrot, and immediately won the royal heart. He soon became a favourite with the queen-mother, who used to call him in to amuse the little dauphin, hereafter to be Tiberio's true patron and friend—Louis XIV. No attention was too great to bestow upon him, and at no time in future

years was the royal condescension lacking. Tiberio's troubles were now over and wealth was his, ungained by knavery. His position was assured, and he became the idol of high and low. Henceforward the historian of his career is on surest ground.

Tiberio is described at this period as being tall and slim, short-sighted, and slightly hump-backed. He was a great eater, and yet possessed remarkable agility. But his greatest asset, and the cause of all his fame as Scaramouche, was a marvellous talent for posturing and making grimaces capable of expressing any human sentiment. Without uttering a syllable he would keep his audience in a state of suspense, sometimes exhibiting the living picture of a panic-stricken man, at other times portraying the feelings of an angry, jealous lover.

The rôle very frequently played with such success by Tiberio Fiorelli was that of the braggart, fire-eating captain who uttered most dreadful threats against absent foes, but shuddered at the sight of a drawn sword. Dressed from head to foot in black, a fearful man he was, brimming over with fierce oaths and blood-curdling speeches—until Harlequin would come along, and with a crack of his wooden sword send Scaramouche sneaking round the nearest corner. In one of his scenes Scaramouche is discovered tidying up a room, having done which, he sits down and plays a tune on his guitar. He is thus occupied when Pasquariello creeps up behind and gently beats time to the melody on Scaramouche's shoulder. This throws him into such paroxysms of terror that, without uttering a word, he keeps the audience spell-bound or throws them into shrieks of laughter.

Molière himself took lessons in the art of depicting by facial expression the passions animating the soul. His troupe and that of the Italian Comedy acted at the Court on alternate nights, and it is said that Molière never missed a single performance of Scaramouche.

Such was the favour now enjoyed by Tiberio that Anne of Austria, Queen Regent of France, and Cardinal Mazarin stood sponsors for one of his children in 1644, and each of his other sons had noble god-parents.

After some time Marinetta left her husband and returned to Italy, to which Scaramouche paid frequent visits. On his last visit he was absent seven years, not returning to France until after his wife's death.

VI.

A few years later Tiberio began to look for another wife, and his choice falling upon a young girl, daughter of a well-to-do baker, he began to press his suit. His attentions were not, however, acceptable; yet not until he had been the victim of a severe practical joke, in the course of which he was shut up in a flour-bin for two days, did Tiberio realise the hopelessness of his suit and leave the girl alone.

At the age of eighty-three he decided to quit the stage and pass his few remaining years in retirement. He was as active and agile as ever, one of his favourite tricks even at that advanced age being to box Pasquariello's ears with his heels! Nor did he consider himself too old to play the part of bridegroom, for, octogenarian though he was, he married a girl named Marie Duval. Little happiness attended this union, however, and before long, tormented by jealousy, and with a cruelty best left undescribed, he put his bride away in the Châtelet prison, where she presently died.

Of such a sound constitution was Tiberio that up to the age of eighty-six he had never had the slightest ailment. Death, however, could not be kept waiting longer, and Scaramouche met his new acquaintance with all his wonted originality. One day, as life was fast on the ebb, he demanded one of the favourite dishes of his long-past youth, a great plate of vermicelli and Parmesan cheese. The doctor warned him that he might yet live another week if he would deny himself the delicacy. 'Well, well!' said Scaramouche, 'a week more or less means little to a man of my age, and is certainly worth less than a dish of vermicelli. So prepare it at once, and send for a priest.'

Having made a good confession and recommended his soul to his Maker, he ate the vermicelli with the utmost gusto and drank deeply. At two o'clock in the morning, being unable to sleep, he called a couple of lads and challenged them to a game of cards. After a while he threw down the cards, bidding the boys continue their game, but not disturb him in his prayers. A few moments later, mumbling the closing words of the *Pater Noster*, he fell back dead.

For over fifty years Tiberio Fiorelli had been the life of the Italian Comedy in Paris. By his sole genius he had given the rôle of Scaramouche an entirely new character, raising it to a permanent place in the immortal family of Harlequin. Molière was well justified in writing as he did beneath Tiberio's portrait:

Cet illustre comédien
Atteignit de son art l'agréable manière;
Il fut le maître de Molière
Et la Nature fut le sien.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

FERRO-CONCRETE FLAG-STAFF.

ALMOST every one must be familiar with ferro-concrete posts for fences and gates, while where piles are used for piers and similar structures this material is now preferred to wood. At the same time, it is rather startling to hear of ferro-concrete being used for a flag-staff, yet this has been done successfully at the Ancon Hospital in the Panamá Canal Zone. Moreover, the size of the staff is no greater than that of a wooden one of equal height—eighty feet—the pole tapering from seventeen inches in diameter at the bottom to eight and a half inches at the top. This flag-staff was not made on the ground and raised into a vertical position, but was cast in place, the moulds being carried by a light wooden tower. Eight square steel bars, equally spaced just below the surface, form the reinforcement, these bars being tapered from one and a quarter inches at the bottom to half an inch at the top, and held together at intervals by steel rings. The staff is sunk ten feet into the ground, and was smoothed over with 'neat' cement after the moulds had been removed.

ARCHED HOUSES WITHOUT ROOFS.

All manner of suggestions are being put forward with a view to the production of cheap houses, one of the most interesting and promising having been made recently by Mr Albert C. Freeman, after studying a description of the catenarian arch to be seen supporting the lantern of the church of St Geneviève in Paris. The main feature of Mr Freeman's system is the elimination of the roof by curving the front and back walls towards each other until they meet at the top. Only at the bottom are these walls vertical as they begin curving inward just above the ground, the resulting contour being very similar to a section of the business end of a shell with the point well rounded off. The end-walls are, of course, vertical. This form of construction demands dormer windows and doors in the side-walls, but owing to the steepness of the curve the windows do not project nearly so much as from an ordinary roof. Special concrete blocks, reinforced with steel and made with a patented machine, are used for the walls, the blocks, which have a recess two and a half inches deep all round, being set in cement with expanded metal between them. The blunt apex of the structure is covered with curved blocks. Owing to the hollow end-walls and the air-chambers in the blocks for the curved walls, houses built on this system should be warm in winter and cool in summer; while, needless to say, they are sure to be dry. The cost of construction is said to be 30 per cent. less than that of brick houses with roofs.

A NEW PUSH-BIKE MOTOR.

Several attempts have been made during the last decade to produce a motor that can be successfully applied to the ordinary push-bike. One of the most recent and satisfactory is the Simplex Power Unit, which consists of a single-cylinder two-stroke horizontal engine, capable of developing one horse-power. This unit is mounted in the same position as a luggage-carrier, but, of course, the framing is very much stronger to carry the additional weight, which reaches twenty-three pounds. The motor drives the back-wheel by a chain which takes on to an extra chain wheel, mounted upon five special tubular spokes attached to the rim of the back-wheel at the side opposite to the pinion for the foot-power chain. Lubrication is effected by mixing a small proportion of lubricating oil with the petrol—a plan which is commonly followed for outboard marine motors. The petrol-tank holds half-a-gallon, which is said to be enough to propel bicycle and rider for ninety miles. With a rider weighing ten stone, a speed of twenty miles per hour is attainable on the level, with an average of fifteen miles per hour; while the cycle will ascend an incline of one in ten without assistance from the pedals. The only levers needed to control this motor are one connected to a decompressor and clutch, and the usual ignition and throttle controls. Ignition is provided by a magneto embodied in the engine.

HUGE ORE-LOADING PLANT.

What is claimed to be the largest ore-loading staith in the world was opened at Duluth, U.S.A., on 1st May. When its construction was begun the site was enclosed with steel sheet piling and pumped out dry, being afterwards partially filled with sand. Then a concrete slab was poured in, embedding the ends of the piles to a depth of nine inches. The storage accommodation consists of huge bunkers, each capable of holding 6540 cubic feet of ore, or the contents of eight standard fifty-ton ore-cars. According to the *Scientific American*, the total storage capacity is 153,600 tons, and 29,600 tons of steel were used in the construction of the bunkers and the loading-shoots. The staith measures 2438 feet in length, and two of the world's largest ships can berth at each side of it.

WATER-JETS SINK CONCRETE PILES.

Piles constructed of concrete, reinforced with steel bars, have (as indicated above) been used for many years, in preference to those of wood, for piers, quays, bridges, and other structures needing this form of support. Until recently such piles were driven by a steam pile-driver, which entailed steel points and special hoods

for the top ends to withstand the blows of the driver. A method of sinking concrete piles has now been devised whereby they are lowered down to their correct level without a blow being struck or any pressure being exerted by them other than that due to their weight. Passing through the middle of each pile from end to end is a four-inch steel pipe, projecting a few inches at the top, and terminating at the bottom in a coned casting with a two-inch outlet. A T-piece is fitted to the top of this pipe, and a two-inch pipe is passed through the T and down to the bottom, where a collar on the end of it jams in the coned casting. Water at pressures up to 200 pounds to the square inch can be passed into the small pipe, and, independently, into the larger one through the side of the T. At intervals along the lower part of the pile small cross-pipes lead from the larger pipe to the four sides, and where these emerge the ends are turned upwards. When a pile is to be sunk, it is simply lowered into the mud or to the ground by its own weight, and the water blows away the soil at the bottom end, allowing the pile to sink gently to the correct level. The process is facilitated by water from the cross-pipes, which helps to drive the soil upwards, while forming a lubricant for the sides. Once the water is turned off, the loose ground settles round the pipe and holds it as firmly as if it had been sunk with a pile-driver; in fact, piles sixteen inches square, sunk forty-eight feet into sand and clay on this system, have carried loads up to 100,000 pounds each. Where obstructions are likely to be encountered the points of the piles are protected by steel shoes, and the piles can be lifted and allowed to fall until buried objects are broken up or forced aside. Experiments show this method of sinking piles to be successful in all kinds of loose soils, either under water or on dry land.

A CLEAN, SILENT, AND EFFICIENT OIL-STOVE.

A great many houses in this country are still beyond the reach of public gas-mains, and although the larger country-houses have their own supplies of gas or electricity, the smaller householder has to content himself with oil-stoves to supplement coal for heating and cooking. Until the advent of the stove we are about to describe, no very satisfactory oil-burner for cooking and heating had been produced. Many types are feeble and dirty; and nine women out of ten cannot or will not use oil-stoves which have to be started by methylated spirit and pumped up to a high pressure of air. At the recent Shipping Exhibition, a number of oil-stoves known as the 'Valor Perfection' were shown. These stoves have circular wicks which give a very powerful blue flame, and they can be lit at once without any preparation or pumping. Although this type of stove is not new, it is not so well known as it might be, and some of the models and accessories exhibited are of recent origin. One of the stoves, for instance, has a single burner, and is similar in size and form to a Primus. A useful griller was to be seen, in which chops, steaks, or birds can be easily cooked over one burner. These stoves are made with ovens, and have one, two, three, or four burners. A device having three burners with a heater above them is used in conjunction with a circulating cistern for producing hot water for baths. One advantageous feature of the stove is the glass container, in which the level of the oil can always be seen.

NOVEL SHIP-SALVAGE DEVICES.

All the large ships sunk by German submarines during the war were built of steel, which, of course, corrodes quickly in sea-water. These vessels, however, have not deteriorated from this cause to the extent that might have been expected, and, owing to the high cost of building, most of them are well worth raising even at a heavy cost. Many methods of salvage for wrecks have been put forward by inventors, some of which have been described in these notes. One promising plan that has already proved successful consists in lashing collapsible pontoons to the sunken ship, and then pumping them full of air. Pontoons of this description have been made by Messrs Vickers Ltd., of Barrow-in-Furness, the material used for the covers being a special canvas. Although the weight of each pontoon is only one ton, when inflated it has a lifting-power of 100 tons. Two of these pontoons were recently attached to the stern of the s.s. *Main*, which was sunk by a U-boat in Luce Bay, off the Wigtownshire coast. They were pumped full of air by a compressor on a tug, and successfully raised the sunken steamer so that it could be beached, preparatory to being pumped out. Experience gained during this operation showed that the canvas pontoons were capable of withstanding a great deal of rough usage, and it is thought that similar bags can be made with lifting capacities up to 300, or even 500, tons. The latter size is large enough, if a number were used, to lift such vessels as the *Lusitania;* in fact, any sunken ship which divers can reach and secure to pontoons can be raised by such means. Another interesting scheme which was put in hand by the Admiralty before the end of the war depends for its lifting-power upon two enormous concrete pontoons having towers reaching to a height of 125 feet above sea-level. These salvage-vessels have been built on the beach at Southwick, near Brighton, where they gave rise to much conjecture until their purpose was made known after the Armistice had been signed. Likened by the *Scientific American* to huge wedding-cakes, they measure 180 feet in length, and consist of superimposed hexagonal stages. Hollow blocks of concrete

four feet square and two feet deep constitute the building units, and each pontoon is built in four storeys, the upper ones being stepped back, thus giving the appearance of a stepped pyramid. The concrete blocks are so arranged as to give a saw-tooth surface to the periphery of each storey. Surmounting the fourth storey is a hollow cylindrical tower, thirty feet in diameter and sixty-five feet in height. At the summit of this tower is a platform nineteen feet wide, supported by twelve columns. As already stated, these vessels were built on the beach, and holes were left in the sides of the bottom storey so that the tide could run in and out of them until they were completed and ready for floating, when the holes were stopped up and the vessels floated off to take up their duties. These salvage-craft are each fitted with numerous powerful winches, and when a sunken ship is to be raised they are floated over it, one on each side, and huge steel cables are either passed under the wreck or attached to it. At low-water the ends of the cables are wound in by the aforesaid winches; whilst, if necessary, the salvage-pontoons can be partly filled with water and sunk to a considerable depth, thus allowing the cables to be taken up still farther. As the tide rises the pontoons and the sunken ship all rise together, whilst a farther lift can be obtained by pumping the water out of the pontoons. At high water the three vessels are towed into shallower water, where the wreck is grounded and the process is repeated, until the hull is exposed at low tide and can be pumped out. Naturally, when the pull of the cables comes upon the salvage-pontoons, they will list over towards the wreck unless means are taken to counterbalance the weight of the vessel. This can be done by admitting water to certain chambers on the outer sides of the pontoons. In order to raise sunken ships in deeper water, it is proposed to haul loops of wire rope under the wreck by tugs, the ends of the ropes being subsequently wound up on the winches of the salvage-pontoons. This system should be practicable for sunken ships lying on sand or mud, although no doubt powerful tugs will be needed to haul the ropes into position. Means are provided for completely submerging the salvage-pontoons, if found desirable, so that they can be sunk down to any depth their hulls are strong enough to withstand. The powerful machinery needed for pumping the water out of them is carried in auxiliary craft.

BLOCKHOUSES FOR BANKS.

So common has the robbery of banks become in the suburbs of Chicago that in one establishment a steel blockhouse has been installed which commands every part of the banking-room, while loopholes facing on the street allow of firing at escaping thieves. The sides of the structure are of sufficient thickness to protect the occupants against bullets from small-arms or rifles, and narrow slits are provided through which observations can be made and the guns fired. A guard is maintained in the blockhouse both by night and by day.

FELLED TREES STOP RIVER EROSION.

Serious as are the losses of land by the erosion of the sea, it is doubtful whether they equal those resulting from the wearing away of their banks by the big rivers of the world. This action has been particularly pronounced with the Mississippi and the Missouri, and bank-protection works are a constant source of expense to the states and the landowners along their courses. A new method of protection has been recently put into operation which depends for its effectiveness upon the hollow piles described in a previous note. These were invented by Edward Bignell of Lincoln, U.S.A., who, as superintendent of a division of the Burlington Railroad, was 'up against' the problem of sinking piles to greater depths than they could be driven by blows on the head. Early last year the railroad-shops opposite Omaha were threatened by the Missouri, and, after other schemes had failed, Bignell piles were adopted in conjunction with felled trees (having all their branches left on), which were moored along the sides of the river. Steel collars, to which are attached chain cables, are fixed to the heads of the piles, which are sunk down level with the river-bed. The trees are attached to the cables and float in the current, which carries large quantities of sand in suspension, and runs, when unobstructed, at a rate of some eight miles an hour. If slowed down by the trees, however, the water deposits its sand where desired in the form of bars, which protect the banks and confine the river within safe limits. Ordinary cotton-wood trees are used, with trunks averaging a foot in diameter, and as many as 160 may be attached to one pile. This kind of protection has shown itself to be proof against floods and ice, which are often destructive to other types of protective works. In one case erosion was entirely stopped although twenty acres of bank had been cut away in thirty days previous to the sinking of the piles.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

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CONTENTS.

MERRIE GENTLEMEN	By Arthur Beverley Baxter	Page 1
'IMPH!' SAID MRS KNOX	By Mary Stuart Boyd	" 23
THE KHAMSIN	By J. A. Nimmo	" 36
THE FALL TRIUMPHANT	By C. L. M. Brown	" 37

CHRISTMAS 1919.

MERRIE GENTLEMEN.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER,

Author of *The Blower of Bubbles, The Airy Prince,* &c.

I.

IF you could find the village of Windbridge (which is very difficult, as it hides itself at the bottom of a hill, well off the main road that crosses the downs at a certain part of the English south-east coast), you would see the identical cottage where Dr Jellybud looked from his window at the beginning of this history.

For more years than most people could remember he had lived there, and every day he looked out of the window on rising, because he was a jovial, round-bellied old boy who was glad to see the morning; and if the sun has any sympathy in its nature at all, it must have had hard work to keep from coming out and smiling back at the jolly, red-faced doctor.

'Octavius,' cried his sister from below, 'breakfast is ready.'

'Coming, my dear; coming at once,' cried the doctor, immersing his face in a basin of cold water.

That was a harmless lie which, I am sure, never grew any blacker for repetition. He always *was* late for breakfast, and never did come 'at once;' but then, if he had, there would have been no necessity for his rubbing his hands, and making all sorts of genial excuses, and generally starting the day (as it should be started) as if life were a very pleasant thing altogether, and breakfast one of the pleasantest things in life.

The doctor had never married, which was strange too, for in that part of the country there wasn't a keener eye than his for a dimpled cheek or a pretty ankle. . . . But, then, possibly he liked so many dimples and admired such regiments of pretty ankles that he couldn't concentrate on any one set of them.

Yet it should be recorded that sometimes, when he used to sit by the fire and drink punch with Jacob Funnle, the county magistrate, who was given to amateur theatricals—it was a well-known fact that Funnle's Othello was far better than anything on the London stage—and who used to scare prisoners speechless by his manner when he tried them, Dr Jellybud would grow a little melancholy. On such occasions it was his habit to confess to an early and fruitless attachment to a 'splendid creature' with ten thousand a year in her own right, who had been cruel enough to hand over the care of her splendid self and the ten thousand a year to an ensign in the —th Bloodandthunderers, who owned the finest moustaches, the best legs, and the thickest head in London.

As this tale never failed to produce a state of abject sentimentality in both of them, old Funnle would propose, 'Women, lovely women—God bless 'em;' and, as any gentleman would, they always did full justice to the toast, bracing up surprisingly after it. In fact, more than once these evenings had ended with a chorus descriptive of the joys of bachelorhood, sung with a

heartiness that made it difficult to realise that one was a blighted lover and the other a lonely widower.

The doctor was the eighth child of a teacher in a poor little Cornish school, and by dint of much economy he had been sent to London, where, after several years in a hospital, he was duly proclaimed a competent member of the medical profession. The superbly moustached ensign having bludgeoned his matrimonial chances, Jellybud took over the practice of Dr Swiggins, who had looked after the health of all Windbridge for fifty years, and who, finally taking sick, had made the mistake of trying one of his own remedies, with the result that his place of residence changed to the cemetery, and his practice, as aforesaid, passed to Dr Jellybud.

As this was when Octavius was in his early thirties, his favourite sister, Regina, had come to keep house for him—just until he was married.

Thirty years passed by, and the pretty little sister with the cheeks like roses grew to be a sweet-countenanced woman with fading flowers in her face, but with a gentle kindliness that is a far more lasting and beautiful thing than roses, which must die with the passing of summer. The world is full of such women, offering their sympathy and understanding, and never asking any other reward than the knowledge that some load has been made a little lighter for their ministering.

So when this story opens his sister was still keeping house for the doctor, though it was a great joke between them that some day he would bring home a blushing young bride. And in return he would accuse Regina of designs on Jacob Funnle.

Altogether they were a very happy pair; and even if the old doctor never knew very much about medicine, and had forgotten most of the little he had learned, he did a tremendous amount of good by his cheeriness. In fact, as he used to drive through the village with his black bag in full view, Windbridge wouldn't have exchanged its family doctor for all the brains of Harley Street.

II.

'Well, my dear,' said Dr Jellybud, entering the dining-room with his face still glowing from recent ablutions, 'that's a very cosy fire. Sorry I am late. Damme! I'm always late—shouldn't wonder, you know, if I wasn't really intended for the seventh child, but consequence of being late they had to leave me till the eighth. I tell you that's good porridge, ain't it? Eat lots of oatmeal, sleep with your window open, keep cheerful, and half the doctors and undertakers would go bankrupt in a year.'

'It looks like rain, Octavius.'

'Should be snow this time of year.'

'I think there's a storm coming on. Do you have to go out to-day? You know, you're not so young as you were.'

'Yes I am, m'dear—younger. If a fellow lives properly, you know—open windows at night, not too much spirits and 'baccy, and absolutely never touches port wine—he simply lives in a circle. Starts young, grows to middle age, then gets younger and younger until he disappears again.'

'But, Octavius, whom do you have to see to-day?'

'The whole lot of 'em, Regina. There's Widow M'Gregor, getting more melancholy every day; and Joe Green, who is quarrelling with his wife all the time; then there's poor old Ned Clarke, who don't seem able to earn a penny; and, of course, I have to see Sam Heeling about the Christmas music—you know it falls on Sunday this year; and then I must go and see little Barbara Flint.'

'You shouldn't go away out to that lonely spot.'

'That's just it, m'dear. It *is* a lonely spot, and that pretty little creature's pining away like a bird in a cage, all on account of her sinful old dad, who won't see what's going on before his very eyes.'

'Yes; I noticed Barbara at church last Sunday, and she looked like a fading lily.'

'She does, Regina—just like a lily. It's my opinion, speaking as her medical adviser, that she's in love. She looks just like I did when —you know whom I mean—when she jilted me for that nincompoop in the Bloodandthunderers.'

After which melancholy thought the doctor devoted himself to his breakfast with more relish than ever.

'Barbara,' said Miss Jellybud, pouring out some coffee and uncovering a plate of steaming rolls, 'has never been the same since she visited her poor dead mother's brother in Surrey. It's my idea she fell in love with some one while there.'

'Like as not.'

'I wish I could go and see her, or even that she would come here of an afternoon and sit by the fire. I know I'm dull company for a young girl like her, but surely anything's better than remaining in that rickety old house on the downs with her mean old father.'

'The perverse old specimen!'

'Well, really, Octavius, I hate to be unkind; but when I think of how he screws the last penny out of everybody, and never spends anything except when he's forced to, and how he lives in that horrible house with little Barbara just the same as a prisoner, I must say that I think he's anything but a gentleman.'

'A gentleman, Regina!' The doctor's face grew quite apoplectic. 'He's not only Flint—he's a skinflint! A miser; a scoundrel! Damme! if only he would get sick, I'd poison him, and hang cheerfully for it. It's my opinion that this trouble between Joe Green and his wife, and Widow M'Gregor with her fretting, is all

in consequence of that bad-livered old scoundrel grinding the money out of them that haven't the means to pay. I tell you, Regina, Josephus Flint had better keep out of my way: he'd better not apply to Dr Jellybud for medicine unless he gets it analysed first.'

There was a scratching at the door and the low whine of a dog.

'There's Nero,' said the doctor. 'Let him in.'

His sister opened the door to admit the shaggiest and most melancholy dog that ever walked on four legs. Without so much as a wag of his tail, he took one look at his master and rolled over on the floor by the fire, as if life's burdens were really too heavy for him to bear much longer. His sadness was perhaps a business asset to the doctor, because, when a medical practitioner is as jovial as old Jellybud, it is just as well to have a dog that is always on the brink of tears.

Nero used to accompany his master on all his journeys, running behind the gig with his shaggy head just between the two wheels, which spattered him constantly with mud. And he being an object of particular animosity to other canines, who apparently regarded his melancholy as a personal affront, Nero's progress through the village was considerably harassed by mongrels all and sundry, who waged guerilla warfare on him, while the doctor would brandish his whip and threaten them with tortures unending.

'Well, Nero,' said the doctor, 'how's the weather?'

The dog uttered a dismal groan, as though that were the one subject which he could not bear to hear mentioned.

'Nero's in a good humour this morning,' said the happy little doctor. 'And now, m'dear, if you have the present for the Widow M'Gregor, and that leg of mutton we don't want for old Ned Clarke, I'll just tell the man to harness up, and then be off on my rounds.'

'I wish you wouldn't go, Octavius dear. There's going to be a storm.'

'Bless your sweet face!' said the doctor, producing his pipe, 'that's the very reason I must go. Those poor souls always get worse when the sky's clouding up and there's a nasty bite in the air.'

III.

If Dr Jellybud's dog was a creature of melancholy, his horse was a quadruped that would have earned a fortune for an undertaker. He was a large beast of fabulous age, and though he ate enough for three dray-horses, was all angles and corners. On the outward journeys, away from home, he made a tremendous show, tossing his head and heaving his flanks, though in reality going just a little quicker than a fast walk. But when the day's rounds were completed, and the doctor's gig was definitely set for home, the old horse would get right down to business, covering so much ground with his long, ungainly stride that the little red-wheeled gig used to bob from side to side, to the immediate peril of the doctor and any passing pedestrian who did not allow sufficient leeway. As for Nero, it must ever remain a mystery how he escaped decapitation. Perhaps a life of such daily jeopardy may have accounted for his dejected condition of mind.

The horse was named Socrates (out of respect for the learned lineage of the Jellybud family), and was unfortunate enough to be blind in his right eye. He was possessed, however, of an inordinate curiosity that only ripened with age, and such being the perverseness of human affairs that most incidents of interest happened on his left side, it resulted that Socrates was frequently facing the opposite way to that in which he was going.

In fact, as Dr Jellybud would drive down the street with Nero, the dog, in mournful faithfulness between the gig-wheels, and Socrates turning his head almost completely round, the impression one received was that the family practitioner was actually consulting with his horse concerning the treatment to be administered to the sick of Windbridge.

On the morning, then, that this narrative commences the doctor bade good-bye to his sister, who had been packing into the gig various little presents for people—'just things she didn't want'—as if she were affluent instead of being forced to economise on every shilling; and with much clattering of hoofs from Socrates, who seemed to be trying to devise a new step for the hornpipe, and a dismal groan from Nero, the equipage made its stately way through the village. Seated on the very high seat of the absurd little gig, and, as I have said, with the mysterious black bag in full view of the populace, the doctor acknowledged the hearty greetings of the few who were abroad on that bleak December morning with a cordiality tempered by consciousness of his exalted position.

Arriving without mishap at the Widow M'Gregor's (unless it could be counted a mishap when the chemist's dog made a rush at Nero and very nearly succeeded in embroiling him with the glaring red spokes), the doctor carefully tied Socrates to a post, and walking round the gig, entered the miserable little garden—the horse endeavouring to follow his master's circuitous progress with his good eye until a strangling sensation reminded him that he couldn't turn a complete circle with his neck.

'Good-morning to you, madam,' said the doctor, as a tired woman, whose face was threaded with wrinkles, opened the door. 'I hope I see you hearty.'

'Na, na, doctor. I'm no herty—far frae it.'

'Tut, tut, madam!' said the doctor, taking a seat in a bare, dingy room and rubbing his hands

jovially together; 'you 're looking the very picture of health.'

'Then it disna tak' muckle to mak' a picter,' was the miserable response. 'I 'm feelin' richt bad, for it 's a raw mornin', and I canna afford mair than a wee bit fire.'

'I am sorry to hear that,' began the doctor; 'very'——

'Ay—sympathy 's a' verra weel, but it disna bur-r-rn. It tak's a' my earnin's to pey auld Flint the rent. He raised it on me last week again, and me a puir weedow.'

The doctor grew so red in the face with anger, and so short of breath with its suppression, that he was forced to stand up to permit the proper circulation and respiration.

'Flint,' said he forcefully, 'is a scoundrel. A double-dyed, double-damned scoundrel!'

'Ay,' said Mrs M'Gregor drearily; 'but chuckin' stanes disna heat the hoose.'

'I tell you what, madam,' said the family physician; 'if that fellow isn't very careful, he 'll meet with a painful accident one of these days. I don't want to startle you, madam, but when I was younger I once took on "Bruiser" Jones, a professional pugilist. I won't say what I did to him—I was young and impetuous in those days—but "Bruiser" was never the same man again. No, sir—I mean, no, madam!'

'Ay,' agreed the widow, with a doleful sigh, 'we were a' young aince, though ye wouldna think it to look at me noo.'

'Mrs M'Gregor,' said the doctor, in the manner which had so nearly been the undoing of the ensign in the Bloodandthunderers, 'I remember, when you came to the village from Scotland nearly thirty years ago, "By gad!" I said; "there 's a woman!" Those were the very words—"There 's a woman!" And, by gad! you don't look a day older now.'

'Then your eyesicht is waur than it should be,' was the gracious response.

'By-the-by,' said Jellybud, remembering the professional nature of his visit, 'be sure and sleep with your window open, eat plenty of porridge, and—— Dear me! where did I leave that bag? Oh, there it is. I have a bottle of port wine here which I want to get rid of, in case I 'm tempted to drink it. Would you believe it, madam, an inch of that wine in the bottom of a glass, and Dr Jellybud would join his predecessor in the cemetery?' The doctor produced the bottle from the bag and handed it to her. 'Will you accept it, Mrs M'Gregor?' he said appealingly.

'Ay, wull I. Beggars canna be choosers; but it 's a puir drink compared wi' whuskey. Hae ye an opener?—and we 'll juist sample it, efter a mainner o' speakin.'

Dr Jellybud *had* an opener, and in a second he had extracted the cork, and the good lady poured two generous portions into two cracked glasses

'Mrs M'Gregor,' said the doctor, not at all like a man who was about to drink the hemlock and end his days on earth, 'I wish you a Merry Christmas.'

'Ay,' said the old woman, 'it 's a daft-like wish when a weedow 's as puir as me; but I thank ye for the speerit that prompts it.'

IV.

It was not necessary to drive to old Ned Clarke's tumble-down cottage, as it was only a few steps from where the Widow M'Gregor lived, so, hurrying to Ned's door, the energetic little doctor gave a brisk double-knock. It was opened by a very old man in shabby clothes, whose large face, once lit with a certain rugged good-humour, had grown dull with fading faculties and the ugly companionship of poverty. He was a man of nearly ninety years of age, but with a frame so strong that, though it was a little bent, it refused to yield to the siege of dimming memory and dulling mind.

'Good-morning, Ned,' said the doctor. 'I hope I find you well.'

'I cannot complain,' said the other in a deliberate, heavy voice that pronounced every syllable distinctly, as if he were conscious that the work of his mind might be slow, but he would make it thorough, 'though it be cold, and my old bones aching just a little with the damp morning.' Ned led the way into the cottage and indicated a chair for his visitor. 'But it will not be long now, doctor, for I be growing old and no use to no one. I 'm a weary, tired man, as will be very glad when his time has coom.'

'My dear sir,' said the doctor, 'you have years of life in you yet. Why, the village wouldn't be the same without you! Bless my heart! take Ned Clarke from Windbridge and what remains? There 's a riddle for you. How long have you lived here, Ned?'

'Sixty year and a little better; ever since I hurt my leg in the navy and was sent ashore. You wouldn't know Windbridge in them days, doctor. Where the chapel be now there were a scaff'ld, and one day I see'd a man hanged there. Ah, I see'd him. There he hanged for more 'n a week; but he had killed another, and 'tis writ in Holy Scripter that—that—my memory bean't what it were, but I recall his hanging, and the Good Book says something that makes it all right. But I remember thinking at the time that it were a rare awful thing to hang a man. Shoot him, or drown him; but hanging 's a choky business, and bean't a proper sight for women and children to see.'

'Your cottage is cold here, Ned.'

'Yes, doctor, it do be chilsome; but, then, I 'm a hardy fellow, spite of my ninety year coom this May, though I don't go for to say that a bit of fire wouldn't be a kindly thing.'

'Have you no coal or firewood?'

'Yes, a little. But I must save it for the days

when my old bones ache worse 'n to-day, for I be too bad in the back now for to cut the bush; though I do say that it 's a pleasant thing for an old man to sit with his pipe and listen to the logs a-blazing in the fire. But I cannot complain, doctor, even if it do coom hard to move from this cot in another week, and me not knowing where to go, unless into the work'us, which goes again' my feelings arter fighting all these years for to die independent like.'

Dr Jellybud took out a pair of spectacles and adjusted them on the very tip of his nose. 'Ned,' he said calmly, though his face was purple, 'why are you leaving here?'

The old man slowly tapped the arm of his chair with his hand. 'It be Master Flint, doctor,' he said. 'He has raised the rent five bob a month more, and no matter how I scrape I cannot go for to meet it.'

The doctor took the glasses off the end of his nose and put them back in the case. He then produced a very large handkerchief and wiped his brow, stopping in the act suddenly and brandishing a fist within an inch of Ned Clarke's nose.

'Ned,' he said tensely, 'do you see that?'

'Yezzir,' replied the old man. 'What be you going to do with it?'

'Never mind, sir; never mind,' said the doctor, plunging the fist beneath the tails of his coat, and tossing them violently up and down. 'All I can say to Mr Flint is that I don't envy him—that 's all. By the way, Ned'—the little man's fury had subsided as swiftly as it had come—'here 's a leg of mutton which my sister bought, forgetting that neither of us can abide mutton. She was wondering if you 'd mind taking it, so that it wouldn't be wasted.'

'Doctor,' said Clarke slowly, 'you and your sister be a very kindly pair. It 's my opinion as people like you, that just keeps doing things for poor folk, has as good a chance up yonder on the quarter-deck as them long-faced chapel people as keeps on praying for them, but don't go for to do nothing but pray.'

'But, my dear sir,' said Jellybud, 'that mutton would be wasted. It 's nothing but that. And now I must be off. Sleep with your window open?'

'I do, doctor. I be a man as likes the feel o' the open air upon his face.'

'That 's right. Well, Ned my boy, a Merry Christmas!'

'Thank you, doctor; and I 'll take it kindly of you to give that there same wish to your sister, from an old man whose time has almost coom. This be my last winter, doctor, for I can see the signal flying at the mast.'

'Tut, tut, Ned!—you 'll be the pride of the village for another ten years.'

'P'r'aps yes—p'r'aps no, doctor; though I do take it bad for to leave Windbridge now, as Master Flint be forcing me to do. It were sixty year and a little better when I came here first. You wouldn't have knowed the village in them days. Where the chapel be now, there were a scaff'ld, and one day I see'd a man hanged there.'

'Well, Ned, a Merry Christmas!'

'I wish you the same, doctor, and thank you kindly.'

V.

With a growing indignation that threatened to burst a blood-vessel in his head, Dr Octavius Jellybud completed his morning rounds, dispensing a very little medical advice, a great deal of cheeriness, and generally contributing towards the good of men with that sublime art of *philanthropia* which Lord Bacon attributes to the ancient Greeks. Nor did the threats which he breathed against the person of one, Josephus Flint, Esq., of 'The Oaks,' in any way impair his sympathy for the forlorn of Windbridge. On the contrary, he mixed gentleness and violence and boisterous good-humour in the same vial, and produced a remedy which would have made a fortune for him if he could have put it on the market.

He had just spent fifteen minutes with Mrs Green, whose trouble with her husband Joe was one of those offsprings of poverty, a state supposed by comfortable philosophers to be a very good one for people who are used to it; and he had hurried down the road to arrange with Sam Heeling about the Christmas music (the doctor's voice being of the kind that can sing bass, tenor, or alto, wherever there happens to be a shortage), when the lowering clouds warned him that the storm would not hold off much longer.

For a full minute he debated with himself whether to go home or carry out his original plan of visiting Barbara Flint. After the manner of a man who is undecided, he gazed at the clouds and shook his head; then he looked at Socrates and frowned; after that he looked up the road and then down it, as if the solution might appear unexpectedly from either quarter; finally he clambered into the gig with a look of implacable determination.

'One more run, Socrates,' he said. 'Out to "The Oaks," and then back home.'

After ten minutes of protest on the part of Socrates, which resulted in horse, gig, and doctor going round and round in a circle (while Nero followed patiently between the wheels, under the impression that he was covering a considerable amount of ground), they started off suddenly at a very good clip for the distant dwelling of Josephus Flint.

But to get to 'The Oaks' it was necessary to pass 'The Briars,' which was the dwelling-place of that worthy soul, Jacob Funnle, county magistrate and prince of Othellos. 'The Briars'

was one of the pleasantest places imaginable, with great fireplaces that made merry with logs, a beam-ceilinged den, a larder in which game was always hanging from the hooks. And there was no denying it—Funnle was the one man in the village who could give the doctor a contest at cribbage. It was their custom to wager half-a-crown on a game, and rivalry was so intense that the inhabitants of Windbridge could always tell next day by their faces who had lost and who had won.

Nevertheless, Dr Jellybud had a conscience, and, like most honest men, was afraid of it. It was his habit to declare that working-hours were working-hours, and that the time for play must on no account interfere with them. Therefore he determined, with a capital D, that even if it was a disagreeable, raw morning, and even if Funnle's chimneys were throwing sparks into the air, he would not listen to their siren melody. As it was impossible to follow the plan of Ulysses and strap himself to the gig, he emulated Orpheus, and, looking away from the temptation, sang lustily along the country road a chorus which, if it did not exactly offer praises to the gods, was not without its holy aspect, being all about a friar.

But he had forgotten that included in the seductions of 'The Briars' there was an exceedingly comfortable stable where two old friends of Socrates were ending their days in well-fed contentment. Therefore it happened that, when the roadway leading to Funnle's home was reached, Socrates stopped so suddenly that Nero, whose mind was on something else, kept right on up the avenue of wheels, between the legs of the horse, and was a good fifty yards along the road before he pulled himself up.

'Now, Socrates,' said the doctor, 'none of that.'

Being a philosopher, the horse remained calm, merely turning round, as usual, by the longest route to bring his good eye to bear on the speaker.

'Come on, Socrates,' said Dr Jellybud, brandishing the whip; 'there can't be two masters on a job like this.'

As an illustration that only certain types can be trusted with the truth, the horse no sooner heard this sagacious remark than he apparently determined to be the one master himself, and turning headlong into the avenue, actually galloped the whole distance to the stables.

'Now then, you scoundrel,' said the doctor, puffing hard from the unexpecting jolting, 'you 're a nice, grateful beast, ain't you? After all these years I've kept you in oats, you go and play a trick like that.'

The feelings of the horse were spared further by the simultaneous appearance of Funnle and the groom, the former taking charge of the doctor, and the latter unharnessing the horse.

'Well, Jellybud,' said the magistrate, 'what ill wind brings you here? Isn't the undertaker getting enough to do these days?'

'Funnle,' said the doctor, as they cordially shook hands, 'I believe you'd rather die than have the doctor earn an honest pound physicking you.'

'What's the use of giving him an honest pound? He'd only lose it at cribbage.'

'Lose, my dear Funnle! Did you say lose?' The doctor grew quite indignant at the thought. 'I would say that betting money against Jacob Funnle at cribbage should be listed as a safe investment for widows and orphans.'

For a moment the magistrate, who was tall and could look very fierce on occasion, stared haughtily at his guest, while his whiskers, which ended half-way down his face, seemed to bristle outwards with condensed fury. Satisfying himself, however, with a scornful laugh, he permitted hospitality to prevail, and led the doctor into the aforesaid den with the beam-ceiling.

'That's a fire!' said Jellybud, rubbing his hands together jovially, and chuckling at the merry noise of the flames roaring up the chimney.

'Then,' said the host, making a poor pretence at seeming casual, 'what do you say to a game by it?'

'No,' said the doctor.

'Just one?'

'No, Funnle, not even one. Business'——

'Fiddlesticks!'

'Anything but fiddlesticks, my dear sir. My rule of life is: work hard, loaf hard, sleep hard—but never two at the same time. By the way, I hope you sleep with your window open. That's the secret of health: very little spirits, very little 'baccy, and on no account any port wine. One inch of port'——

'That reminds me,' said Funnle, 'I want you to try a new weed. A fellow in Pall Mall sold it to me last month when I was to town, and attributed to it all the flavour of Ambrosia. Here are bowl and pipe all waiting for you.'

'Thank you, old fellow,' said the doctor. 'Now, I call that real thoughtful of you.'

'Not at all, Jellybud. Now, draw your chair up nearer the fire and—what do you say to one game at half-a-crown?'

'No, sir,' said the doctor heroically, 'it can't be done. As a matter of fact, I came in here to-day to ask your advice. You're a justice of the peace, ain't you?'

'I am,' said the other, with dignity.

'Well, Funnle, I'm going to break it.'

'Eh?' said the host, somewhat startled. 'Oh, I see: you are going to disturb Her Majesty's peace, are you?'

'As to that,' said the doctor uncomfortably, 'there's no more loyal subject alive than myself; but if the peace belongs to Her Majesty, then I'm a Dutchman if I don't break it, even if they smother me in the Tower for it.'

'You had better be careful, sir,' said Jacob

Funnle, Esq., J.P., of 'The Briars,' rising to his feet, buttoning his coat, adjusting his spectacles, and generally managing to look every inch a magistrate. 'What is the *casus belli?*'

'Flint,' said the doctor.

'Oh!' said the magistrate, taking off his spectacles. 'What's he up to now?'

'Raised the rent on Widow M'Gregor, Ned Clarke, Sam Heeling, and Joe Green,' said the doctor, so forcefully that he was almost lifted clean out of his chair.

'Now, I call that,' said Funnle, undoing two buttons of his coat, 'a rascally thing to do.'

'It's a downright, dastardly, dirty, evil, murdering trick,' cried Dr Jellybud; 'and when Flint and I meet—then watch for sparks.'

'Now, just a minute,' said the other, puffing thoughtfully and doing up one of the two liberated buttons. 'What are you thinking of doing?'

'Doing?' cried the doctor. 'I'm going to call and give him a piece of my mind. Then, if he won't reduce those rents, why, damme! I'll pulverise him; I'll make him an interesting anatomical study for medical students. Did you ever hear of "Bruiser" Jones?'

Jacob Funnle, who had taken a seat, rose once again, replaced the spectacles on his nose, and resecured the top magisterial button.

'Jellybud,' said he, frowning tremendously, 'there is about you *poco di matto*. You have the presumption to come to me with this threat of violence to one of Her Majesty's subjects, forgetting that, *virtute officii*, I should commit you at once for conspiracy. Remember, as the ancients had it, *verbum sapienti sat est*, which in vulgar parlance means that a wink is as good as a nod. As a magistrate, my duty is clear; as one who is not indifferent to the claims of long acquaintanceship, I advise *via media*—in other words, "take another coach." It is a *sine quâ non* that you have the law on your side, for, if it be against you, a traveller on the desert of Sahara were better able to escape the rays of the sun than you to elude the long grip of JUSTICE!'

After this imposing oration, Jacob Funnle, Esq., removed his glasses, unbuttoned his coat, lit his pipe, and sat down.

'When do the new rents start, Jellybud?' he said amiably.

'Next week—Boxing Day,' answered the doctor, who had not quite recovered from the awful feeling that the law was chasing him over the Rocky Mountains.

'Then, look you, old fire-eater, we'll think this over together.'

'And while we're thinking,' said the doctor, his indignation driving away his fear, 'Widow M'Gregor is freezing, and old Ned Clarke has no roof to cover his head.'

'H'm—m,' mused the magistrate. 'Jellybud, you old firebrand, there's my hand on it that I'll join you in any scheme—providing it does not break one of Her Majesty's statutes—that will bring Master Flint to his senses. But I demand one condition.'

The doctor frowned dubiously. 'What is it?' he asked.

'That you don't do anything to Flint until we discuss it further.'

'Very good, old fellow,' said the doctor, shaking hands with the utmost heartiness; 'though I was all keyed up to a bout with a villain. I'll never forget the third round against "Bruiser"'——

'Well, now that that's settled,' said the magistrate, 'what do you say to one game? And, seeing that it's the Christmas season, shall we make it three bob instead of half-a-crown?'

'As to that,' said the doctor, refilling his pipe, 'I suppose you are entitled to your revenge.'

'Revenge?' said the other with a sneer. 'Why, last month my housemaid, Jennie, threatened to leave my service, all of having to gather up half-crowns left here by a certain doctor. And as for my dog Prince, he went thin as a lath, ruining his digestion with eating 'em.'

The doctor produced his glasses and set them on the very tip of his nose—not that his eyes needed any assistance, but it served to check the eruption of temper.

'Funnle,' he said, more in sadness than in anger, 'I am sorry to say it of a friend, but you are not telling the truth.'

For a moment there was an intense silence, charged with explosive matter, but the host's fiery face gradually melted into a grin and his whiskers drooped on his face like sails that are becalmed.

'What will you have to drink, old spit-fire?' he said.

'Damme!' said the doctor, his face glowing with complete and contagious good-humour; 'give me a glass of port.'

VI.

As has been stated, Windbridge lies at the bottom of a hill. As thus it is sheltered from the wind, and as there is no place for a bridge anywhere, doubtless these two facts gave rise to the village's name—it being a good old English custom to call places after features that do not exist, quite as frequently as after things that do.

But the men who first led the village destiny downhill were not lacking in wisdom, for the winds that rise from the sea and sweep the downs that extend for fifteen miles inland are cold and biting in most months of the year, but especially so when the forces of winter advance to wrest earth from the lethargy of autumn.

At least, so thought a solitary traveller who was wending his way up the long up-and-down road that stretches from the coast to the county

town, ten miles beyond Windbridge. It was a miserable December morning, too sulky to snow, too lazy to rain, but determined, dog-in-the-manger-like, that the sun wouldn't be given a chance whatever happened. The sky was dark and sullen with heavy, gray clouds, and the sea, which has no mind of its own, but always borrows its mood from the heavens, was like swirling lead.

The traveller was a young man, dressed in a style indicative of decent country family rather than of a man about town; his boots were good—sturdy ones, like his brown hands, intended for use. With his cloak thrown over his shoulder, carrying a stick and a knapsack, he was covering a good four English miles an hour, while his breath on the raw morning air appeared like steam.

Every now and then, when he reached the top of a rise (and the road from the sea to the county town is a series of camel's humps), he would pause and gaze at the bleak vista of the downs. If the sister-elements of the air and the water were dull and cheerless, the sight of those desolate stretches, with miserable growth of stubble, could not have been much more enlivening.

As far as the eye could see, there was no sign of life except where a lonely cottage huddled against a slope, as though its owner were an ex-hangman eating out his days in remorse. And, to add to the general eeriness of the scene, the wind was howling and moaning in chromatic rise and fall like a ghostly orchestra of murdered clarionet-players.

The young man was within three miles of Windbridge when the truce of the elements was broken, and a drizzling rain began to fall—not the kind of rain which comes down in an honest, straightforward manner, but one that watches its chance, creeps under coat-collars, and trickles down the neck, or glides off a hat on to the nose; the kind of rain that loves to hide in the sleeves, or ooze into some crack between the sole and the uppers of a boot; a miserable, slinking rain that knew it had no business there at all in December, but was determined to cause as much discomfort as possible before the slumbering Spirit of Winter woke and did its duty.

Buttoning his cloak about him, and pulling his hat down to cover his face (which was a manly, weather-tanned one), the traveller stepped out more briskly than before, and without pausing at any hill, reached the last slope, which led him to the cross-roads.

And at its summit he paused.

The roads now eligible were like the twisted prongs of a fork. One prong went to the left, and led to the county town; another ambled straight on, and then, by a sort of practical joke, made a gradual detour to the right and took you back to the sea again; while a third stole furtively to the right for half a mile, where it abruptly dipped, and pulled up short at Windbridge, hidden from view below.

To aid distracted travellers, a sign-post, all bent with age, was stuck in the very centre of the cross-roads, with its left arm declaring that the county town was somewhere near the North Star, and its right that Windbridge lay buried in the bowels of the earth.

Perhaps it was the perplexity of those who journeyed that way which had prompted some philanthropic soul, many decades before, to erect an inn on the spot, where direction and refreshment could be obtained. At any rate, there it stood, all by itself, a fine, little, stony, door-and-hinges sort of inn, with a snug little bar just inside the door, and queer dark rooms hidden all over the place, and pretty little casement windows meant to be looked out of by pretty blue eyes—or brown ones either, for that matter.

Unfortunately, like most of the best little inns of England, 'The Fiddlers Three' boasted an evil past. It is a discouraging fact that wickedness in both families and public-houses seems a better foundation than good behaviour; for the gentlemen who write on social reform are always telling us that our oldest families were a bad lot in the time of Ethelred the Unready or Boadicea; and certainly the snuggest and pleasantest taverns in deserted spots of the country usually seem to have attracted and harboured all the wandering vagabonds of the district in the past.

There was no question of it, but 'The Fiddlers Three,' when it was owned by Patrick O'Flynn (who was hanged by mistake in 1827—but richly deserved it), was in league with both smugglers and highwaymen. It had been his custom to keep a look-out across the downs, and, if he saw travellers approaching, put a light in the western window to acquaint the gentlemen of the road of the fact. And when the Excise men would drop in for a glass of grog before going down to Perkin's Cove to try to catch the smugglers who were known to use it, Patrick showed a red light in an eastern window—and never a smuggler would be caught that night.

It was in later and more peaceful times, however, that our lonely traveller paused to survey 'The Fiddlers Three,' which was standing apparently deserted and strangely quiet in the drip-drip-drip of the rain. Not a movement could be seen about the inn; not the chortle of a single fowl could be heard; not the yelp of a restless dog.

From a chimney at the back of the house a thin stream of smoke was emerging into the soaking air, and walking towards it, the traveller came to a covered shed where a solitary figure was sitting on a barrel.

'Hello!' said the young wayfarer, halting his investigations.

The other made no reply, but taking up a

stick, proceeded to whittle it with a knife. He was dressed in a blue smock, with pantaloons that were far too large for him, and were tied at the ankles to prevent their getting underneath his boots. Although his face was young, there was a weak beard of several months' growth on his chin, and his large colourless eyes, gleaming from nebulous depths, lacked focus, so that his gaze seemed to expand like the rays of a lantern, and to surround, rather than concentrate on, what he looked at.

'Hello!' said the stranger again.

'Follow the sparks,' said the other, pausing in his whittling and speaking in a far-away, breathy voice. 'Watch 'em coming from the chimneys. Follow the sparks; they'll lead you to it. What's your name?'

He appeared to lose interest in the question as soon as it was asked, and carefully examining the stick in his hand, resumed his occupation.

The young man smiled, and putting down his knapsack, sat on an old box in the yard.

'What's your name?' repeated the strange figure without looking up. 'If you've got no name they can't bury you. Must have one to put on the tombstone or the coach will never find you.'

The stranger sucked at an unfilled pipe. 'Have *you* got a name?' he asked.

'Ah—that I have: Jack Fish—poor Jack Fish. Come here.' He beckoned to the other, and solemnly tapped his own head with the handle of the knife. 'Queer,' he whispered; 'something wrong inside. Don't tell no one.'

The traveller nodded sympathetically.

'They laugh at me,' said the poor fellow, measuring the stick against his arm and frowning profoundly. 'They say poor Jack Fish sees things. Ha, ha! They don't be far wrong there. Sees 'em, and *hears* 'em too. Do you know where they keep the ghosts of old stage-coaches?'

'No.'

'Do you know that on Christmas Eve the coachmen and guards—them that is dead, I mean—harness 'em up and ride over the country blowing horns and cracking whips. Did you ever hear that afore?'

The visitor shook his head, and the idiot laughed softly to himself, both his voice and his shining eyes full of the mysticism of his disordered fantasies.

'Jack Fish,' he moaned, suddenly breaking off from his laugh and clasping his head with his hands as though struck with pain. 'Poor—Jack—Fish. That's what they call me.' He looked up vacantly, then took up his knife and stick once more. 'They laugh at me, and say I sees things—ah, and *hears* 'em too; but when I meets 'em on a dark night and tells 'em that if you catch the sound of wheels on Christmas Eve a-grinding on the road, and horses clattering hard—*and if there ain't no wheels nor horses neither*—then I tells 'em that before another Christmas comes they will be dead. Listen.' He leaned over to the stranger, and his voice was low and had the effect of distance. 'Before another Christmas comes,' he repeated, 'you're dead. They bury you in a cemetery, with your name writ on a stone—but the sparks will find you. They'll follow the sparks—follow the sparks. And when I tells 'em that on a dark night, they say, "Poor Jack Fish!" but I see 'em hurrying away with their eyes all fearsome, and they never stops until they're inside and ha' locked the doors secure.'

With a quiet laugh he whittled for a few minutes; while the stranger, noticing that his pipe was unfilled, took a pouch from the knapsack and remedied the deficiency.

'On Christmas Eve,' went on the idiot after a few minutes' silence, 'the coachmen always comes out of their graves and harnesses up the old Brighton coach. Then they watches where the sparks goes as comes out of chimneys, and follows them to the graveyards. At midnight they blows their horns, and all the Merrie Gentlemen come out of their graves—them as used to smuggle by sea, and them as robbed on the roads by night, and them that was pirates a-cutting men's throats and hanging them up in the sun all day to rot. Merrie Gentlemen, I calls 'em. And at midnight every Christmas Eve they gather for some rum and 'baccy, and a merry time they has laughing over the days when they was alive. But where do you think they come?'

The stranger shook his head.

'Here,' said the idiot triumphantly; 'right here at "The Fiddlers Three." I let 'em in. They don't mind poor Jack Fish—I let 'em in.'

As if he had wasted too much time already, the half-wit resumed his work with such energy that the air was full of flying bits of the stick; while the traveller, apparently lost in his own thoughts, sat silently puffing his pipe, as the persistent rain covered the roof of the shed and dripped drearily through the cracks.

'Where's Windbridge, Jack?' asked the stranger after a considerable pause.

'Go along the road,' said Jack without looking up, 'roll down the hill, take two turns and a jump, and beware of the dog!'

The other nodded. 'Is that the road there?' he queried.

'Ah,' said the idiot, 'it might be, if it ain't moved. I heard some of the chimneys saying as how they was thinking of moving farther downhill.'

'Jack,' said the traveller abruptly, 'where does Josephus Flint live?'

The idiot put down the stick and laughed softly to himself. 'I see him yesterday on the road,' he said, checking his mirth, 'all doubled up and snarling like a dog. "Get away, Jack Fish," he sez, all frighted and shaking his fist

at me. "You bring bad luck." "I do," I sez, "for the Merrie Gentlemen will have you this very Christmas Eve, and take you back with 'em to their graves." And away he ran—down the road, with his stick knocking the pebbles all ways, and him yelling as how I lied and the devil was in me. And as long as I stood there laughing, he was going hickety-hump, hickety-hump, like as if the grave-diggers was after him.'

During this recital the stranger appeared more interested, and at its finish he rose and stretched his arms. 'Which is Flint's house?' he asked.

The idiot pointed vaguely towards the road that led to the county town. 'Follow the sparks,' he said.

'Is that it where the smoke's coming out—away over the fields there?'

The half-wit looked, and nodded his head. 'Perhaps it is,' he said grudgingly; 'but the Merrie Gentlemen will have him this Christmas Eve.'

The traveller adjusted his cloak once more, and shaking his hat to clear it of moisture, replaced it on his head. 'Good-bye, Jack,' he said.

But the figure in the smock was gazing at the stick, which by that time was little more than the size of a pencil, apparently trying to recall the use for which he had intended it. When he reached the road the stranger looked back, but the poor fellow was still sitting there, lost in some fantastic reverie of his tired, useless brain.

VII.

The dwelling of Josephus Flint lay back from the road, surrounded by great trees that kept the place in constant shade. It was a gloomy, lonely abode; and even at night, when other places were bright with light, the darkness of the house would be broken only by a single lamp moving about wherever the miserly owner went.

Josephus Flint was not a man to have guests at his home, and in his turn he never visited any one, so that 'The Oaks,' as his house was called, was more like a gloomy fortress under siege than a dwelling-place for human beings. Yet it was notorious that Flint had money. Rumour, in her extravagance, had it that he was fabulously rich; but be that as it may, his fortune was considerable, and grew little less for any spending he might do.

By dint of reaching here and clawing there, he had succeeded in acquiring the ownership of nearly all the poorer dwelling-places of Windbridge, by reason of which he was able, like a Spaniard torturing prisoners on the rack, to squeeze and turn the handle of his power until his name had become a thing of detestation. On the few occasions that he ventured through the streets of the village he was greeted with malignant scowls and muttered imprecations; but these only served to add fuel to the burning flames of his greed, and to convince him further of his rare shrewdness.

Perhaps, as had been predicted more than once, he would have been brought to task by some of the more adventurous spirits, such as Dr Jellybud, if it had not been that, in addition to his other wealth, the old miser possessed a daughter, who inspired an affection which was no less general than was the dislike of her father. There was absolutely no reason why a shrivelled, whining, yellow-faced fellow like Flint should have had a daughter like Barbara. Eugenically it was all wrong. But there she was, and there was no denying her, even if any one wanted to.

Though she was allowed from the house only of a Sunday morning, or on the very rarest of occasions—when, perhaps, the choir in which she sang might be holding some secular celebration (as even the most serious choirs do every now and then), Barbara always looked as fresh and dainty as if such things as a miserly father and a great, creaky, lonely house were completely unknown to her.

Barbara Flint was not a tall, imposing girl—I don't suppose any one would ever have spoken of her as 'queenly;' on the contrary, her brown curls were just about the height of a man's shoulder (which is the proper height for brown curls to be), and her eyes were a mischievous, twinkling pair that no sooner looked at a man than everything would go out of his head and he would be forced straightway to lower his own optics. Not that that was much refuge, for it only brought you to Barbara's mouth—a coaxing, tantalising affair altogether—and as it was quite impossible to look for any length of time at that without completely losing one's presence of mind, it was necessary to leave there too. But whether it was her snowy, rounded neck, her dainty fingers, or her quite bewildering waist, looking at Barbara Flint was very trying for masculine eyes. It wasn't even safe to lower one's eyes to the floor, for there were Barbara's ankles—and, as Dr Jellybud once said . . . But, then, he was a bit of a dog in his day.

In fact, the only safe way to talk to Barbara Flint was to stare straight at the ceiling; but who wanted to stare at a ceiling if he could look at Barbara instead?

But there had come a change.

In a moment of generosity, or whatever ingredient passed therefor in old Flint's system, he had allowed her to visit her uncle in Surrey. When the bird returned to its cage the eyes were no longer sparkling, but pensive; the tantalising mouth drooped, and the roses in her cheeks changed to lilies. Gossip speculated; conjecture waxed eloquent; but she confided in no one, and it is hardly to be expected that her father, blind through greed to all the pleasant things of life, would notice the disappearance of the roses from his daughter's face.

[*Christmas Number.*

Week by week she grew more quiet and thoughtful, but, if possible, more lovely than before. It is perfectly surprising what a charming effect can be given to a pretty face by its owner thinking; and even more surprising, the cynical will add, how seldom this beauty-ruse is adopted by the fair ones of the land.

But, though prettier than ever, Barbara grew more and more like an imprisoned bird pining for the open meadows, like a flower that summer's departing spirit has forgotten to call.

VIII.

Thus to the gloomy fortress of 'The Oaks,' with its drooping prisoner, came the stranger of the downs. Walking up the unused avenue, as still as the tomb, he knocked firmly at the door, the noise startling a whole community of birds into an indignant chatter and bringing an echo from a deserted stable.

When he had repeated the knock a third time, he heard a shuffling step, the undoing of a chain, the unlocking of a padlock, and the slow withdrawal of a bolt. After this disarmament, the door, which creaked horribly in protest, was slightly opened, and an old retainer, whose hair was so thin that his head seemed covered with cobwebs, peered through the crevice.

'Go 'way,' he said in a quavering, cracked voice. 'Ye have no business here. Go 'way.'

The young man quietly advanced his foot against the door.

'I want to see Miss Barbara,' he said.

'Go 'way,' repeated the servant, coughing querulously with the effort of speech. 'Mas'r Flint's orders—ye be begging, I know. No beggars; no beggars. He has nought to give. Go 'way.'

With this hearty welcome, the old man tried to close the door, but the stranger stopped it with his foot, and then, rather roughly, put his shoulder against it, with the result that it swung back abruptly, pinning the old servitor against the wall, with only his hands and feet showing in convulsive movements, like a drowning man struggling to swim.

'Here,' said the impetuous invader, 'come out and listen to me. See this half-crown? That's for you if you tell Miss Barbara that Jerry wants to speak with her. I'll wait in this room to the right, and if you don't get that message to her at once, I'll crack your old egg-shell of a head.'

The servant clutched the coin avariciously, and grinning knowingly, shuffled down the dark hallway, murmuring strange sounds, and wagging his yellow head at all angles to assure himself that it was still there and in good working order. The stranger moved into a great dreary room with dingy furniture covered with shabby upholstery, a grate that had known no coal for many winters, a long table in the centre, with its contents concealed beneath a shroud-like cloth, and windows where the light was repelled by heavy curtains, as though beneath the table-cover there was some one lying dead.

With an impatient frown the visitor took in the appointments of the room, and undoing his cloak, threw it back over his shoulders. The drops of rain still clinging to it fell and made a little pool on the worn-out carpet.

There was a light footstep on the stairway, a sudden glimpse of dimples, blushes, curls, and twinkling feet, and an equally sudden encircling of their owner by a pair of particularly strong arms.

'Oh, Jerry!' said the young lady, speaking into the breast-pocket of his coat.

'Barbara!' said the stranger, with his lips pressed against the brown curls.

As neither of them seemed to think that anything more need be said, they might have gone on indefinitely, with her apostrophising the breast-pocket, and him murmuring 'Barbara!' into the curls (and by no means a pastime to be sneered at either!), if she had not been suddenly overcome with a combination of timidity and curiosity.

'Oh, Jerry,' she whispered, 'why have you come?'

'Barbara,' said the stranger—and his voice went all wobbly with emotion—'I couldn't live another day without you.'

'Oh, Jerry!' said Barbara, sighing happily at this outrageous lie—although the young man was naturally honest and wouldn't have stated what he didn't believe, yet—well, confound it! *you* try holding in your arms the sweetest little bit of femininity for a hundred miles in any direction, and see if hyperbole doesn't creep in somewhere.

'Jerry,' said Barbara, looking up at him, and bringing her coaxing lips cruelly near his, 'you must go away.'

'Never,' said Jerry.

At this point conversation ceased. But words are poor things at best, and if a young man in his twenties and a young lady as fragrant and winsome as Barbara Flint couldn't find a better medium of expression than language, then the world was made for philosophers and not for lovers.

'But you *must*,' said Barbara, after a lengthy pause, speaking with that sublime irrelevancy of young people who are able to take up the threads of a conversation at any time with an aplomb that would drive a memory-expert into a paroxysm of envy.

'If I go away,' said the stranger, 'you must come too. Listen, Barbara. I tried to forget you, but ever since you visited your uncle I have been the most wretched man alive. I have endeavoured to get interested in my farm. I went to town to try to forget. I even thought of going to Canada.'

'Oh, Jerry!' said Barbara.

'Yes I did,' said the other stoutly. 'Bad

Indians or no Red Indians, I was going there. But the more I thought of it all, the harder it was to forget you. Oh, Barbara dear, if you don't want to see me go to the other end of the world and die a miserable bachelor, say that you love me and will be my wife.' (And Jacob Funnle in his most dramatic moments never equalled the intensity of the young man's voice as he uttered those words.)

'No, dear,' said Barbara, 'you must go away.' Here she pressed his hand very tightly—as if that made the going away any easier! 'Father would never consent, for, you know, I am only nineteen; and, besides, there is no one to look after him.'

'Then bring him along, Barbara,' said Jerry. 'From all I hear, he seems a surly brute—excuse my speaking of your father in that way, my love—but when I see this horrible house and think how you are a prisoner in it, I would rather have him come and live with us than let you stay here one day longer than necessary.'

'Oh, you would, would you?'

The young people separated swiftly, as Josephus Flint uttered these words in a thin, quivering voice, as though the bones in his throat were already loosened by death's palsy and rattling in ghoulish anticipation of his approaching disintegration. Having been warned by his faithful servitor, who was curiously devoted to the miser, Josephus had crept towards the lovers, feeling every step with his stick before he ventured on it, with the result that he had arrived unperceived, and just in time to hear the candid reference to his own charming disposition. He was a wrinkled, biscuit-coloured man, whose very blood had grown miserly, and, refusing to flow freely through his veins, had left him open to periodical attacks of rheumatism, caused by the damp, unaired rooms and the constant shadow in which mind and body lived. Although Josephus was considerably bent from all this, and yellow of skin, a pair of piercing eyes and a strong, hooked nose kept his appearance from senility — lending an effect of smouldering vitality, as a burning coal will often continue to glow when its fellows have become lifeless ashes.

'So you would take me with you?' said Mr Flint, with a horrible rattle, shaking his stick at the uninvited guest, while the old retainer, who had acted as informer and had followed him into the room, rubbed his shrivelled hands and wagged his old egg of a head in great enjoyment of the scene. 'You would be kindly to an old man just for nothing, eh? Not for his gold—oh no, not for his gold—nor for his houses bringing in good rents neither!' Here Mr Flint grinned disagreeably, displaying a cracked tooth to the very best advantage. 'Bringing in good rents,' he went on, sucking a breath in between the cracked tooth and its neighbour with an unearthly whistle; 'and they 'll bring more, too, mark ye. The villagers can't afford to buy, and there 's no other houses to be had, so they 'll pay Josephus Flint more and more—and more'——

His words ended in a cough, and with difficulty he regained his breath. There was a cackle of laughter from the aged servant, who tremblingly ran his fingers over his colourless lips, as though the jest were so good that he begrudged the escaping of any of it in merriment.

'Mr Flint,' said the young man, glancing for encouragement at Barbara's beaming eyes, 'I love your daughter. I have loved her now for many months, and I cannot live without her.'

'Ah — he loves her,' sneered the miser, apparently speaking to no one in particular. 'He didn't know anything about her being an only child, nothing about her father's money —oh, no—nothing at all about the money. Hark 'ee, Smithers—hark to him raving about my daughter, and never a word about the money I 've scraped and worked and starved and fought for. Hark 'ee, Smithers.'

Thus appealed to, the old servant opened his mouth wide, and from its toothless interior came a faint, subterranean sound, no louder than the mew of a kitten.

'Sir,' said the young man, 'you wrong me cruelly. I don't need a penny of your money—Barbara is all I want.' At which statement the young lady mentioned cast such an affectionate glance upon him that further speech became quite impossible.

'The girl,' said the miser, 'has no mind of her own. She 's only a chit of a thing, and thinks as how every monkey-face that looks sweet at her wants her for a wife. I know your game, young fellow. You 've got a smooth tongue that can fool her, but you can't come over Josephus Flint. He wasn't born yesterday—no, nor the day before neither. Eh, Smithers?'

'Mr Flint,' said the young suitor, 'I have asked Barbara to become my wife.'

'And I tell you,' cried the miser, his thin voice rising almost to a scream, 'that she 'll not have you—and all your sneaking around here won't get you no further.'

'But,' said the young man, biting his lip with suppressed anger, 'she can speak for herself. She 's old enough to know her own mind.'

'Nothing of the sort,' cried Flint. 'She 's a child—a silly, brainless thing, as every skulking hound that wants her father's money tries to be sweet with.'

'Oh, Jerry,' said Barbara, wiping a tear from one of the twin jewels, 'I think you had better go.'

'Never!' said Jerry, with a repetition of the before-mentioned hyperbole.

'Her advice is good,' sneered Josephus Flint; 'the door works both ways, and will let you out same as it let you in. So out you go, my strutting peacock, and don't let me see your fine

Christmas Number.

feathers about here no more unless you want them clipped.'

'Sir,' said the young man, taking a very slight step forward, which so startled Mr Flint that he staggered back into the arms of old Smithers, 'if it weren't for your daughter I'd take you two old devils by the scruff of the neck and drown you like cats in a tub. You're a scoundrel, sir; and when you insult me, and your daughter too—which is far worse—you do so because you know your age protects you.'

'Begone,' cried the miser, an ugly pallor mixing with the disagreeable yellow of his face. 'Begone, afore I put the dogs on you.'

'Go 'way,' bleated Smithers, shaking a long, shining finger over Flint's shoulder. 'Go 'way.'

'Yes, Jerry dear,' pleaded Barbara, 'please go. Father will be all right directly.'

'Barbara,' said Jerry, 'come with me. There's no law, written or unwritten, that can keep us apart if you really love me. Get a few things together at once, and I'll warrant that you'll leave the house unmolested.'

'Smithers,' shrieked the miser, brandishing his stick, 'hark to him. You be witness to his trying to abduct my daughter. There's a law for that, Smithers, and I'll have it on him if it takes every penny I've scraped together.'

'Mr Flint'—— said Jerry quietly.

'Ah—"Mister Flint! Mister Flint!"' shrieked the old fellow in a tempest of rage—'that's your song, you parrot; but it will be "Mr Turnkey, Mr Turnkey," for you, my fine fellow. Breaking into a man's house, assaulting his servant, trying to steal his daughter—there's a law for that. And, for all I know, that may be only your excuse for robbing the house.—He was alone here, Smithers! He's been robbing us! He's been robbing'—— His voice rose to a scream, and ended in a fit of coughing, which discoloured his face a horrible black; while Smithers slapped him on the back, and crooned toothless mouthings of encouragement and sympathy.

'Sir,' said Jerry, 'I will go—but you have not heard the last of me. If Barbara will be my wife, I shall come and take her, even if you bar every window and door six feet deep with the gold you've stolen from the poor.'

'Libel!' yelled Mr Flint. 'Blackmail! Threats! I'll have the law, Smithers—I'll'——

'Call the law as loudly as you like,' said the young man disdainfully, buttoning his cloak about him and reaching for his hat; 'but some of these nights you'll have visitors here that the law can't touch. Watch out, Mr Flint, that the man who has wronged the living so long may not be punished *by the dead*.'

There was a choking sound from the miser; his face was livid, and the rattling sound in his throat seemed startlingly loud. Weak with anger and terror, he pulled the collar from his throat to ease his breathing, and turning helplessly to old Smithers, leaned on his shoulder for support.

'Conspiracy,' he said faintly, 'everywhere. . . . All against me. . . . It's Jack Fish's doing. I'll have the law on him . . . dangerous . . . lock him up. They're all against me—Smithers—my own daughter . . . everybody . . . against me.'

'No, they ain't,' squeaked the old servitor, patting the miser's shoulder with his bony hand. 'I ain't again' ye, Mas'r Flint. You be a good mas'r to old Smithers these forty year. I ain't again' ye.'

'Conspiracy,' moaned the miser, his whole body trembling. 'They don't come out in the open. . . . They won't fight fair. . . . They try to frighten me, Smithers.'

'I know, mas'r,' croaked the servitor. 'Go 'way'—he shook his finger at the young man—'ye have no business here. Ye be a beggar—that's what ye are. Go 'way.'

'Barbara,' said the young man, 'is it your wish that I go?'

'Yes, yes, dear,' said the girl bravely; 'I must stay with father. Perhaps in a couple of years I could see you again.'

'But you do love me, Barbara?'

'Oh, Jerry!' said Barbara, and burst into tears, which the young man checked by vehemently catching her in his arms, imprinting a kiss on her lips, stamping past the two old men, conferring a snap of the fingers on them as he did so, and leaving the house—performing the whole series of actions in a little less time than it takes to record.

As he reached the avenue, the rain, which apparently had been waiting for him, came down in an absolute deluge. Pulling his hat tight down on his ears, the young man of the downs walked sternly away, the rain splashing off his hat in such torrents that he looked like a figure in a fountain that had suddenly decided to go for a walk.

IX.

It will have been noted by this time that Dr Octavius Jellybud possessed a deep fixity of purpose. Duty to him was as the magnetic north to the needle of a compass, and just as compelling. When he declared he was going to see Barbara Flint that day, the entire king's army of horse and foot who were said to be unequal to replacing Humpty-Dumpty on the wall would have been just as helpless in preventing Dr Jellybud from attaining his objective.

Yet, even as mariners steering by a perfect chart have been known to run on shoals, the doctor suffered peculiarly from the diverting cross-currents which beset the human destiny. There never was a family physician who planned his day more ruthlessly; there probably was never one so unsuccessful in adhering to his plans.

In spite of his indomitable will, he was forced to realise that where Might (in the form of Jacob

Funnle's house) could not prevail, Treachery (in the person of Socrates), by deserting the straight road of duty for the avenue of ease and oats, could puncture the strongest armour of inflexibility.

But though temporarily drawn from his course, the doctor was not the kind of man to give up without a struggle. At the conclusion of his game of cribbage with Funnle he pocketed three shillings, and resolutely refusing to stay for luncheon, went out to the stables and superintended the harnessing of the indignant Socrates.

Waving his host farewell, he climbed into the gig.

'Good-bye, Funnle,' he said, indicating to his horse by a 'Chck!' that he was to proceed. The response very nearly threw the worthy physician by a back-somersault into the road. Socrates bolted forward a full length, and then did a shuffling, music-hall step that gave him a particularly misanthropic look, failing to advance the gig a single yard.

'Now then,' said the doctor, readjusting his hat and shifting himself several inches forward, 'none of that.—Good-bye, Funnle.'

After six repetitions of this spasmodic mode of transit (during which Nero was four times within an inch of having his brains kicked out), Socrates squared well away, and without further mishap they reached the main road, and went bowling along once more towards 'The Oaks.'

But the troubles of this man of iron will were not yet over. Rain has a habit of falling upon 'the place beneath,' as one of our first women barristers sagely remarked during the trial of a much-hounded Jew—a trial in which the young lady modestly assumed the rôles of prosecuting counsel, judge, and jury; and therefore, just as the doctor was within half a mile of 'The Fiddlers Three,' which he had to pass before gaining the road to Flint's house, the storm, which had so drenched the young man of the downs, came swift as wrath upon the doctor.

'Hello!' said the doctor, buttoning everything up and covering his head with a rubber cape; 'this is very remarkable for the time of year. I am very much afraid we'll have to put in at "The Fiddlers Three" until it passes.'

It was a wise resolution, for the rain was coming down with such force that it was rebounding a good foot from the road and turning the country-side into a network of muddy, running streams; and the rain being joined by a bolshevistic wind that did its best to blow the doctor and his gig clean back to Windbridge, progress was extremely difficult. At length, however, the friendly shelter of the stable was reached, and the grinning half-wit helped the practitioner from his pedestal.

With a kindly pat on the shoulder, which the poor fellow seemed to appreciate tremendously (for, if his brain was half-witted, that is not to say that he was half-hearted as well), the doctor shook hands with the landlord, no less a person than Abraham Fish, who had hurried out to take the doctor's dripping coat.

Opening the door for his guest, Abraham bustled about, putting new logs on the fire in the coffee-room, and ordering the buxom cook to prepare some chops right away; while an exceedingly pretty bar-and-house-maid was told to mix 'something warm' for the doctor, but first to bring some slippers to take the place of his wet boots. In fact, 'The Fiddlers Three,' instead of being a desolate, deserted tavern, as it had looked in the morning to Jerry, was turned into a hive of bustling hospitality; and as the doctor sat before the fire with a jar of tobacco handed from a shelf by the landlord, noting with approval that the pretty little bar-and-house-maid was squeezing a bit of lemon into the glass of 'something warm,' Dr Jellybud felt that, except for the three violinists (and, after all, that's an awful load of artistic temperament to have hanging around), his lot could compare very favourably with that of Old King Cole himself.

'Horrible weather, Abraham,' said the doctor.

'Very aggravatin',' said the landlord.

'Well, my dear,' said the doctor, accepting the steaming libation from the daughter of Bacchus, 'here's looking at you.'

'Go on with you,' said the young woman, blushing most agreeably, and coyly looking at the ground.

The phrase 'something warm' is a peculiar one. It may mean a great deal, and then, again, it may mean very little. In these days 'something warm' has a geographical quality, signifying quite a different thing in America from what it would, say, in Scotland; but whatever Abraham Fish meant when he used that phrase back in the times of which this story tells, the bar-and-house-maid must have given it a very satisfactory translation. Of course, the potion may have possessed only medicinal qualities, and the squeezing of the lemon may have been merely a 'gilding of the philosophic pill,' but no sooner were the contents out of the glass and inside the doctor than a gradual glow of comfort began to spread from his chilled feet to the bald spot, about the size of a half-crown, on the very pinnacle of his head. He listened to the logs roaring in the fireplace; he noticed the noiseless and endless activities of the pretty bar-and-house-maid; he smelt the fragrance of broiling chops, percolating gratefully from the kitchen; and a smile of such cherubic sweetness expanded over his plump countenance that if it could only have been put into a stained-glass cathedral window he might have passed for a medieval saint.

X.

The doctor was just relapsing into a reverie, the burden of which was the thought of how

pleasant a thing life was, when the front-door was violently opened, and a gust of wind, a swirl of rain, and a bad-tempered young man all came in together.

'Damme!' said the doctor. 'Close the door. Come in. Draw your chair up by the fire.—Abraham, here's a drowned man for you.'

'Can I get something to eat here?' said the stranger sharply as the landlord helped to divest him of cloak and hat.

'Directly, sir,' said Mr Fish. 'I'll hang your things up in the kitchen for to dry. Your feet be soaked, sir. Take off them boots and we'll have 'em dry in an hour.—Now then, Nancy—a glass of something warm for the gen'l'man.'

With rather a sulky air the young man received these hospitable ministrations, and with a curt 'Good-day' took his seat beside the doctor, draining his glass of restorative without so much as a glance at the officiating Nancy, who had assumed her most demure and captivating manner for the occasion.

'Disagreeable weather,' said the doctor.

'Infernal,' said the other, staring dreamily into the fire.

'You are a stranger to Windbridge?'

'Yes.'

As the new-comer did not deign any further information, a silence ensued, while 'The Fiddlers Three' rocked and creaked in the gale and the windows were hard pressed to resist the attacking torrents of rain.

'Visiting about these parts?' suggested the doctor interrogatively.

'No.'

'Just'——

'Yes.'

'I see,' said the doctor, who was just as wise as before, but, owing to his medical experience, had acquired the habit of appearing to understand exactly what every one meant. To be able to describe one's symptoms to a physician who says, 'I see,' is to experience complete mental relief on the spot.

'Disagreeable weather,' said the doctor again.

'Detestable.'

'For this time of year.'

'For any time of year,' said the stranger.

'But particularly for *this* time of year,' persisted the doctor.

'Well, it's very disagreeable, anyway.'

'Exactly,' said the doctor, quite convinced that he had proved a knotty point.

'Nice cosy little inn, this,' he went on after another lengthy pause, as the celestial odour of chops was wafted into the room. 'Ever been here before?'

'No,' said the young man; 'and there'll be two moons in the sky when I come again.'

'Now I gather,' said Octavius Jellybud thoughtfully, 'that something unpleasant has happened to you. I knew it wasn't just a bad liver at your age.'

The young man rose to his feet, and, crossing to the side of the fire, leaned against the stone frame, looking musingly into the flames.

'Sir,' he said, 'excuse my curtness to you. You will pardon me if you reflect that I crossed these grizzly downs in a drizzling rain, borne up by hope of seeing and claiming for my wife a young woman whom I had every reason to believe looked kindly on me, only to be ordered out of the house by her father, and—what is worse—being accused of trying to rob the place. Curse it, sir! if I were older, or he younger, I'd make him eat those words and shake him by the throat until they were well down his gullet.'

Dr Jellybud's face was a study of sympathetic understanding. Possessing a blighted romance of his own, he found his greatest joy in the romance of others; and the straightforward story of the young stranger had roused the keenest interest in him.

'But, my dear sir,' he said encouragingly, 'it will all come right.'

'Yes'—the young man shrugged his shoulders—'even Barbara said we might see each other again in a couple of years!'

'BARBARA?' The doctor sat bolt-upright and gripped the arms of his chair. 'Are you the lover of Barbara Flint?'

'I was,' said the other, 'though I did not mean to mention her name.'

'I might have known it,' cried the doctor, jumping to his feet and striding up and down the room, tossing his coat-tails violently as he did so. 'You're the chap—bless my soul!—you're the lucky scoundrel that captured our little beauty's heart, are you? I see—I've got it—clear as day. Here's my hand—Jellybud's my name—Dr Octavius Jellybud. What's yours?'

'Jerry'—— began the other, heartily gripping the doctor's hand.

'Jerry? That's enough,' said the practitioner energetically. 'Jerry will do for me—and there's something wrong if you and I, Jerry, don't do for old FLINT!' At which word, delivered with terrific energy, the doctor took a pass in the air with his right fist, then assumed an 'on guard' position that would have won applause in any sporting club in the country.

'Then you know Barbara?' said the young man soulfully, finding a melancholy pleasure in the mere mention of her name.

'Know her, my dear Jerry!' The doctor's frown vanished before the sunshine of his good-humour. 'Bless your heart! I officiated when she arrived; and as I said to her mother at the time—charming woman—never should have married that obnoxious specimen—I said, "There'll be tears in heaven at parting from this lovely little thing"—which were about the the last words the poor soul heard, for she fell sick of pneumonia from living in that damp house, and died a few hours later.'

Here the doctor blew his nose with such violence that it sounded like a trumpet.

'I am the most miserable man alive,' said Jerry, turning towards the fire with a countenance which lent considerable force to his assertion.

'Tell me all that happened,' said the doctor, resuming his seat, and, as was his professional custom, adjusting the glasses on the end of his nose. 'The only difference between whispering a secret down a well and telling it to a doctor is that a doctor can't be pumped; so out with it, Jerry.'

With lips that trembled angrily, the young man told the story of his visit: how he had proved that Barbara did love him; how their Eden was invaded by the serpent; how words had flown about like brick-bats; . . . and, in short, he told his tale with a manliness and a frankness that would have melted the most rugged nature.

'. . . Is it fair, doctor,' concluded the youth, 'that Barbara and I, who love each other so dearly, should be parted by this curmudgeon, who can see nothing for the greed blinding his eyes—is it fair?'

'No, sir!' cried the doctor, jumping up and sitting down violently. 'No, SIR!'

'I wish you had seen him,' said the young man, with a mirthless laugh, 'when I told him that the dead would get him yet. I guessed from Jack Fish that the old miser was superstitious, but I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw him with his jaw quivering and his whole body trembling like a jelly, as if he saw the ghosts in the very room.'

'Poor Jack!' said Abraham Fish, the landlord, who had joined the two guests, and had heard the last remarks. 'The silly lad's barmy in the nob. He always holds as how every Christmas Eve the old dead pirates and highwaymen—them as used "The Fiddlers Three" in the good old days—comes back here for an hour. It's a creepy thing, gents, when the wind's a-howling over them there downs, and the poor boy telling it like as if he hears the dead uns hammering at the door. It do be a creepy thing—and Master Flint is that scared that when he sees Jack he runs away as fast as his crooked old legs will take him.'

The doctor puffed at his pipe, but a trained physiognomist would have noticed that his eyebrows were lowered and his lips pursed up in an expression of deep mental concentration.

'For twenty year now,' went on the landlord, 'Master Flint do always come here on Christmas Eve. There he sits in that corner all by hisself—and when he thinks as how almost every one is gone, he sez, "Fish, a glass of beer for all these gen'l'men, at my expense." I don't know why he goes for to do it, and most of us would rather drink a glass of physic—beggin' your pardon, Dr Jellybud—than take anything from that there aggravatin' curmudgeon. But wishes don't get nowhere—and he'll be here this Christmas Eve same as before.'

Beckoning them to be silent, the doctor requested the young man and the landlord to gather close about him. He was almost purple in the face with condensed excitement, and his merry old eyes were shining like lamps.

'Listen,' he whispered. 'Listen to this.'

XI.

Whatever it was the doctor said, it must have been very amusing, for at its conclusion all three burst into such a prolonged and hearty laugh that poor Jack Fish came in at the noise, terror-stricken.

'What is it?' cried the half-wit, dancing about the room with his fingers extended in the air like the blades of an open fan. 'Burn the house! Scuttle the ship! Cut his throat! What is it? Ghosts and graveyards! What is it?'

'Jack,' cried the jovial doctor, 'here's a half-crown for you. You've earned it, my boy.'

With a gleeful laugh the idiot thrust the coin into his smock, and, with eyes rolling about in their sockets, left the room muttering and chuckling to himself.

At this point Nancy arrived to announce that the meal was ready, and proceeded to spread a table right where they were (it being the wish of the doctor and Jerry that they should eat together). After which they set to with such heartiness that Barbara Flint would have been more unhappy still if she could have seen the jolly look on the face of the lover so recently torn from her arms. As for the bar-and-housemaid, she waited on them so dexterously and daintily, and joined in their mysteriously boisterous good-humour so cheerfully, that on three occasions the doctor insisted upon placing his arm around her—a recognition of her charms which brought such outbursts of guffaws each time from the whole group that the buxom cook in the kitchen (who hadn't the faintest idea of what was going on) laughed herself into hysterics, and had to be restored with a drop of something from the bar. In fact, it was such a merry and noisy party that even Nero appeared at the door with the nearest thing approaching a grin ever seen on his super-melancholy visage.

'Then it's decided,' said the doctor, at the end of the meal, apropos of what they had discussed. 'You come and stay with me—my sister will be delighted—and on the way home we'll drop in and see Funnle.—Abraham, have Socrates harnessed.'

Half-an-hour later, with the stranger seated beside the doctor, the gig started off for 'The Briars' once more, and as the wind and the rain were behind him, Socrates established a record for speed that is still spoken of in awe by the villagers of Windbridge.

[*Christmas Number.*

XII.

Christmas Eve.

Windbridge, after lying disconsolate for two days in the grip of unseasonable rain, had been transformed into a shimmering, crystal fairyland. Early in the morning snow began to fall, covering the downs in a great blanket of white; clothing the naked trees in soft, clinging garments; embedding cottages in thick hoods; changing green hedges to furry palisades. Hour after hour the descending, fluttering hosts of snowflakes fell twinkling through the air. Tracks of passing vehicles were made, and obliterated as soon as made. On church tower, on pinnacles of trees, on creeping vines, the soft encroaching canopy of Nature fell, hanging its jewelry on them all.

And when, towards night, the storehouse of the skies held no more treasure, the moon appeared, with its alchemy of silvery blue, and touched the world with its star-tipped wand. Cottage roofs changed to glittering minarets; out on the downs the light of a solitary shepherd's hut became a sapphire glowing in a sea of satin white; the village itself was a twinkling street of little snow-bound palaces for gnomes.

It was Christmas Eve—that strangely gripping season of the heart; a time that means so much to children, a time when children mean so much to us; a passing hour when selfishness and greed and carking care fly up the chimneys like poor Jack Fish's sparks; when hearts beat faster, hands clasp tighter; when tears and laughter are nearer the brink, and old scenes and old friends are best. One moment in life's little day when kindly hearts can make a palace of a hut, or lack of them turn affluence to poverty.

Far out at the cross-roads, 'The Fiddlers Three,' deep-banked in snow, was all ablaze with merriment. A goodly company of villagers, as was their custom, had gathered for a jovial tankard and the easy badinage of hard-working, well-fed, honest souls. It is true, I grant, the conversation was not over-deep, nor dealt with things of metaphysical import. They did not immerse themselves in the Dead Sea of advanced socialistic thought, nor did they feel the subliminal uprush of those who by some hired medium strive to hitch this world to the next; but they *did* laugh, and they *did* sing; and when they wished each other the greetings of the season, they did not mumble or stumble over them. When they sang a foolish chorus, each man did his best to sing louder than his neighbour; and when they passed the hat for a crippled villager, they gave as they sang and laughed—cheerily, heartily, generously,

Milords and gentlemen, senators and scientists, presidents and potentates, is there nothing to learn in these troublesome times from the goodly gathering at 'The Fiddlers Three'?

It was nearly eleven o'clock when those of the villagers who had spouses to consider left, and the inn resumed its normal aspect. The logs were burning low, Nancy had washed and 'shined' every glass in the place, then retired upstairs, when the door was cautiously opened and the head of Josephus Flint appeared in the aperture.

'A Merry Christmas to ye all!' he croaked, addressing the three invariables who were attending the last moments of the dying fire.

With good grace they returned the wish; and the miser, stamping his feet to shake off the clinging snow, entered and took his customary seat back in the shadows, sitting without a word as his fingers played a querulous tattoo on his chin.

In a few minutes one of the perennials left, amidst a chorus of good wishes from his partners; and hammering the table with his stick, Flint summoned the landlord.

'Fish,' he said, with the disagreeable rattle of his throat, 'a glass of beer all round for these gentlemen.'

'All of 'em?' said the landlord, glancing at the two survivors of the party. As it was obviously a question which did not necessitate an answer, he retired behind the bar and filled three glasses, giving two to the guests and the third to the generous donor himself.

With a perfunctory 'Here's to you, sir,' the pair of villagers quaffed the foaming, twopenny draught, and then departed, having achieved the thirsty purpose for which they had remained.

Twenty minutes passed.

The smouldering logs glowed faintly in the fireplace; a solitary candle spluttered, almost went out, revived, drooped, and sent strange shadows playing grotesquely about the room. The inn that had been so noisy was as silent as a tomb set in the great white desert of the downs.

And still the miser sat with wrinkled, yellow brow supported by his lean, clawing fingers, his hungry eyes gazing into the smouldering fire. There was the soft sound of some loosened snow gliding from the roof to the ground. A blue ray of moonlight crept stealthily in through a window. Over the downs came the howl of a lonely dog.

XIII.

Midnight.

The miser still sat alone, wrapped in some dream of gold that left him lost to his surroundings.

Suddenly his thin blood froze in horror. There was a loud hammering at the outer kitchen door, the sound of a neighing horse, noisy voices uttering strange oaths. He heard the shriek of Jack Fish and the stamp of jingling spurs.

Staggering to his feet, the miser reached for his hat and strove to leave the room, but his feet were lead, and his trembling limbs powerless to move them. The voices were coming nearer;

the door was opening. He looked wildly over his shoulder, and with a moan sank to his knees and hid behind the chair he had been sitting in.

There at the door, in the almost total darkness, he saw two hideous faces. They were glowing like flames, as if two satyrs stood grinning into the fires of hell. Across the brow of the taller one, and enveloping his left eye, was a blood-stained bandage. The other's countenance was a murderous, red-bearded one, with an open sword-cut running diagonally across it.

'What ho!' bellowed the taller one, and the horror-stricken miser saw that he was dressed in the vile trappings of a pirate, knife, cutlass, and all. 'Some rum, landlord; and, look ye, blackguard, make it boiling hot, for sink me by the head if that grave of mine doesn't grow more rheumaticky every year.'

With clumsy, stumbling steps and terrified countenance, Abraham Fish appeared, and taking two bottles from the bar, hurried towards the kitchen. Through the door Flint could just make out the jibbering figure of the half-wit muttering wildly to himself as he sat, cross-legged, on the floor.

'One moment, by Jupiter!' said the shorter spectre, drawing a pair of enormous pistols from their holsters and halting the landlord as he was just leaving the room. 'Are we alone?'

'Y-yes, s-s-sir,' stammered the landlord.

'Cut his throat,' said the pirate in a blood-curdling voice; 'throw him down the well.'

'W-would you care for a light?' asked the proprietor. Josephus Flint's heart distinctly stopped, then resumed its beat at a greater speed than ever.

'Goggles and gutter-snipes!' swore the shorter ghost, juggling a pistol and narrowly missing a tumble as his enormous spurs interlocked. 'Begone and fetch the rum, or hang me to the nearest gibbet if I don't puncture your windpipe.'

Not waiting for a second intimation, the landlord bowed low and precipitately disappeared as the pirate drew his enormous cutlass and took a heavy step in his direction.

'Well, Turpin, my lad,' said the pirate, putting down his cutlass on the floor and drawing up a chair to the table in the centre of the room, 'are you ready with the dice?'

'Squirks and skittles!' ejaculated the other, whose costume bore out the fact that he had once been a highwayman, and whose bearded, maltreated face looked blotched and hideous in the meagre glimmer of the persistent candle. ''Sdeath! but my fingers itch to feel the scoundrel's throat.'

'Now then,' said the other, reaching for his cutlass and laying it on the table, 'let us understand each other *verbatim et literatim*. Three throws of the dice, and the winner of two takes Master Flint along with him.'

'*What's that?*' cried the highwayman, jumping to his feet and pointing his pistols recklessly around the room.

'WHAT'S WHAT?' roared the pirate, lunging into the dark with his cutlass.

'Slugs and squashes! Methought I heard the rattle of some villain's throat.'

'Hop aboard me!' cried the pirate, making the air sing with his cutlass; 'where is the yellow-livered scroundrel? I'll carve him. I'll change his architecture!'

In spite of this opportunity for improving his figure, the listener remained hidden, one hand clutching the chair, the other holding his jaw lest the noise of his chattering teeth be heard. After the two diabolical figures had uttered a few more oaths and threats, they sat down again, the cutlass was once more put on the table, and the pistols were replaced in their holsters.

'Now then,' said the rather stout highwayman, 'your deal'——

'Lash me to the mast!' roared the bandaged robber of the sea, taking a pair of dice from his pocket and shaking them about in his closed hand. 'Roll for me, my beauties—roll high for your favourite uncle.—What is it, Dick?'

'Gumph and snuckles!' cried the highwayman. 'Three.'

The pirate grasped his cutlass, but changing his mind, folded his arms and looked hideously over his bandage as his opponent threw five.

'By my skull!' muttered the seaman, reaching angrily for the dice; 'am I to be thwarted of Master Flint's company just as I've at last worked it out so we sha'n't be crowded in my grave? Roll for me, you little angels—roll for your handsome uncle. Come, eleven!—What do you say to that, Jel—Turpin? Eleven it is.'

'As to that,' sneered the highwayman, 'accidents will happen.'

For a moment the two ghosts glared ferociously into each other's faces.

'Rake me fore and aft!' roared the pirate, '*vivit post funera virtus*—which means that, though the undertaker have you, virtue will emerge triumphant. Give me the dice—this is the time we throw the grappling-irons upon each other.'

'Curse me!' ejaculated the other, 'but I'm dry as a skeleton.'

'Well said. What ho! Landlord! What of the rum?'

'C-coming, gents,' cried the voice of Abraham Fish, and a moment later he appeared with two steaming glasses of what looked extraordinarily like the beverage known as 'something warm.'

'Boots and bottles!' said the highwayman, taking a sip. 'Tell me, rogue—and if thou liest may the saints protect thee!—dost know a fellow by the name of Flint?'

'I d-d-do, sir.'

'Not so much "d-d-d-o" and more talk,' muttered the pirate, fingering his cutlass.

[*Christmas Number.*

'Where doth he abide, rogue?' asked the portly shade of the lamented Turpin.

'Down the road, a good three-quarters of a mile from here.'

''Tis well. And tell me, donkey-face, what say they of Master Flint in these parts?'

'Nothing good, your honour. He be very close with his money.'

'Ha, ha!' roared the pirate. 'Scuttle the frigate! but he'll be closer still when he lies beside me in the grave.'

'He was here, gents, only an hour since.'

'Gumph and snuckles!' cried the red-bearded Turpin, drawing both pistols again. 'Have we missed the scoundrel, then?'

'Enough of talk,' said the pirate. 'Let's to the dice. Then, when 'tis finished, we'll on to Master Flint's house, drag him out by the heels, and make him answer to a tribunal of ghosts the charge that he has robbed and hounded the poor, tortured the helpless, and soured the lives of his fellow-men.'

'Hear, hear!' said the highwayman; 'for, though in our day we've murdered many and robbed a goodly number more, we never yet took money from the poor. And so, my lad, it is your roll; then to the Merrie Gentlemen with good Master Flint between us.'

'A last throw,' muttered the pirate, shaking the dice. 'By the Jolly Roger! I never failed at love or gambling yet. If you love me, my beauties, roll 'em high; if you love me, give me my little Flint to fondle and strangle in my mouldy'——

There was a cry and a horrible rattle of a man's throat. With his face so pallid that its gleaming surface challenged the fiery horror of the ghostly visitors, Josephus Flint staggered forward and fell upon his knees.

'Squirks!' roared the highwayman, covering him with both pistols and upsetting a chair by catching it with his spurs.

'Sink me, by Jupiter!' bellowed the pirate, dropping the dice and picking up the cutlass.

'Throw him in the fire! Stir it up, landlord.'

'No, no—drown him. Cut his throat and drown him.'

'Mercy!' shrieked the miser, imploring it with clasped, trembling hands. 'Awful spirits of the past, have mercy.'

'Who is the blackguard?' cried the pirate.

'Wax and waistcoats!' roared the highwayman, 'what's his name?'

'Flint,' said the landlord, peering into the miser's lowered face.

'WHAT!' shouted the pirate. 'Rake me'——

'Prime my cocking-piece!' cried the highwayman, endeavouring to pull back the firing-pins of his pistols, and, considering his life's calling, displaying an extraordinary ignorance of their mechanism.

'Mercy!' moaned the miser. 'Ghosts of the bygone past, mercy!'

'What mercy have you shown to others?' said the pirate, noisily sharpening his cutlass against the heel of his boot. 'Stand up till I cut your throat.'

'I'll make it right,' cried the miserable Flint, shaking and quivering like a leaf in a gale. 'I'll pay the money back. Don't bury me alive—*alive!*' Josephus Flint fell forward, clutching at his throat and coughing horribly.

'Poison him,' suggested the highwayman unfeelingly, still deeply engrossed in the obstinate nature of his firearms.

'Spirits sent from the grave to haunt me,' whimpered the miser, 'mark my repentance. I have been cruel. I have extorted money from the poor. Mercy! Mercy!'

'Boil him in oil,' said the highwayman, handing a pistol to the landlord to see if he could unravel its complexity.

'Hold!' said the pirate, dramatically pinning the cutlass into the floor and missing his right big toe by the fraction of an inch. 'We must deal with this malefactor *recte et suaviter*. The villain has confessed — he offers restitution. Let us hear him out, for it is *lex terræ* to allow a prisoner to speak for himself before you hang him.—Look you, Flint, wouldst save thy hang-dog life?'

'Mercy!' moaned the cringing miser.

'Very well,' said the pirate, adjusting a pair of glasses over the blood-stained bandage. 'Turpin, I see some ink and a quill upon the shelf. Pray give it to the hound. Good!—And now, Master Flint, rise up.' He prodded the miser with the point of his cutlass, causing him to squeal like a stuck pig. 'Sit down there.'

'There,' repeated the highwayman, grasping the sorry figure by the shoulders and shoving him so violently into the chair by the table that every bone in his body was jarred, his teeth meeting with the click one hears when a boxer catches a gaping opponent an 'upper-cut' on the jaw.

'You swear,' said the pirate, 'that you will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so'——

'Here's the remains of a candle,' said the highwayman, carrying the tenacious bit of tallow to the table and thrusting the barrel of an uncocked pistol into the miser's ear.

'Write,' said the pirate.

'Take it down,' echoed the highwayman.

'"I hereby swear,"' dictated the follower of the black flag slowly, '"that I have grossly overcharged the following of my tenants"—— Landlord, recite the names; and if you value your donkey's ears, leave not *out* one.'

'Leave out *not* one,' corrected the highwayman.

'So far as I remember, gents,' said the landlord, who had apparently grown quite used to his uncanny visitors, 'the names are'——

'Take 'em down, by Venus!' thundered the pirate.

'Ned Clarke,' went on the innkeeper, 'Widow M'Gregor, Sam Heeling, Joe Green, Silas Walker, Brown the chemist, and Martin Sutherland.'

'Got that, yellow face?' said the pirate as the stuttering pen finished its scratchy journey over the surface of a large sheet of note-paper. 'Now then, write on—"and therefore I agree to refund one-half of all rents charged for the last five years, and further to reduce all rents to one-half their present amount."'

The trembling hand of the miser was poised protestingly over the paper.

'Gutter-snipes!' bellowed the fiery-faced and fiery-natured highwayman, bringing the handle of a pistol smartly on the knuckles of the writer; 'you would, eh?'

With a howl of pain the poor wretch thrust his bruised knuckles into his mouth, but at the brandished cutlass he hurriedly resumed his writing.

With whimpering tears the miser wrote on for half-an-hour as the pirate (who was extraordinarily well informed on Mr Flint's private affairs) dictated his act of repentance and restitution for the usury he had practised, the securities for petty loans he had annexed—in short, thoroughly covering the whole avenue of inhumanity which had made one man's wealth by the misery of others.

'Now sign,' said the pirate sternly.

'In blood,' said the red-headed highwayman.

'Ink,' corrected the chief inquisitor, motioning his fellow to be quiet. 'Landlord, sign as witness. Good!'

'And now,' moaned the miser, wringing his hands, 'let me go home. I'm worn and old. My blood's all chilled and my bones be shaking with the ague.'

'One moment,' said the highwayman. 'You have a daughter.'

The miser said nothing, but his shrivelled lips mouthed impotent nothings, his eyes turning weakly away from the horrible bearded face with its glowing sword-cut.

'She has a lover,' went on the gentleman of the road.

'I deny it,' cried Flint; 'a villainous jackanapes as wants nought but my money.'

'You lie!' bellowed the pirate.

'Guggles and mugglesquirks!' roared the late Turpin; 'cut his throat.'

'Write,' said the pirate sternly.

'Take it down,' added his portly friend.

'"I hereby agree,"' dictated the outlaw of the seas, '"to the immediate marriage of my daughter Barbara to Jerry"—— What's his other name, Turpin?'

'Now, damme!' said the highwayman, 'I never asked him that.'

'It is of no consequence.—Proceed: "to Jerry; and to show my joy in such a happy union I herewith endow my daughter with the sum of one thousand pounds."'

'Mercy!' whined the miser.

'Write,' said the highwayman, 'or we'll slaughter you, and let the buzzards have your carcass for their Christmas meal.'

'Very good,' said the pirate, examining the completed document, and replacing his spectacles in their case. 'I shall leave this with the local magistrate, and—— Listen, Turpin; I hear the horn. Our time above-ground is finished, and the coach is calling us.—Flint, in place of your sordid soul let me advise *mens sibi conscia recti;* and do not forget how brief is the span of life to expiate your many crimes. Take warning, Master Flint, and all of those who live like you, that he who prospers by the misery of others lives after death in constant torture of remorse. Let the spirit of your repentance exceed the act. For I warn you, should you fail to fulfil this long-overdue reparation, that a traveller on the mighty Sahara could more easily escape the rays of the sun than you could avoid the clutch of our ghostly, ghastly, grisly revenge.—Turpin—away!'

'Lead on, old fellow,' said the highwayman, pocketing his pistols and following the high-minded pirate from the room.

Heedless of the jingling spurs and the excited jabbering of poor Jack Fish, who had been waiting outside in a wild fantasia of delight; heedless of the voices of the departing ghosts mingling with the landlord's—and one that sounded strangely like Jerry's—Flint sat trembling at the table, gazing with unseeing eyes into the eerie blackness of the room.

The obstinate candle uttered a final gasp and went out. A breath of wind down the chimney stirred the charred ashes of the fire.

From the downs came the howl of the lonely hound.

XIV.

Christmas: Sunday morning.

Clanging on the frosty air, the old church bell rang out its call to service, and soon the tranquil street, smothered in snow, was dotted with villagers emerging from their cottages. Quietly, as befitted the day, but with hearts brimful of human kindness, these humble sharers of a simple destiny uttered the old, old Yuletide greeting; and as they made their way through the deep drifts of snow, sparkling like diamonds in the sunlight, the pleasant odour of cooking goose and roasting turkey from busy kitchens reminded them that temporal pleasure would follow hard upon the heels of spiritual exercise.

Even the old church, decked with holly and evergreens, took on a festive look as a golden ray of sunlight stole in through St Peter's Window, and irreverently rested on the bald pate of the rector, who was in such rare form, when

he chanted the service, that every one said it was as good as an archbishop and twice as natural. Though, not to be outdone by the Cloth, Jacob Funnle read the lessons so impressively, and rolled the old Hebrew names about with such magisterial dignity, that the eyeballs of the children nearly came clean out of their settings.

But the choir was the thing!

It sang so lustily that the sainted windows rattled as if in a gale (Dr Jellybud singing two notes higher and several tones louder than any one else), while red-cheeked girls who sat in the two front rows indulged in the usual pretence of maidenly bashfulness (but made a pretty joyful noise for all that), and tried to keep their eyes off that handsome tenor, George Smith, the chemist's assistant.

The anthem was announced. It was a 'Te Deum' that started with a long note on the organ, followed by a dynamic, triple *fortissimo* Wagnerian outburst on the word 'We.' But just as the nineteen members of the choir had come in on a terrific 'We' in nineteen variations of the pitch, something happened, and the whole thing came to a sudden stop.

The rector rubbed his eyes; Jacob Funnle put on his spectacles, took them off and wiped them, and put them on again; Sam Heeling turned completely round, forgetting all about his organ; while the boy who blew it walked right into the centre of the chancel, where he could get a good view. Only Joe Green, who had got away to a wonderful start in the 'Te Deum,' went all the way through to 'the goodly fellowship of the Prophets' before he realised that he was the only one singing.

Coming up the centre aisle, with Barbara (whose absence from the choir had been greatly lamented) on his arm, and Jerry walking on the other side, was Josephus Flint. Behind them, carrying a Bible and looking furtively to each side, was Smithers, the aged servitor.

If 'The Fiddlers Three' had picked itself up and gone for a stroll, or if the church steeple had started turning somersaults, the inhabitants of Windbridge could not have been more surprised. In absolute silence they watched the miser, who had never been in the church before, enter an empty pew; while Barbara found the place for him in the book, and Jerry stood up beside her so straight and handsome that the spell of the chemist's assistant over the sopranos was broken for ever.

There is no saying how long this tableau might have gone on if Dr Jellybud had not risen magnificently to the occasion. Seizing the anthem-book and emitting a stentorian 'WE,' he started the 'Te Deum' off in so high a key that, though the whole pack followed gamely after him, probably never before or since has a choir made such faces or such extraordinary sounds (for the rest of the day most of them could speak only in a whisper); and as for Sam Heeling, as soon as the boy had resumed blowing, he tried to head the doctor off in every key known to Christian and Pagan musical composition, failing utterly, but establishing an undying reputation for virtuosity and sportsmanship.

Under this extra inspiration the rector's plea for the collection on behalf of the poor was so eloquent and moving that the women produced a veritable snow-flurry of handkerchiefs, and men jingled sixpences together in their pockets, hardly able to restrain their eagerness to be up and at the collection-bags. When it came the turn of Josephus Flint, he put in four half-crowns. It's true, he was so overcome with giddiness directly afterwards that he was forced to sit down, while old Smithers patted his back and did his best to revive him—but he gave the four half-crowns, for so it is written in the annals of Windbridge.

XV.

When the service was over, what a pent-up flood of good feeling broke loose! They all shook old Flint's hand, as if he were the villagers' life-long benefactor, and crowded around his daughter; while the sexton, quite overcome by the scene, rang the church bell for a full half-hour without stopping once.

Just as the miser was breaking away from the crowd, Dr Octavius Jellybud bore down on him, and refusing to accept any excuses, took the old man off to dinner. The ubiquitous Funnle followed close behind with Barbara on his arm, Jerry and Miss Jellybud coming along behind them, and old Smithers bringing up the rear, wagging his head and expressing mumbled doubts about the whole business.

What a dinner!

Of course, there may have been other Christmas dinners just as sumptuous as that of the Jellybuds; but to this day, whenever the rector refers to the Babylonian feasts of Belshazzar, the minds of the congregation invariably visualise that famous repast at the doctor's. It is a fact, not a figure of speech, that the table groaned with good things, and the more it groaned the louder every one laughed.

For, even if the viands have been equalled (which I strongly doubt), you would have to search a long time to find a merrier party. At the place of honour was Ned Clarke, his sturdy frame bearing his dignity of years like the fine old oak he was. Opposite him was the Widow M'Gregor, whose sagacious Scottish comments on the day still live among the before-mentioned annals of the village. Then there was Jacob Funnle at one end of the table, so full of anecdote and good-humour that it was extraordinary where he found room to put the army of good things which he ate. But he had a rival. Sam Heeling was there with his wife;

and throwing aside the cares of choir leadership, Sam got off so many side-splitting jokes (most of which had survived the test of time) that it was an absolute miracle any one got a mouthful down without choking to death. Nor was the rector far behind Funnle and Heeling, 'getting off' one himself (with considerable prompting by his wife) that made Abraham Fish, who was sitting opposite him, declare he would have made a fortune as an innkeeper.

Out in the kitchen the buxom cook of 'The Fiddlers Three' was in full charge, laughing louder than any one else; and—since who wants to dine at an inn on Christmas Day?—there was Nancy, the bar-and-house-maid, helping to wait at table, looking as pretty and appetising as a northern snow-apple. And as the doctor was never a man to do things by halves, a separate table was set, where poor Jack Fish sat chuckling softly to himself, with old Smithers as a dinner partner, the latter keeping his head cocked to one side, listening for the voice of his master, and mumbling delightedly every time he heard it.

There was a toast to the lovers, Barbara blushing so prettily that every man grew envious of Jerry on the spot; while Jerry's reply caused the Widow M'Gregor to whisper audibly that he 'wasna unlike Sandy M'Gregor hissel', but no sae gleg-lookin'.'

There was a second toast to the doctor's sister. And was there ever a soul deserved it more than that busy little woman of a hundred household cares, waiting and smiling on every one—finding such pleasure in the giving of pleasure—losing herself in sublime sympathy for others!

There was a third toast to Josephus Flint; and though he did not reply, his twitching features showed he was learning that gold is not the only treasure of this life.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' said the toast-master—no less a personage than Jacob Funnle—'I give you our host.'

Is it anything against the little doctor that, as he looked around the group of happy, glowing faces, his twinkling eyes were suddenly dimmed? Was he less a man because his lips trembled slightly when he said how happy it all made him? There he stood at the head of the table, one hand playing with an enormous watch-chain, and the other stroking the head of the melancholy Nero, who was resting his forepaws on the table, and looking as mournful as if the whole cost were coming out of his personal pocket. There the doctor stood, and there we shall leave him.

Would, in this first Christmas of Peace, that more hearts swelled up with goodwill to men as did that of the sturdy little family doctor that Sunday, many years ago!

L'ENVOI.

So this little story of the village by the downs comes to its close.

Flint did everything he promised, and more—but I don't think he ever enjoyed giving. On Christmas Eve, attended by Smithers, he always went to 'The Fiddlers Three' and 'stood' a glass of beer all round, but he made sure to be home before midnight. Sometimes he would go to visit Barbara and Jerry in Surrey, and would always have a gift for little Octavius and littler Jacob, but he seemed happier in his own dreary home in company with the toothless Smithers, who looked upon him as the kindest master in the country.

As to the 'Merrie Gentlemen,' carping sceptics have tried to maintain that the ghostly visitors weren't ghosts at all. It has even been said that in the books, for that date, of Willy Clarkson, the ageless theatrical costumier of Wardour Street, London, the following items occur: 'One large-sized pirate, complete with cutlass; one stout highwayman, complete with pistols; phosphorus, grease paints, &c.'

But the villagers of Windbridge will have none of it.

If you have any doubts yourself, why not watch the sparks emerging from the chimneys on a Christmas Eve? Note the direction of the wind, and follow them into the dark. Perhaps you will find the place where they keep the ghosts of departed stage-coaches.

If you do, don't fail to look for a yellow gig with glaring red wheels, for it once belonged to the last of the old family doctors.

THE GARDEN OF MY HEART.

THE little garden of my heart
Is very dear to me;
'Tis cradled 'mong the quiet hills,
And shelter'd from the sea.
'Tis gay with sweet old-fashion'd flowers,
The flow'rs I love so well;
It draws me, when I'm far away,
And holds me like a spell.

The little garden of my heart
Is sweet beyond compare;
The dove of peace her shining wings
Methinks has folded there.
'Tis there my childhood's days were spent—
'Tis *there* I'm fain to be
When at the setting of Life's sun
Comes one clear call for me.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

'IMPHM!' SAID MRS KNOX.

By MARY STUART BOYD,
Author of *Kavanagh's Lucky Bean*, *The Fortunate Isles*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—HER HUSBAND'S SECRET.

MRS KNOX sat by the kitchen fire in her top flat in Apsley Place, Glasgow, one December night a dozen years ago. The brown teapot, which long use had stained black in parts, sat on the hob; but though its owner was an ardent tea-drinker, the contents held no lure for her that night. Her never buoyant spirits were at their lowest; and, as always when she became down-hearted, one question recurred to torment her—What had Knox done with the money?

It was the sole mystery of an otherwise apparently transparent life. Had Mrs Knox voiced her opinion of her spouse before a paralytic seizure robbed her of his companionship, she would confidently have asserted that he kept nothing secret from her. Her firmest belief was that she knew his innermost thoughts. Not that she had esteemed those thoughts highly, or even listened very attentively when he sought to put them into words. But, after his sudden death, when she looked into his savings-bank book and discovered that, only a few days before he was stricken down, he had withdrawn £47, 10s.—a sum that constituted nearly half of his total deposit—she felt as though she had never really known her husband.

Since their early married days, when the signing of his name to oblige a friend had involved him in a grievous payment of fifteen pounds, John Knox had scrupulously kept the promise exacted by his wife never again to become surety for anybody. She knew he would not break his word, and he had no expensive tastes, so where the money had gone was a puzzle.

Knox's employers had not assessed the value of his services at an extravagant rate; but what he earned, combined with the sums paid by their two lodgers, had enabled the couple to live without privation, and even to save a little fund against possible rainy days.

At this moment the missing money would have been specially welcome, for, after Dennis Kavanagh had taken his hurried departure, the room he rented had stood empty, except during a disastrous fortnight when it was occupied by a good-looking and plausible young Englishman, who left without paying a penny, and in the going took with him a new Burberry rain-coat, a leather portmanteau, and a presentation silk umbrella, all belonging to Mr Cruikshank, the schoolmaster, who for several years had tenanted the two best rooms.

The weekly sum paid by Mr Cruikshank, Mrs Knox knew, was not sufficient to meet the rent and the taxes and to defray the cost of her food. Already she had been obliged to dip into the secret hoard that she kept hidden in a cracked jug behind the zinc pail and the scrubbing-brushes, in the little cupboard under the sink, where no burglar, however cunning at discovering concealed treasure, would be likely to look for it. The money still remaining in the savings-bank Mrs Knox regarded as the sole barrier between herself and want; dire necessity alone would have induced her to draw upon it. And now that Mr Cruikshank had brought matters to a climax by telling her that, from the beginning of the Christmas holidays, his apartments would be vacant, Mrs Knox felt convinced that her feet were set on the broad road that leads direct to the gates of the poorhouse.

A smart knock at the outer door, followed by three cheery little taps, proclaimed the arrival of a familiar visitor. 'That 's Mirren,' Mrs Knox told herself, hastening to admit her guest. Marion Weir, who was a niece of the late Mr Knox, filled the post of parlour-maid in a West End family. She had been fond of her uncle, and for his sake retained a kindly interest in his widow.

'Well, aunt, and how are you keeping?' Marion asked anxiously, impressed by her hostess's lugubrious demeanour as they sat by the fire. 'You look as if you were in a real bad way.'

Mrs Knox sighed dismally. 'My looks dinna belie me, then. I 'm on the straight road to the poorhouse.'

'To the poorhouse?'

Mrs Knox nodded with something of satisfaction in the gloomy prognostication. 'Aye; to the Govan Poorhouse. Imphm!'

'Why, whatever 's the matter now?' Mirren demanded.

'Mr Cruikshank has given me warnin', and when he leaves the whole house 'll be standin' empty, an' no a brass farthing comin' in, and the rent and taxes goin' on.'

'But Mr Cruikshank has been here a long time. What 's the reason he 's leavin' you?'

'He says it 's because he 's goin' out to Hillhead so as to be nearer his classes. But fine I ken that he 'll no stay in a house where he 's had a thief for a fellow-lodger. He 's never said it, mind you, but I ken he blames me for his property being stolen.'

'How can he blame you? You couldn't help it if that Smith turned out dishonest.'

'I see now I shouldna have taken in a stranger without askin' for what they ca' references.'

'Oh, havers! Whenever did you hear tell of anybody in Apsley Place askin' lodgers for references?'

'No ever,' Mrs Knox admitted somewhat grudgingly. 'But that disna alter the case. As I was sayin', lodgers are no so easy gotten now. An' in twa-three months I'll be roupit to the door.'

'Tuts, aunt! it's surely no as bad as a' that? You'll get plenty more lodgers if you have a wee thing patience,' Mirren made hopeful prophecy; though, as she thought of the dingy rooms, and of the savourless cooking, she mentally inclined to agree with her aunt's estimate of the possibilities. 'Your rooms have never stood long empty yet. And, anyway, if you're needin' money, I have some by me, and you're welcome to the loan'——

'It's no that,' Mrs Knox interrupted. 'I have something of my ain yet. But auld age is comin' on. I'll no aye be sae able to toil and fight. If I just had that siller that Knox made away with. Forty-seven pounds ten shillings, and it was gone—clean gone, as ye might say, in the twinklin' o' an eye!' she added impressively.

Mirren had heard the tale of the vanished money many times, and she hastened to change the subject. 'I havena told you my news yet. Peter's master is opening a new branch for house-painting in the South Side, and Peter's to be the manager of it. And Peter and me is thinkin' of getting married at the May term. If things was bad you'd be welcome to stop with us. And if you were wantin' to give the house a good clean when Mr Cruikshank's rooms are empty, I could come over and help. Peter might give us a hand with the whitewashing in his odd time. I'm to have a holiday, for Mrs Montgomery is going away.'

If Mrs Knox was interested in anybody beyond herself, it was in her niece's mistress, whom she had never seen. At the mention of the name of Montgomery her attention was instantly diverted from her own affairs.

'Keep me! She's no goin' away to anither of thae hydropathics, is she?'

Mirren nodded affirmation. 'Yes; she says she's needin' a change. It's to a big one in England this time. She's got a grand new evening-dress, and her fur coat relined with brocaded satin, and a transformation, as they ca' it, for her hair. It makes her look real young. Aunt, I wish you would get one. Mrs Montgomery's hair is as gray as yours, and she hasn't near as much of it as you have. A transformation would suit you fine.'

'Me! No, thank ye. A nice-lookin' object I'd be with ither folks' hair on my head!' Mrs Knox's tone might be scornful, but she was secretly flattered by the suggestion.

'Peter'll be waitin' for me at the close-mouth. I'll need to be goin'. You're looking real tired, aunt. Let me make you a bit of buttered toast for your supper afore I go.'

'No supper for me,' Mrs Knox said firmly. 'I'm feelin' that bilious that I'll take naething but a pill and a cup of tea the night.'

When Mirren had joined her sweetheart, and Mrs Knox was left alone, her thoughts kept turning enviously to Mrs Montgomery. 'I doubt if she has ever done a hand's turn in her life. No a thing but dress herself up, and jaunt about. An' here's me, that has worked hard all my days, has naething to show for it but a yellow face and a bilious disposition with bein' kept too much in the house.' Rummaging in the dresser-drawer, she found the pill-box. 'I wish I had a thousand pounds, an' then I'd dress myself up in grand clothes and transformations, and be a fine lady an' live at hydropathics like Mirren's mistress,' Mrs Knox promised herself, as she stood holding the big pill-box in her hand. 'But it seems, when I need a change o' air, my portion is jist to bide at home and take a pill!'

It appeared, however, as if fortune would deny the good lady even that cheap solace, for, when Mrs Knox opened the pill-box, it proved to contain only a curious crescent-shaped lucky bean—the 'wish-bean' she had raked out of the ashes of the fire when Dennis Kavanagh flung it there on the eve of his departure, confidently believing he had made an end of its occult powers for ever.

CHAPTER II.—WHAT THE OLD DESK HELD.

IT was so seldom that any communication reached her by post that the following morning, when the postman delivered the missive that was fated to change her whole outlook upon life, Mrs Knox did not trouble even to glance at the address, but, from sheer force of habit, took it in to Mr Cruikshank, who, as usual at that hour, was engaged in bolting his breakfast before hastening off to his pupils.

'This isn't for me, Mrs Knox,' he exclaimed, as she was leaving the room. 'It's addressed to your husband.'

Carrying away the letter without comment, Mrs Knox went close up to the kitchen window to read it. 'John Knox, Esq.,' was legibly typed on the face of the envelope. The back bore the stamp of the Universal Insurance Company.

The formal aspect of the document awoke vague forebodings in the breast of the widow, and stirred afresh her ingrained distrust of her husband's business capacity. 'What has Knox been doin' now?' she asked herself testily, forgetting that for nearly a year Mr Knox's behaviour had ceased to have power to fret her.

Opening the envelope, Mrs Knox was amazed to find a printed notice in which the Universal Insurance Company informed John Knox, Esq., that the premium on his life insurance policy, No. G74183, would fall due on the 20th December, and must be paid within one calendar month thereafter.

Putting on her spectacles to see more clearly, Mrs Knox re-read the bewildering document, then read it again slowly aloud, still without gaining any understanding of its purport. She had just resolved to ask Mr Cruikshank's opinion when his quick step in the lobby, and the sound of the door shutting behind him, showed that she was too late, and that, did she wish to consult him, she must await his return.

As she went about her housework Mrs Knox became more and more anxious to learn the meaning of the mysterious intimation. All she could gather from it was that a sum of money owed by her deceased husband was due, and must shortly be paid. Her sorely perturbed mind lost no time in deciding that some rash action of her husband's had involved her in an outlay she could ill afford.

'It was just like Knox to die sudden, and leave me with a thing like that on my hands; an' them full enough as it is,' she thought bitterly. 'I'm sure, if I told him once, I told him a hundred times that he had nae head for business speculations, an' should leave them alone.'

As the day wore on Mrs Knox's apprehensions increased. She became too impatient to wait for Mr Cruikshank's return, and decided to consult Mr Forbes, the house-factor. On his office door she had noticed the brass plate of a fire insurance company. From that the astute dame deduced an understanding of life insurance that might be qualified to reveal the inner meaning of the disturbing epistle. And as Mr Forbes was not actually a certified lawyer, she thought he would be unlikely to charge a fee for his advice.

Since the occasion ranked as an important one, Mrs Knox dressed herself, putting on the handsome widow's weeds that she had bought before she discovered the appalling deficit in the family savings. Mrs Knox was tall; she carried herself well; and in the black raiment she looked an eminently respectable—even a dignified—figure of woe.

On entering Mr Forbes's office she was annoyed to find him already engaged interviewing a neighbour, Mrs M'Whisten, with whom, owing to a difference of opinion regarding the rightful custody of the washing-house key, she had, for a considerable period, been on strained terms.

As she waited in the outer room in company with the office-boy, Mrs Knox could hear Mrs M'Whisten expatiating at length on her wrongs, which in this instance appeared to culminate in the dastardly behaviour of certain boys who had played 'tig' among her clean linen when it was hanging out to dry, and who, when reasoned with, had climbed on the roof of the washing-house and shouted opprobrious epithets at her.

'You leave these laddies to me, Mrs M'Whisten. Don't you worry any more about them. I'll make them sorry they were born before I'm done with them,' was Mr Forbes's comforting assurance, as he showed the irate lady out.—1919.]

'Well, Mrs Knox, I'm glad to see you. What can I do for you to-day?'

When Mrs Knox had explained the nature of her errand, Mr Forbes examined the paper critically. 'That's a good company, anyway,' he said. 'Your husband was well advised to insure with them.'

'But Knox wasna insured at all. At least, I never heard tell of it, if he was,' she insisted.

'Mr Knox died suddenly—didn't he?'

Mrs Knox heaved a deep sigh. 'John took a stroke of palsy at a quarter-past nine o'clock on a Friday night, and passed away early on the following Monday morning, without ever speakin' an understandable word.' Her tone revealed a gruesome satisfaction in the tragedy of his passing.

'Well, all I can make out is that Mr Knox may have insured his life for your benefit, and meant to tell you as a pleasant surprise, say on New Year's Day,' Mr Forbes suggested, with his customary kindly way of anticipating the brightest side of possibilities. 'If that is the case, the insurance policy must be somewhere. You have the papers he left?'

'Knox had no papers that I ken of forby his savings-bank book. If he had any more, they'll be in the old desk. I never opened it.'

'You might take a look and tell me. Or, if you like, I'll come round with you now. Such matters had better be inquired into as soon as possible.'

The old desk was in the place it had occupied throughout Mrs Knox's wedded life—on the chiffonier in the parlour flanking the family Bible. Early in life John Knox had married, and within seven years had lost both his young wife and his little son. Left alone, he sold off his furniture and went into lodgings, and many years had elapsed before he took another wife. When he married his spinster landlady, the desk was the sole article that he contributed to the household plenishing. His widow guessed that some cherished relics of his past life were locked up in the old desk. Possibly an innate delicacy of feeling had induced her to hold its contents sacred; or, more probably, an unacknowledged jealousy of those he had loved before he knew her had made her refrain from opening it.

The desk, which was a solid article of mahogany bound with brass, had belonged to Knox's father. That, perhaps, was the reason he had retained it when, in a spasm of grief, he had broken up his home. Unlocking it, Mrs Knox spread the contents on the table, Mr Forbes looking on the while in silent sympathy with the dead man, the relics of whose hidden life lay before them.

There was a tarnished silver medal that had been awarded to John Knox at school for excellence in writing, and a bundle or two of letters, whose British stamps had been so long out of use that they had almost a foreign aspect. A piece of unfinished crochet-trimming had the needle still sticking in the ball of cotton. But the thing that touched Mr Forbes most acutely was

a little rubbed and worn otter sporran, a memento of the wee son whom, though he died of measles when he was only five years old, his father had never forgotten.

Engrossed in the thoughts raised by these tokens of the dead, the factor had almost forgotten the object of the search, when Mrs Knox, who had been turning over some loose papers, held out a long envelope bearing the stamp of the Universal Insurance Company.

'This is maybe what we're wantin'. You look at it. I canna see without my glasses.'

The envelope was found to enclose a life insurance policy issued to John Knox for the sum of £1000.

'That's the very thing! I must congratulate you, Mrs Knox. Your husband appears to have insured his life just about this time last year. That was shortly before his death, wasn't it? He had paid only one premium.'

Mrs Knox bent forward, her sallow cheeks flushed with restrained emotion. 'Does that paper tell how much Knox paid—to insure his life, I mean?' she asked breathlessly.

'Yes. It's stated here. The amount he paid was forty-seven pounds ten shillings.'

To Mr Forbes's astonishment, the usually reticent widow burst into a sound that was half-laugh, half-sob. 'That was it, then! That was where the siller went!' she cried exultantly. 'Here I've been misjudgin' my man, thinkin' he had done me an injustice. An' all the time he was tryin' to make provision for my old age. I'm a thankless woman. I am that. Imphm!'

'Well, unless the insurance people refuse to pay your claim on the ground that they were not informed of the death within a specified period after it occurred, you are a luckier woman to-day than you were last night, Mrs Knox.'

'An' it no farther back than last night that I was wishin' for a thousand pounds. An' me with no a ghost of a notion where the money could possibly come from! But do you think they'll refuse to pay?' she asked with a sudden spasm of anxiety.

'I don't think it's the least likely they will. Still, it would be better not to lose any more time before forwarding your claim. The office is in St Vincent Street. It is nearly three o'clock. Can you go over and see them at once?'

'Keep me! Is it that time? Then I canna go. Mr Cruikshank'll be in for his dinner at four o'clock. He disna like to be kept waitin', an' the meat's no in the pot yet,' Mrs Knox made disconsolate confession. 'No, I canna gang.'

'If it's of any service to you, I'll call on the insurance company and lay your case before them,' Mr Forbes offered kindly. 'I'll just leave word at my office, and then go over to St Vincent Street at once.'

Left alone, Mrs Knox set about the preparation of the meal in an absent-minded fashion that boded ill for the edibility of the viands that would ultimately be set before her lodger. On reaching a plate from the dresser she caught sight of the open pill-box, which still contained Kavanagh's lucky bean. On the previous night, when she had opened the box in quest of a pill, the bean had looked bright and attractive, with its encircling scarlet band showing vividly against the black. Now it seemed dull and worthless. Lifting the box, Mrs Knox threw it and its contents into the refuse-bucket.

'If I get that siller I ken what I'll dae with it,' she told herself emphatically, as she cleaned the knives with a vigour that betrayed her inward excitement. 'Never in all my life have I had a penny to spend that I hadna seventeen different roads for it to gang. If that thousand pounds comes my way, fine I ken what I'll dae with it. I'll *squander* it—that will I. Aye. Imphm!'

CHAPTER III.—MRS KNOX TAKES HER FLING.

THE thing that couldn't had occurred! Mrs Knox was the possessor of the wished-for thousand pounds. Her hitherto narrow world had suddenly expanded into a boundless realm gay with enticing possibilities.

The Universal Insurance Company, had they chosen to contest her claim, might doubtless have made a stand on one of those by-laws, printed in very small type, which nobody bothers to read. But they made no difficulties. Very shortly after they had received a certificate of the registration of death, the widow received the insurance money. Before the actual bank-notes were in her hands Mrs Knox spent the entire amount in imagination half-a-dozen times a day. But when the money was really in her possession her ideas changed. They shrank. The rigorous economy she had been obliged to practise all her life had become a habit that could not lightly be broken.

Acting on Mr Forbes's advice, Mrs Knox invested the bulk of what she called her 'fortune' in an annuity. A sensation of remorse at having ever doubted his integrity induced her to expend a considerable sum in erecting a handsome tombstone to the memory of her husband. The remainder of the money was lodged in the bank, where it could be drawn upon as desired.

These arrangements accomplished, Mrs Knox was free to embark on the course of squandering that she had promised herself. Unfortunately, though she still adhered to her treasured plan of taking a holiday at a hydropathic, Mrs Knox was exceedingly loath to spend money on the indispensable preparatory arrangements for such a trip. Mirren Weir, going shopping with her, found the frugal lady reluctant to part with even a shilling, until, by a happy chance, she remembered the improvement the transformation had wrought in Mrs Montgomery's appearance, and managed, by dint of skilful cajolery, to inveigle

her aunt into a hairdresser's. After Mrs Knox had seen herself with her gray hair artistically waved, and raised *à la Pompadour* over the transformation, her scruples vanished; and the early days of the January sales found her an eager and interested buyer.

Her employer being out of town, Mirren's time was at her aunt's disposal. It was she who wrote for the prospectus of Invercairn Hydropathic Establishment, and arranged the dates of Mrs Knox's visit; she who coaxed her aunt into the purchase of a set of furs (greatly reduced) that she declared made the owner look like a dowager duchess, and of a dress (at lowest sale price) that was suitable for evening wear. It was Mirren who supplemented her relative's somewhat circumscribed wardrobe by lending her a selection of her own most treasured belongings, notably articles of the toilet, and a dressing-gown of quilted lavender Japanese silk that had originally been the property of Mrs Montgomery.

When the great day came, Mirren escorted her aunt to the station and saw her off. Any uneasiness Mrs Knox might have experienced at abandoning her house had been removed by Mirren volunteering to spend her holiday in taking care of it.

'But I didna mean to travel in the first class,' Mrs Knox protested when she saw her niece, who had taken her ticket, directing a porter where to put her suit-case.

'Whisht!' cautioned Mirren. 'It wouldna have done to go third. There's sure to be other folk going to the hydropathic travelling in the train, an' they'd have seen you. Remember you're a grand lady now.'

The entrance of two passengers into her compartment put an end to Mrs Knox's protests. Just as the train was on the point of starting, Mirren beckoned her aunt to the window.

'Aunt, am I to get doing what I like with the house when you're away?' she asked hastily. 'I'd like to tosh it up a wee bit.'

The fire of adventure was hot in Mrs Knox's veins. For the first time in her confined life she had abandoned stereotyped ways, and she felt gloriously reckless. For the moment, indeed, she hardly cared if she never saw the flat in Apsley Place again. Leaning out of the carriage window, as the whistle blew, she said, 'Do whatever you like. You can make a kirk or a mill o' the house for all I care!'

And the train moved off, leaving Mirren with an expression of blank astonishment on her face, and the unbelievable words ringing in her ears.

The train was an express, and, fortunately for Mrs Knox, the journey occupied rather less than an hour. All the way she sat bolt-upright in her seat, clutching her umbrella and the handbag that held her ticket and purse, quite unconscious of the strained tensity of her attitude.

Her travelling companions were a portly gentleman and a pleasant-looking lady in a rich fur coat. They were evidently worried about a matter that they discussed in low tones. Mrs Knox's hearing was keen, and she gathered that their trouble concerned somebody called 'Rita,' and what a certain Mrs Steele had reported of her doings.

'Yes, and the worst of it is that, now that Rita is of age, she can snap her fingers at us, and marry any fortune-hunter she chooses,' she overheard the lady say helplessly.

'Rita always was self-willed. Robert spoiled her. If she insists on making a fool of herself, we can't do anything to stop her,' the stout gentleman said bluntly.

'I know that, dear. But it's our duty, for her dead parents' sake, to try to prevent the poor deluded girl deliberately ruining her life.'

'I warn you we'll get no thanks for interfering.' The gentleman resumed the study of his evening paper. His wife sighed, and the discussion ended.

When the train stopped at Invercairn Station, Mrs Knox entrusted her luggage to the care of a porter, and followed him to where the hydropathic bus was waiting. Two business men, who lived at the hydro and travelled daily to and from Glasgow, were already seated in it, and, after her fellow-travellers had also taken their places, the bus jogged off.

The latent craving for adventure that had been suppressed throughout her cramped existence now dominated Mrs Knox. She felt young, alert, acutely observant. Every trifling inconsequent detail became vividly imprinted on her memory. Yet she sat silent, apparently unmoved, presenting a stolid front to the world.

The bus stopped before the entrance to an imposing building. Following the others up the steps, Mrs Knox found herself in a large hall which seemed full of people. The arrival of the afternoon bus from the station was the exciting moment of the day to the hydro visitors, who assembled in the lounge-hall to see if it had brought any new guests who were likely to prove entertaining.

Mrs Knox saw her train companions recognised by a young lady who did not appear overjoyed to receive her visitors. After a word or two had been exchanged in low tones, the young lady led them towards the wide staircase, saying impatiently, 'Come up to my room, then, if you have anything to say.'

The manageress, now coming forward, greeted Mrs Knox cordially, and passed her on to the care of the assistant manageress, who showed the new arrival where to write her name in the visitors' book, and then escorted her upstairs to a bedroom, where she left her, after expressing a hope that madam would find it comfortable, and mentioning that afternoon tea would be served in the drawing-room in a few minutes.

Before taking off her wraps, Mrs Knox sat down in one of the cane-seated chairs and sur-

veyed her surroundings a little disconsolately. Seen first in the dusk of a January day, the plainly furnished, lofty-ceilinged room struck her as being austere and chilly. The narrow white bed looked cold and uninviting. The fireplace was so highly polished as to hint that flame had never sullied its brightness. 'Well, if this is what folk leave their comfortable firesides for'—— Mrs Knox was thinking, when the sound of conversation in an adjoining apartment attracted her attention.

The two rooms were evidently part of a suite, for there was a communicating door—now locked—between them. Though she distinctly heard voices, even Mrs Knox's sharp ears could not distinguish more than that some sort of argument was in progress.

Drawn by the irresistible lure of tea, Mrs Knox removed her outdoor garments, experiencing as she did so a thrill of pride in the new fur stole and muff, which she still regarded as a wicked extravagance. Then, opening the bedroom door, she was on the point of stepping out, when the sound of people leaving the next room made her shrink back.

The three persons who appeared proved to be her companions in the train and the young lady they had hoped to influence. Apparently their efforts had been in vain; for, as they paused for a last word, just outside the half-open door within whose shadow Mrs Knox was standing, she heard the kindly woman say earnestly, 'Believe me, dear, your uncle and I came from the best of motives. It was only a desire for your good that brought us—wasn't it, William?'

'I haven't the slightest doubt that your motives are unimpeachable,' the young lady said haughtily. 'But please remember in future that I am my own mistress, and quite able to manage my affairs without any interference from my relatives. And I shall be obliged if you will tell your informant, Mrs Steele, to mind her own business in future.'

'Come away, Alice,' the portly gentleman said irritably. 'I told you it would be wasting words to try to reason with Rita. If we make haste we 'll just catch that train.'

As they moved towards the staircase Mrs Knox heard the nice woman say tearfully, 'Rita dear, remember, whatever happens, you will always find a home and a sincere welcome at "Earlston."' Then they passed out of earshot.

Mrs Knox's luncheon had been an early and perfunctory one. Excitement and the keen air had sharpened her appetite, and she looked eagerly forward to the promised tea. To her disappointment, on entering the drawing-room she found that, instead of the comfortable sit-round-the-table sort of meal she had anticipated and desired, the function meant a small cup of tea served from a side-table.

The guests who had been longest in residence had taken possession of the most luxurious chairs, and had appropriated the warmest corners by the fire. They were all busy with fancy-work and gossiping, and were evidently on friendly terms with each other. Many covert glances were cast at the new-comer, and one or two kindly disposed souls would have liked to make advances to the stranger; but, though Mrs Knox did not guess it, her ultra-dignified bearing and stern expression served to repel even the best-intentioned.

'Where 's Rita Ballengray?' one matron asked. 'She hasn't come in for tea.'

'I saw her in the hall a little while ago. She had been seeing some callers away,' a girl volunteered. 'She was ordering tea to be sent up to her room. She said she had a headache.'

'I expect Miss Rita is feeling lonely to-day. She 'll be all right when a certain gentleman returns.'

As a ripple of sympathetic laughter followed this arch insinuation, Mrs Knox was conscious of a feeling of superiority in that she knew, or thought she knew, the true reason of Miss Rita Ballengray's temporary disinclination for society.

Mrs Knox was gasping for a second cup of tea, but everybody else appeared to be satisfied. She might have helped herself had not the tea-table been on the farther side of the large drawing-room. And, before so many critical eyes, she did not feel equal to facing the ordeal of leaving her chair and going to fetch it. So she continued to sit stiffly upright, outwardly uninterested and apathetic, but inwardly keenly conscious of every movement or varied inflection of voice among her fellow-guests. Yet above all was she obsessed by the knowledge that she had badly needed her tea, and that she had failed to secure it.

Feeling desperately lonely, and looking quite unapproachable, she sat turning over the leaves of an illustrated paper that lay on a table beside her, till a gong sounded and the company dispersed, saying that it was time to dress for dinner. 'This 'll be the time for me to put on my new gown,' Mrs Knox decided, and followed closely in their wake.

As she passed through the hall her casual glance rested upon an umbrella-stand, and she stopped short, for, prominent among the collection of sticks and umbrellas, she thought she saw the familiar handle of Mr Cruikshank's stolen umbrella. Mrs Knox was naturally composed in manner, but, at the recognition, it must be confessed she gasped. On the ground that few umbrellas are unique creations, that most of them have many counterparts, a more experienced traveller might have argued herself out of the belief that the umbrella was the identical one that had been taken from her house. But in Mrs Knox's estimation Mr Cruikshank's presentation umbrella was a wholly distinctive article. For one thing, it had a striking gold, or silver-gilt, handle; for another, the owner's initials, C. C., were legibly graven on the top.

[*Christmas Number.*

'Whose umbrella is that?' she asked the page-boy, who was hanging a bag of golf-clubs on the stand.

'That's Mr Coulter's umbrella, ma'am,' the boy answered respectfully. 'He's been away to-day, but he's coming back to-night.'

'If that's Mr Coulter's umbrella, I'd like to take a look at Mr Coulter,' Mrs Knox told herself as she ascended the stair. 'Aye. It might pay me to have a look at Mr Coulter. Imphm!'

CHAPTER IV.—TWO DARK HORSES.

THE bedroom seemed even chillier than before when Mrs Knox entered it to change her dress for the late dinner which she anticipated with mingled feelings of pleasure and nervousness. The room was dark, too, and when she would have lit the gas she could find neither matches nor bracket. No bell-pull was visible either, and matters seemed at a standstill, when a maid, entering with hot water, switched on the electric light, and, in answer to Mrs Knox's request, showed her where to find the electric bell-push.

The new gown with its elaborately trimmed chiffon bodice might look smart, but it felt cold. Its wearer would have given much for the gray Shetland shawl she had accustomed herself to wear; but Mirren had wisely forbidden its inclusion in the packing. Praying that pride might keep her warm, Mrs Knox went downstairs when the gong sounded, and following the company into the large, brilliantly lit dining-room, found herself placed at a little table beside a sprightly English widow whom she had noticed at tea.

Mrs Norton lost no time in entering into friendly conversation. When by dint of skilful questioning she succeeded in getting her laconic companion to admit to her present visit being the first she had paid to any hydropathic, Mrs Norton revealed an intimate knowledge of the merits and demerits of many similar establishments. She frankly confessed that, since her widowhood, she had lived almost entirely at hydropathics.

'I find I get so much better value for my money than if I tried to keep house; and then, when I tire of one place, it is so easy to move on to another. I have only two hundred a year, and what can one do on an income like that?' Mrs Knox may have thought that *she* could do a good deal, but, like the wise monkey, she said nothing. 'Why, in London I couldn't even *live!* And a tiny house and one inexperienced maid in the country would be too awful for words. Now, here I get congenial society, and good cooking, and large rooms. I hate poky rooms—don't you?'

Mrs Knox, who was wondering if it was the pink sauce served with it that made the boiled haddock taste so much nicer than usual, uttered a half-articulate reply that convinced Mrs Norton her table companion was accustomed to such a spacious dwelling that she considered her present quarters inferior. Mrs Knox was what is known in racing parlance as a 'dark horse.' Even with her extensive acquaintance with the residents in similar hostelries, Mrs Norton felt quite unable to place her. She had hoped that her loquacity would have the customary effect of eliciting similar confidences. But, quite apart from her natural taciturnity, Mrs Knox, who almost for the first time in her life was enjoying the pleasures of the table, was more concerned with her dinner than with Mrs Norton's affairs, and she remained irresponsive.

Rather than sit silent, the garrulous widow would have prattled even to a deaf mute, so she continued to chatter.

'We have had quite a romance at the hydro lately. That young lady sitting alone at the little table by the window has got engaged to a man she met here for the first time about three weeks ago. A real case of love at first sight it was. She is an heiress—the only child of a wealthy shipbuilder. The man is English, and perfectly *charming*. I tell her we are *all* in love with him! I don't suppose he is rich, but he comes of good family—a younger son, I believe. And Rita is rich enough for both. Her chaperon, Mrs Steele, quarrelled with her about him, and went off in a great hurry yesterday. But all our sympathies are with the young lovers. I do delight in romance—don't you? He has been away to-day, and the dear girl has been quite disconsolate—wouldn't even come down to tea. Said she had a headache, but—— Oh! there he is. *Now* she'll be all right.'

Glancing up from the roast-fowl that she was carefully consuming, Mrs Knox became suddenly electrified.

'Who is that?' she demanded sharply, indicating a well-dressed, good-looking young man, who, smiling recognition of the welcome that greeted his tardy arrival, was making his way to the table where Miss Rita Ballengray was seated.

'Oh, that is Claude Coulter, the hero of the little romance I was speaking about. Isn't it *refreshing* to see how devoted they are? Do you know him?' asked Mrs Norton, noticing the attention with which Mrs Knox was regarding the late-comer.

'I never knew anybody of the name of Coulter,' Mrs Knox said guardedly. The tempting food had ceased to interest her, for in the successful wooer of the heiress she had recognised the insinuating young Englishman who, passing under the name of Edward Smith, had defrauded her of a fortnight's board and lodging, and who when leaving covertly had annexed some of Mr Cruikshank's property as his own.

She was hard at work trying to piece together a mental jig-saw puzzle, of which the fragmentary pieces were the scraps of conversation overheard.

in the train and on the landing, Mrs Norton's gossip, the presence of Mr Cruikshank's umbrella, and the reappearance of Mr Smith in the character of the well-born Mr Claude Coulter.

Mrs Knox wondered if her former lodger would recognise her, and trusted he would not until she had had time to think matters over quietly, and decide how to act. But she need not have concerned herself. Dress and surroundings work marvels in effecting a disguise. And when Mr Coulter's casual glance chanced to rest upon her, he saw only another of those elderly dames of independent means who form the prop-in-chief of hydropathics.

Mrs Knox next feared that he might see her name in the visitors' book, and fly before she had an opportunity of exposing him. She did not guess that to the young Englishman she had been known as Mrs 'Noakes.' Never having seen his hostess's name in writing, Mr Smith (or Coulter) had accepted it as she pronounced it, though it would have aroused the good lady's indignant denial had any one told her that she miscalled herself 'Noakes.'

In the presence of her lover Miss Ballengray had completely recovered her lost spirits. She was flushed and animated. After dinner, when the other guests amused themselves with card-games, they two sat in a secluded corner of the drawing-room whispering together. Seated bolt-upright in her chair, Mrs Knox, who had declined to join in the games, watched them silently—though her dominant sensation was a longing for tea. The thimbleful of coffee served after dinner had seemed to her a mockery. In the midst of the gay throng she positively pined for the company of her brown teapot, and thought with envy how, at that very moment, Mirren might be sitting beside a cosy fire in the kitchen, her feet on the fender, a cup of strong, well-sweetened tea in her hand, and the kettle singing on the hob.

In spite of the novelty, the evening seemed interminable. It was a relief at length to get away to bed. In the corridor she came upon the lovers bidding each other a protracted 'Good-night,' and remembered that Miss Ballengray's room was the large one next to her own—the room in which the independent girl had defied the authority of her relatives.

Accustomed to the amenities of her kitchen fire, Mrs Knox shuddered a little as she undressed and crept in between the rigidly clean linen sheets. There was no hot jar to take the chill off the bed, and at first she felt numb with cold. As she gradually became warmer, her brain began to work feverishly. Ideas tumbled over each other pell-mell. She would publicly expose the villain who was masquerading as a gentleman. She would confront him with the stolen umbrella. She would warn the deluded girl. She would summon the local police, and deliver him over to justice. She would make herself known to him, and see how he would act. She would . . . She would . . .

Out of this medley of confused resolves one alone remained. She would secure the evidence of the purloined umbrella. There was a weapon ready to her hand.

Stealing out of bed when the house was still, she drew on her stockings, and, having thrown on the quilted silk dressing-gown, cautiously opened her bedroom door and peeped out. All was quiet. The dimly lit corridors and hall were empty. Slipping from her room, she moved noiselessly, on stockinged feet, towards the staircase. Once she narrowly avoided tripping over boots put out to clean.

By the aid of the one light in the hall she secured the umbrella. Concealing it in the folds of her dressing-gown, she crept upstairs. When she had reached the haven of her own room without misadventure, Mrs Knox breathed freely. As she locked the recovered article in her wardrobe and tucked the key under her pillow, she nodded her head.

'Aye, my gentleman 's clever! But he 's no the only clever one in the world,' she thought triumphantly. 'Other folk can be clever as well as Mr Claude Coulter. Aye, that they can. Imphm!'

CHAPTER V.—STOLEN GOODS.

WHEN they met at breakfast next morning, Mrs Norton, undeterred by Mrs Knox's reserve, began at once to initiate her into the latest hydropathic scandal.

'I have been scolding myself all night because I didn't warn you. I really ought to have put you on your guard. It was a duty, for you were a stranger amongst us. But I suppose I was too busy talking about our little romance—and, by the way, I hear Rita Ballengray's uncle and aunt came here yesterday, and made a *frightful* row about her getting engaged to Mr Coulter. Positively *raved* and *stormed* at the poor girl, and threatened to shut her up in a madhouse if she didn't throw him over at once! Luckily the brave child held her own, but it must have been terrible for her.'

'You were speakin' about something you should have warned me against,' Mrs Knox interrupted. She felt she had nothing to learn from Mrs Norton regarding Miss Ballengray's affairs.

'Oh yes. What I wanted to say was'—she dropped her voice to a confidential whisper—'that I hope you haven't many valuables with you. If you have, I do trust you 'll take the *greatest* care of them. There have been quite a lot of mysterious losses at the hydro lately. Several people have missed money. Rita Ballengray had ten pounds taken from her purse, and Mr Coulter had his cheque-book stolen. The worst thing was that Lady Moffat lost a priceless diamond cross. She wore it one night there was a dance

here, and next morning it was gone! So, as I said, I do hope you haven't many valuables with you.'

'No that many,' Mrs Knox made non-committal reply, serene in the knowledge that, at the moment, she was wearing the only jewellery she possessed—two rings and a large old-fashioned cameo brooch—and that her money and return-ticket were securely safety-pinned into a substantial gray linen pouch that fastened round her waist, and hung suspended beneath her skirt. 'I havena more with me than what I can take care of. Thankin' ye for warnin' me, all the same. An' Mr Coulter had his cheque-book stolen, ye said?'

'Yes. His account is with the Bank of England. He telegraphed to London at once to stop payment of his cheques; but just fancy what harm the thief might have done before the loss was discovered! Why, he might easily have drawn out all Mr Coulter's deposits!'

'So he might; aye, he might do that easy. Imphm!' agreed Mrs Knox, inwardly reckoning that the proceeding might prove a simpler matter than her informant guessed.

These revelations decided Mrs Knox that she must take action, and quickly. Her difficulty was how to set about it. Mrs Knox was acutely conscious that, while she was a complete stranger to the company, Mr Claude Coulter was on a familiar footing, and evidently a great favourite with everybody. Were she to accuse him of having stolen goods in his possession, public sympathy would, she felt assured, be with him; and while it would be simple enough to denounce him, it might be extremely difficult, by her own unsupported word, to convince people that she was right.

As they passed through the lounge after breakfast Mrs Norton stopped Mr Coulter, and Mrs Knox heard her ask if he had any news of his cheque-book.

'No, and never shall, I'm afraid,' Mr Coulter replied with a rueful shrug of his shoulders. 'It was partly my own fault, of course. I should have kept it securely locked away; but I had just begun to fill in some cheques when the gong sounded, and I went in to lunch, leaving it lying on the table in the writing-room. When I returned it had vanished, as I might have known it would. I wired to the Bank of England to send me on a new cheque-book, and I hope they won't lose time about it, for I had no idea how being without money would hamper one. I declare I'll feel like a pauper till the new book comes.'

Mrs Knox caught Mrs Norton's offer of a loan —'Only five pounds or so'—and heard Mr Coulter's grateful acceptance—'Just till to-morrow, you know.' As she passed on with Mr Coulter's effusive thanks in her ears, Mrs Knox told herself that the alleged theft of the cheque-book was proving a little mine of wealth to the plausible young man.

It was a fine morning. The sun shone. The air was crisp and invigorating. The day was decidedly not one to be wasted indoors. The guests quickly dispersed in various directions. Sitting in the lounge with a copy of the *Glasgow Herald* in her hands, Mrs Knox watched their departure, noting specially that Miss Ballengray and Mr Coulter, carrying golf-clubs, had gone off towards the private golf-course of the hydropathic.

For a little longer Mrs Knox sat deep in thought; then, having resolved upon a course of action, she proceeded to put it into force. Opening the visitors' book, she turned over the pages until she found the entries she wanted. These were two: 'Miss Rita Ballengray, Earlston, Great Western Road, Glasgow, No. 33;' and 'Claude Coulter, Mayfair, London, No. 48.'

Making a mental note of Miss Ballengray's home address, and of the number of her suitor's room, Mrs Knox went upstairs. Passing the door of her own chamber, she walked deliberately along the corridors until she reached No. 48. Opening the door, she entered. The first object she saw was Mr Cruikshank's portmanteau, which rested upon a luggage-stool. A glance showed her that it was empty. Trying the wardrobe door, she found that it was locked. Leaving the room, she got the key of her own wardrobe, and returned with it to Mr Coulter's room. The appointments of both apartments were exactly alike, and she had rightly concluded that the key that fitted one wardrobe would open the other.

Hanging up inside, with divers other garments, the origin of which Mrs Knox felt curious to learn, she saw Mr Cruikshank's rain-coat. Taking it over her arm, Mrs Knox closed and locked the wardrobe; then, picking up the portmanteau, she opened the door and peeped along the passage. Seeing that it was still empty, she slipped out, to find herself face to face with a young chamber-maid, who emerged from a housemaid's pantry, laden with a pail and a mop. If the girl, who looked stupid, noticed anything odd in the appearance of an elderly lady, whose own apartment was some distance off, leaving a gentleman's room carrying a waterproof and a portmanteau, her blank expression did not change. And Mrs Knox regained the seclusion of her own chamber, with the comforting consciousness that she had achieved something.

Having locked the purloined goods in her wardrobe, Mrs Knox donned her outdoor raiment and walked down to the post-office in the little town, where she wrote out and despatched a telegram.

She was well on her way back to the hydro, when, arrested by a sudden idea, she turned and retraced her steps to the post-office, where, after a good deal of consideration as to the form it should take, she wrote out and sent off a second message. Not in the course of her whole life had Mrs Knox spent so much on telegrams as

she did that morning, but she felt that the end she had in view justified the expenditure. Then she returned to the hydropathic, and, in a state of suppressed excitement, waited for things to happen.

CHAPTER VI.—MR COULTER IS INSULTED.

TO have left her life of retirement with the intention of taking a quiet holiday, and to find herself, within twenty-four hours of leaving home, playing one of the chief parts in a thrilling drama, was enough to render any one less unemotional than Mrs Knox distracted and hysterical. At this juncture Mrs Knox's lifelong habit of self-restraint stood her in good stead. She was able to present an imperturbable front to the world, while keeping a sharp eye on those of its denizens who specially interested her.

In the afternoon she took up her position in a retired corner of the lounge, where, herself unobserved, she could watch all outgoers and incomers. By a side-stroke of fortune, Mr Coulter and his fiancée, searching for a nook to 'spoon' in, chose a couch on the other side of the screen that stood near her. Moving her chair as close as she could to the side of the screen, Mrs Knox became an unblushing eavesdropper. She was rewarded by learning that Mr Coulter's journey on the previous day had been for the purpose of securing a special license, and that now he was using his whole powers of persuasion to induce Miss Ballengray to go off with him, the following morning, to Edinburgh, where they would be privately married.

The girl spoke in so low a tone that Mrs Knox had the greatest difficulty in catching her words. All she gathered was that, though at first Miss Ballengray was inclined to demur at the haste Mr Coulter deemed a necessity, she appeared later to yield to his entreaties. The note of relief in his voice, and the warmth of his reiterated assurances that she would never regret taking the step—that his whole life would be spent in worshipping her—warned Mrs Knox afresh that there was not a moment to be lost if his schemes were to be frustrated. 'I'm sure I needna wonder at the fair-spoken rascal takin' her in, when he took *me* in,' she thought, with sympathy for the new victim.

As Mrs Knox sat impatiently waiting for the next move in the game, it was played, but in a manner she had not anticipated.

Mr Coulter had gone upstairs to fetch something—probably the marriage license—to show his bride-elect. A minute later the sound of a bell ringing frantically broke the somnolence of the winter afternoon. There was the tread of quick steps above, the echo of heated voices; then Mr Coulter appeared on the staircase, followed by two agitated maid-servants.

'The thief is still in the house!' he exclaimed. 'More things have been stolen from my room!'

Except for Mrs Knox and the lovers, the hall had previously been nearly empty. Yet the first promise of sensation found it suddenly full of people. From drawing-room, library, recreation-hall, and waiting-room guests flocked, eager to enjoy the new excitement. Mr Coulter speedily became the centre of an interested group. He was telling Miss Anderson, the manageress, how, having gone up to his room to look for a paper, he had found that his Burberry rain-coat and his portmanteau had both been taken away.

'When did you last see these things?' asked the manageress.

'This morning. I swear they were both there when I went out golfing. The coat was locked in the wardrobe, and I had the key in my possession. The thief must own a key that fits.'

'No one has left the hydro, so the thief may be still amongst us.' The manageress cast a suspicious glance around. 'The maids were working upstairs all morning, turning out rooms. They must have seen if any unauthorised person entered Mr Coulter's room, or was about that corridor.'

'Oh! Oh!'

The ejaculation of the moon-faced young chamber-maid called attention to where she stood gazing open-mouthed at Mrs Knox.

Miss Anderson pounced upon her. 'Well, Wilson, what is it? You were working up there. Did you see anybody go into Mr Coulter's room?'

'No, please, ma'am.'

'Then what are you making a noise about?' demanded the sorely tried manageress impatiently. She was jealous for the good name of the house, and the inexplicable robberies were getting on her nerves.

'Please, ma'am, I never seen anybody go into his room, but I seen somebody comin' out of it.'

'You *did*? Then why didn't you stop him?'

'Please, ma'am, it weren't a him. It were a lady. An' I never knew then but what it were her own room she were a-comin' out of.'

'And who was the lady? Now, be careful what you say.'

'That's her standin' over there. An' may I drop down dead this minute if I'm telling a lie,' said Wilson, bursting into uncontrollable tears. But no one had any attention to spare for Wilson's emotions. All the interest was centred on Mrs Knox, who, when the accusing finger was pointed in her direction, had risen from her seat, and now stood erect, a target for all inquisitive eyes.

'*Mrs Noakes!*' Coulter murmured uneasily. Until this moment he had not recognised his erstwhile landlady. As a prudent measure he made a scarcely perceptible movement to the rear, and so became a less prominent member of the party.

'Mrs Knox—of course, we all know it's an utterly ridiculous question to ask'—Miss Ander-

son spoke apologetically—'but *do* you know anything of the articles that Mr Coulter has missed from his room?'

'If you're referrin' to any goods belongin' to the man that calls himself Claude Coulter, I ken naething about them. But if you're speakin' of a gold-handled umbrella, and a waterproof coat, and a real leather portmanteau that were stolen from my house in Glasgow when he was lodging with me under the name of Edward Smith, and went away without payin' a penny, they are locked in my wardrobe, ready for their rightful owner, an' that's Mr Cruikshank, when he comes to claim them.'

'Oh, this is sheer nonsense! It's a dangerous libel!' Mr Coulter spoke with an admirable affectation of incredulity. Everybody knows who I am, and that the things are my property. This lady has just come—can anybody here vouch for her respectability?'

'Well, well!' the manageress interposed briskly, 'the things are evidently not lost, at any rate. If they are in Mrs Knox's wardrobe they can easily be recovered. I am sure Mr Coulter will be willing to overlook the matter, and nothing more need be said about it.' In her fervent desire to maintain the high reputation of the establishment under her direction, Miss Anderson felt almost willing to regard the occurrence as a little eccentricity on the part of Mrs Knox, to whose story she did not attach the slightest credence. 'But perhaps we should see the things first.—Mrs Knox, may I trouble you for the key of your wardrobe?'

Raising the skirt of her dress, Mrs Knox dived into her linen pouch and produced the key. Taking it, the assistant manageress hastened upstairs, closely attended by one or two of the more actively inquisitive guests, among whom was Mrs Norton. The others clustered round Mr Coulter, who was vigorously asserting that he had never seen Mrs Knox before, and insisting that, as she was undoubtedly mad, her friends ought to be wired for to remove her. Speaking to no one, Mrs Knox quietly bided her time.

During all the commotion Miss Ballengray stood aloof, smiling contemptuously. In her opinion Mrs Knox was a lunatic who ought to be under restraint. Her proud spirit was amazed that her lover should condescend to seek to vindicate himself from so preposterous a calumny.

Then the party that had gone upstairs came into view on the staircase, bearing the articles in dispute.

'You see the bag and the umbrella have my initials, C. C., on them, and in the coat-pockets you'll find communications addressed to me,' Mr Coulter made voluble explanation. 'This so-called Mrs Noakes must be one of the clever gang of thieves who have robbed so many of us guests. Once she is in custody, we'll have a chance of finding out who her accomplices are, and of recovering our belongings. I'll be precious glad to see my cheque-book again!'

Nothing succeeds like cheek. The sympathy of the company was entirely with Mr Coulter. From every side antagonistic glances were levelled at Mrs Knox. Whispers of 'Don't let her escape,' 'Telephone for the police,' were heard; but, secure in the justice of her cause, the good lady never flinched.

'Give me a grip of that coat and of that umbrella,' she demanded, spots of scarlet flaming in her cheeks. 'See! If you examine that umbrella you'll see where a wee plate has been taken off. When the umbrella was stolen there was an inscription on the plate sayin' the umbrella was the gift of Mr Cruikshank's grateful pupils.'

'Stuff and nonsense! Silly rot!' Mr Coulter ejaculated; but his manner was less assured, and he evinced no desire to disprove Mrs Knox's words.

'An' if you'll take a look at the lining of the coat you'll see where it's been mended. For Mr Cruikshank tore it the only time he had it on, and I darned it.' She was turning over the coat in quest of the place, when, quite accidentally, she made the discovery Coulter would have given his ears to avert. 'There's something hard sewed in the lining.—Here—you, miss! You see what it is,' she said, thrusting the garment into the hands of the manageress.

'Miss Anderson, I must trouble you for my property,' Mr Coulter cried excitedly, darting forward and trying to snatch the coat out of her hands. 'We have endured the insolence of this maniac long enough.'

Mrs Knox warded him off with a firm hand, and the manageress, with a whispered word to her assistant, proceeded quietly to snip the stitches with her pocket-scissors. A moment later she gave a cry of surprise, and a gasp of consternation ran through the company as she held up a slender gold chain, at the end of which hung a magnificent cross of diamonds.

'The diamond cross!' 'Lady Moffat's diamond cross!'

The visitors might be engrossed looking at the dazzling trinket, but Mrs Knox's attention never left Mr Coulter. She was just in time to prevent his stealthy attempt to escape. Through the happening of more exciting matters, the customary event of the day—the arrival of the afternoon bus from the station—had passed unnoticed, and its passengers had entered the lounge unobserved, except by Mrs Knox, who had reasons of her own for anxiously awaiting its coming.

'Here, Mr Cruikshank, that's him! That's the thief! Keep him, or he'll be off,' she cried. completely roused out of her usual calm, and Coulter found himself firmly gripped by two pairs of muscular hands—those of Mr Cruikshank, who had come in answer to Mrs Knox's telegram, and of an old pupil, with whom he had renewed acquaintance coming up in the bus. 'Mr Cruikshank, keep a tight hold of that man, an' tell these folks who he is.'

Blinking a little through his eye-glasses, Mr Cruikshank surveyed his prisoner deliberately before making pronouncement. 'He appears to me to bear a striking resemblance to a young man called Smith, who decamped from your house, Mrs Knox, with some of my property.'

'Let me go! This is all a put-up job,' Coulter blustered, struggling fiercely. 'He 's another of the gang. I can explain everything.'

'And Lady Moffat's diamond cross—can you explain it away too?' Miss Anderson inquired quietly.

'That old woman must have hid it in the coat.'

'Did she conceal these pawn-tickets there also?' the manageress asked, holding up some tell-tale slips of paper. 'Gentlemen, I must ask you to have the kindness to retain this man till the police come. I had them 'phoned for when I guessed where the guilt lay. Though, Mrs Knox, I must confess that at one moment I fancied they might be wanted for you.'

Rita Ballengray had shrunk back, and was gazing with ashen face at the fortune-hunter who had so narrowly been prevented from wrecking her life. She was trembling violently, dreading the moment when the attention of the curious might be diverted to herself, yet powerless to move from the spot, when an arm passed gently round her waist drew her back into the shadow, out of sight of the others.

'Rita, my poor, poor child,' her aunt's voice murmured.

'Oh, Aunt Alice! You here!'

'Yes, dear. I've come to take you home,' Mrs Ballengray said as she led her humbled niece upstairs. 'The car is waiting. I'll help you to pack, and we 'll leave at once.'

'How did you guess I needed you?' Rita sobbed when they had gained the shelter of her room. 'And after I had been so hateful to you and uncle yesterday! What made you come?'

'I had a telegram saying, "Your niece requires you. Come at once." I thought it must have come from you, dear.'

'No; I know nothing about it. Some angel must have sent it,' Rita said with conviction.

Meantime Mr Coulter—or Smith—stripped of his pretensions, had passed out into the night in the safe custody of the law. And Mr Cruikshank had accompanied him to the police-station to prefer the charge before returning to spend the night at the hydropathic.

Then excitement waxed higher than ever. For once in her life Mrs Knox found herself the centre of attraction. Admiring listeners hung breathlessly on her words. The most luxurious arm-chair was hers. Hers, too, the much-coveted corner by the drawing-room fire.

'Dear Mrs Knox, words cannot express what the hydro owes to your bravery in exposing that dreadful man. What further villainies you have saved us from no one will ever know,' Miss Anderson said gratefully. 'But you must be exhausted after all that strain—simply worn out. What refreshment can I offer you? Do ask for anything you fancy. The whole resources of the house are at your disposal.'

'I think,' Mrs Knox said slowly, giving utterance to the craving that had been hers ever since she left home—'I *know* I would like a good big teapot of tea all to myself!'

CHAPTER VII.—HAME 'S BEST.

MRS KNOX, still scarcely knowing whether she was standing on her head or on her heels, had at length broken away from the crowd of eager questioners and gone up to her room in search of a little quiet and seclusion, before it was time to prepare for dinner.

She was considering the advisability of lying down for a little, when a gentle knock summoned her to the door, where she found Rita's aunt waiting to speak to her.

'May I come in for a moment?' Mrs Ballengray asked in a confidential whisper. 'I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for what you have done for my niece. I know you must have sent the telegram that brought me here in time to help her in her terrible trial.' She had taken Mrs Knox's hands, and was pressing them warmly between her own. 'Rita has been well brought up. I can't understand how she could ever have been so deluded as to believe that wretch was a *gentleman!*'

'Well, he took *me* in.' Mrs Knox's tone suggested that any one who had proved astute enough to deceive *her* might quite reasonably be excused for deceiving the rest of the world.

'Heaven itself must have prompted you to send the message!' Tears of gratitude stood in Mrs Ballengray's eyes. 'Rita has a proud spirit. No one knows what rash step the poor child might have taken if she had been alone in her bitter humiliation among all those gaping people.'

'Aye. I've noticed they 're gey inquisitive mysel',' Mrs Knox agreed.

'I was out at luncheon when your wire came, but the moment I got it I motored over, and arrived here just in time to see that creature exposed. I'll take Rita home with me now: and in a few days we 'll go off to Cairo, or some bright place where everything will be new to her. Rita is young. She 'll soon get over the shock of her disillusionment.'

'I've heard there 's naething like a change for healin' a broken heart.' Mrs Knox spoke sagely. 'Though I can't say I 've ever suffered from that complaint mysel',' she added truthfully.

'We may never meet again, dear Mrs Knox, but her uncle and I will never forget what a dreadful fate you saved the poor girl from. Will you be here long?'

Mrs Knox understood the significance of the inquiry when, three days later, a handsome dressing-bag arrived for her, with the Ballen-

grays' 'grateful thanks.' As hitherto Mrs Knox's toilet appointments had been limited to a hair-brush and comb, and a tooth-brush, the uses of many of the silver fittings were unknown to her. Nevertheless, throughout the rest of her life the bag remained her proudest possession.

During the remainder of her stay at Invercairn Hydropathic Mrs Knox took precedence as a personage. Each newly arrived guest heard the tale of how the intrepid dame, single-handed, had been the means of bringing just retribution on the subtle thief who, until she came on the scene, had cleverly despoiled the visitors, and who, but for her daring intervention, would have succeeded in beguiling an heiress into a secret marriage.

When Mrs Knox, to oblige interested inquirers, was induced to relate the story of her early acquaintance with Edward Smith—*alias* Claude Coulter—she invariably prefixed her recital by saying, 'That was before I unexpectedly came into a fortune'—a casual statement which, naturally enough, gave rise to rumours of great wealth, and certainly did nothing to detract from the prevailing opinion of Mrs Knox's importance.

When the fortnight's holiday was ended, Mrs Knox resolutely turned her face homewards. She had taken her promised 'fling.' It was over, and once again the uncompromising facts of domestic life had to be encountered.

Fresh air, outdoor exercise, variety of well-cooked food, and probably lessened indulgence in tea-drinking had worked a surprising improvement in the good lady's physical appearance.

When Mirren opened the door of the flat to her aunt she instantly remarked on the difference. 'My word, aunt, but you are looking fine! Anybody would think you were ten years younger. That shows the good a change does.'

But Mrs Knox was too staggered by the altered aspect of her house even to hear what Mirren said. As if by the touch of some magic wand, cheerfulness had dispelled the accustomed gloom. In the lobby the dismal marbled wall-paper had given place to one of a soft primrose tone, which gave the effect of sunshine. The paint was fresh, and a gaily coloured rug lay on the stained boards.

In the kitchen grate a bright fire burned, lighting up the newly tinted walls and white-washed ceiling, and displaying the hues of the carpet, and of the turkey-red curtains that draped the windows and the wall-bed.

'Sirs me! but this is changed days!' ejaculated the amazed householder. 'I think I ken that carpet. What's it doin' on the kitchen floor?'

'Yes; that's the carpet out of Mr Cruikshank's parlour.—I'll no deny it; but dinna you say one word till you've seen the rest of the house,' implored Mirren. 'I took you at your word, an' I've spent some of your money. An' if you're no pleased with anything I've bought for you, Peter an' me 'll buy it back for our own house. You being away, an' no lodgers to attend to, I thought it was a grand opportunity of gettin' the house done up.'

'I 'm thinkin' it wasna oot o' the need of it,' was Mrs Knox's laconic comment. But, knowing her aunt, Mirren knew that she was pleased, and felt encouraged to go on with her record.

'When I spoke to Mr Forbes, he was quite willing to paper and paint the best rooms; and Peter and his apprentice did the rest of the house on Saturday afternoons, and o' nights.'

In the sitting-room that until lately had been occupied by Mr Cruikshank the greatest surprise awaited Mrs Knox. The appearance of the apartment was completely altered. It looked spacious and cheerily attractive. The walls were pearl-gray, the woodwork was cream enamelled, as were the new low book-shelves on either side of the fireplace. Creamy casement curtains had ousted the flabby lace ones from their time-honoured prominence. A fire was burning, and a vase of scarlet tulips decorated a table that was neatly laid for dinner.

'It's a real pity ye hadna made they reforms before Mr Cruikshank left. He 'd maybe have stopped on,' Mrs Knox remarked with grim sarcasm. 'Wha 's the dinner for?'

'It's just for Mr Cruikshank himself! That 's another surprise for you!' cried Mirren joyously. 'He came on Tuesday, and said, if his old rooms wasn't occupied, he 'd like to come back. He couldn't stand the woman at Hillhead. He said her tongue never lay. And, forby—though he never said it—I jalouse she wasn't any too honest. And when Mr Cruikshank saw how nice the rooms were since they had been done up, he said himself that he 'd pay half-a-crown a week more. And there 's an engineering student taken the back-room from next week. It looks real nice since it was toshed up a bit. And he 's willing to pay eighteenpence more than Dennis Kavanagh did. With him, and Mr Cruikshank, and your annuity, and the money lying in the bank, you 'll be real comfortable off.'

''Deed will I, an' that 's the truth,' acquiesced Mrs Knox. 'An' I 'm that obliged to you for what you 've done, an' to Peter too. An' I 'm sure'——

'Tuts! It was nothing but a pleasure,' Mirren interrupted. 'Come away ben the house. You must be wearying for a cup of tea after your journey. And I 've got real good kippers.'

'Mirren,' Mrs Knox said solemnly a little later, as she replenished her cup for the third time, 'since I left home I have travelled. I have seen the world. I don't deny but what I have learned things, an' the very first time I 'm out I 'll buy a cookery-book. But one thing I will maintain until my dying day, and that is, that "East or West, hame 's best." Aye, that 's the gospel truth, an' so it is. Aye. Imphm!'

THE KHAMSIN.

A MEMORY OF SINAI.

By J. A. NIMMO.

WE had sweltered near the Canal, and watched great steamers sail, as it seemed, over solid earth—robbing the camel of his ancient cognomen 'ship of the desert.' We had been baked in open trucks that bore us eastward, while our sun-tired eyes blinked at the endless white road shimmering beside the track—a road like a chalk line drawn across brown paper. We had trekked from railhead over wind-blown ridges and dunes of soft, yielding sand till the sun went down, and we camped dead-weary beneath the naked stars. Next morning we saw the sea.

Here at last was desert without the sense of desolation. The eye followed the flowing contours of scrub-sprinkled dunes with comfort, and, seaward, dwelt with delight on the sweep and roll of the blue Mediterranean. Dividing land and sea, like a gigantic golden scimitar, curved the yellow beach, where ten thousand children could have built sand-castles. Higher up, amid rough grasses and cacti, lurked a few tiny sea-bleached flowers.

Camp had been pitched for three days when the khamsin came. Not like the simoom, with its attendant sand-devils, which bursts howling from the desert, tearing and battering and stifling for brief minutes; but noiselessly, stealthily, the khamsin came, blowing tirelessly, ceaselessly from the south. Over leagues and leagues of red-hot sand it had blown, and its fiery breath dried the marrow in the bones and bred toxins in the blood. For hours and hours the khamsin blew. . . . .

That night a full moon showed blood-red above the desert's edge, then, lifting through noisome vapours, rose clean and white and high, flooding the world with misty light. The men lay outside their tents in strange postures, listless, breathless. A few spoke in whispers, and an officer moved from group to group, talking cheerily.

A man lay beside his corporal, staring at a black kit-bag. He nudged the other nervously.

'What 's wrong wi' that bag?' he grumbled.

'Nothing,' said the corporal. 'Don't worry, man.'

'But it 's growing bigger. It 's swelling! It 's—— Oh Lord! what 's wrong with it?'

'Don't be a fool!' said the corporal. 'Here, have a drink.' He produced his water-bottle, which contained a mere teaspoonful of tepid water. The man sucked down the last drop greedily. He had finished his own allowance hours before. The corporal rose and sat upon the bag.

'You see,' he said wearily, 'it 's only an ordinary kit-bag.'

And still the khamsin blew.

At noon next day the men lay in their tents, half-nude, waiting, waiting for the wind to change. In the corporal's tent a voice babbled.

'Rotten business soldiering. If you 're not freezing or soaking or stuck in mud, you 're roasting. Now, this hell-hot wind—it 's worse than a black sou'-easter in Algoa Bay. It 's flopped out two of the quarter guard already, and '——

'Did you hear about that chap in C Company?' broke in another voice. 'Drank sea-water last night, and went stark staring mad.'

'More fool he,' said the first voice. 'But that 's different. Now, this stinking wind—they say it lasts fifty days!—is just the thing to bring on heat-apoplexy, especially if you 're fat '——

'Aw, chuck it!' A large blotched face was raised in angry expostulation. The naked, full-fleshed torso attached poured perspiration at the movement. The man's eyes dropped, and he brushed something off his knee. Seizing a boot, he beat frenziedly at a sinuous, myriad-legged horror that squirmed in the soft sand.

The corporal, who lay near the tent door, turned. 'You 'll never kill it that way,' he said.

The fat man seized a second boot, and gleefully crushed the writhing centipede between the two iron-shod heels. The others, roused from stupor, sank back, and the corporal turned again to the tent door. His eyes were fixed eagerly on a tiny yellow flag marking the camp boundary. For hours it had flown steadily seaward. Now it drooped.

Something in his tense attitude communicated itself to the men; something, too, in the air moved them—a hint of imminent change. The corporal's eyes never left the flag. Weakly it stirred and sank. Again it stirred, fluttered impotently, and sank. A long, long pause; and then it rose and flew straight inland. On his face the corporal felt the cool, salt breeze that blows from the sea.

'Boys,' he shouted joyfully, 'the wind 's changed!'

The khamsin had passed.

[*Christmas Number.*

THE FALL TRIUMPHANT.

By C. L. M. BROWN.

I.

NONE of us is perfect; even the best and most strictly disciplined amongst us have, somewhere hidden away, the secret failing, the little ewe-lamb of guilt which, in spite of our strong resolutions, we know we cherish and admire above all our fleecy flock of virtues. Such is our poor human nature; and so it was with the Rev. Peter Pomeroy Prendergast.

Peter Pomeroy was assistant curate at the parish church of Gessingham, and he was exceedingly and deservedly popular. Gessingham is a small town in a secluded district of the south of England, and its society is the most eternly respectable and resolutely select to be found on this side eternity, I am tempted to think. As is usually the case, man being by nature a timorous biped, by far the greater proportion of people who mattered—certainly the dominating element of Gessingham society—were ladies. Moreover, they were ladies who prided themselves on their *tone;* none of the corrupting ideas of modern fashion were permitted to find a home in the untainted drawing-rooms of Gessingham. London and kindred cities, with their short skirts and their cigarette-smoking viragoes, might sink to the level of Nineveh and Babylon of old; but here, thank Heaven! they knew what became a lady and what did not. True it is that Mrs Fenton, whose husband was an architect, and whose second cousin had tried to write a play, once began a novel by Ouida, but she had not finished it. No, she had burned it at the third chapter. Without exaggeration it may be said that the primrose paths of folly did not lead to the carriage-drives of Gessingham.

'Nonsense!' you may say. 'All that is done with long ago; it vanished with the last decade and the coming of rag-time and the tango, those final demolishers of the Victorian tradition. There are no places left now like the one you describe.' To which I merely reply, 'Are there *not?*'

II.

Hither, aged twenty-five, came the Rev. Peter Pomeroy Prendergast, and Gessingham took him to its bosom and fed him on China tea and toasted scones. He became the pet of Mrs Burrage-Gracey, the rector's wife and uncrowned queen of Gessingham; the two Misses Gardiner, antique, almost grotesque, but *so* lady-like, doted upon him; homely maidens approaching the still waters of forty regarded their fair selves in the flattering mirrors of hope, and dreamed wild dreams. Peter Pomeroy was the acknowledged darling of the drawing-room, the idol of the at-home.

For one thing, men were scarce in Gessingham—young ones, that is. Of course, there were a certain number of husbands about, but a real untamed man, unbranded by the matrimonial iron, was something of an event. The rising male generation of Gessingham had a lamentable habit of quitting the calm security of its confines as they came to manhood, and going forth after the fleshpots of the world. One supposes it was the call of the wild. But Peter Pomeroy was a charming young man; he had a handsome boyish face, with frank laughing eyes and a smile that would have captivated a cab-driver, and his manner was irresistible. Gessingham never put up a fight at all.

By the time that he had worn the cloth a year, Peter had become so imbued with the ideas and the Puritan spirit of Gessingham that he almost forgot that he had ever known any others. His was an impressionable nature, quick to absorb the particular atmosphere in which he found himself, and it was very easy to fall in with and gradually assume the opinions of the community. There was a time—and that not long past—when he would have considered the prejudices of Gessingham as more than absurd; but, after all, he was ordained now, and it made a difference. Perhaps the austere views held by the ladies of the town were the views he really ought to hold. Perhaps that mode of life which he had formerly deemed harmless and attractive was unfit for decent people. At least, he persuaded himself, this was the view that as a clergyman he ought to adopt. It was certainly the view that he allowed Gessingham to credit him with.

III.

'But,' exclaims the shrewd and experienced reader, 'what about that little ewe-lamb of guilt or whatever you called it? What about that, pray?'

I was just coming to that.

To look too penetratingly into the past of any human being, even a young clergyman, is a performance as indecent as it is hazardous. Why should the mists of the morning be suffered to mar the cloudless serenity of the noon? And again, why?

Thus you must pardon me if, to gratify the improper curiosity of the above-mentioned reader, and also to make more clear what follows hereafter, I disclose one little flaw, if such it can be called, in the otherwise faultless demeanour

of the Rev. Peter Pomeroy. Briefly, it was a fatal susceptibility to the charms of feminine beauty. There was something in the eye of a pretty girl that could shatter in an instant the solid shield of his self-content and set his heart a-dancing to the delicious music of romance. In his younger days it had enticed him into many a fond flirtation, and though for the past year the restless little demon had slumbered within him, lulled by the somnolent atmosphere of Gessingham, he knew that it was not dead; more than once he had felt it stir in its sleep. The chance sight of a soft curving cheek glimpsed beneath a passing hat-brim, the swift vision of two warm red lips parted in an eager smile, were enough even now to set his pulses tingling and recall, deep within him, the echo of that old seductive music. If he had been born in the Middle Ages, Peter would not have sought the cloister; he would have been a troubadour. That is the truth of the matter.

Of course, he knew that all this was wrong now, and that he ought to trample it ruthlessly underfoot, grind it without remorse into the dull gray powder of the past; but somehow he couldn't. While realising that what had been harmless, if at times embarrassing, in an undergraduate was a distinct falling from grace in a cleric, he had not the heart to exterminate utterly this lawless (but withal so fragrant) little wild-flower of romance. At the bottom of his heart he loved it, and he knew it.

IV.

But it was with a mind untroubled by thoughts of this kind that Peter entered the rose-burdened porch of Gessingham Rectory and knocked robustly at the door. The rector's wife was giving a tea-party, with croquet on the lawn for the more athletic of the guests, and every one who counted at all in the Gessingham hierarchy was to be present. The Misses Gardiner, in large, stiff lace collars which gave them a startling resemblance to Tenniel's illustration of the Unicorn in *Through the Looking-Glass;* Mrs Stanton, the bank-manager's wife; the Misses Tree, whom the coming of Peter had roused from the lethargy of maiden despair; and many another worshipper at the shrine of good manners whom it is unnecessary to name, were already being entertained in the drawing-room when Peter entered.

'Ah, here is Mr Prendergast!' cried Mrs Burrage-Gracey, swishing forward to greet him. 'And how do you do? What a glorious afternoon! And did you get the strawberries safely? I do hope they were not squashed—the maids are so careless nowadays, one cannot trust them an instant out of one's sight.'

Peter gave the required assurances, and plunged with zest into the pleasures of the afternoon. He was immediately captured by the Misses Tree.

'And how are the guinea-pigs, Miss Theodora?' he inquired of the younger of the twain.

'Oh, the little dears,' exclaimed the damsel, 'they are so charming! They squeak and run around in the prettiest manner.—Do they not, Ursula?'

'Yes; and jump up and down, too,' added the elder Miss Tree. 'Why, the little one with the pink spot on its nose took a piece of groundsel out of my hand this morning!'

Above the chatter of the two maidens Peter heard the voice of Mrs Burrage-Gracey declaiming to Mrs Fenton. 'Such *terrible* people, my dear . . . at "The Walnuts" . . . perfectly *impossible*. . . . My husband called . . . said they did not usually attend church . . . probably agnostics . . . or artists. . . . I shall not think of calling.' . . . .

'We have named the brown-and-white one Francis, after St Francis of Assisi. Ursula thought it was irreverent, perhaps; but he is such a sweet little thing, I am sure St Francis wouldn't mind. And he squeaks *so* prettily,' said Miss Theodora; and Peter lost the remainder of Mrs Burrage-Gracey's harangue.

V.

Later in the afternoon, while recuperating after an energetic bout of croquet, Peter Pomeroy had an opportunity of speaking to the rector's wife. 'Did I hear you say that some new people are come to "The Walnuts"?' he inquired.

'Oh yes; have you not heard?' replied Mrs Burrage-Gracey eagerly. 'Some really terrible people from London named Gordon, I believe. A mother and son and two daughters; and I hear that all three of the women *smoke*, though I cannot believe it possible. But it is perfectly true that one of the daughters rode up the High Street on horseback sitting astride, like a jockey. Simply outrageous!'

'Dear me,' observed Peter, 'how very distressing! Have you called yet?'

'No, decidedly not,' snorted Mrs Burrage-Gracey; 'nor do I intend to do so. The rector has been, of course, but they practically told him that they never went inside a church. I trust Gessingham will entirely ignore them. Fancy dear Miss Gardiner going to such a house—they would probably offer her a cigar! There will be no need for you to call, Mr Prendergast; they are obviously people who have no respect for the clergy. I should not be surprised if they turn out to be actors, or something like that.'

'Most unfortunate,' said the Rev. Peter. 'Perhaps they will not stay long when they discover how little we approve of them.'

'I sincerely hope not,' declared Mrs Burrage-Gracey. 'I shall feel most uneasy whilst such a corrupting influence is in our midst. The rector and I have always endeavoured to main-

tain the moral tone of Gessingham at a high level, and I am sure a family of this type can do nothing but harm in the parish.'

'To be sure,' agreed Peter, rising to renew the conflict.

'Quite an amusing situation,' he said to himself as he walked home after the company had dispersed. But exactly how amusing he had yet to learn.

The subject was again brought to Peter's notice the following morning, when Mrs Blessing, his landlady, waxed indignant over the behaviour of Gessingham's new residents. According to reliable reports, the 'goings-on' at 'The Walnuts' were of a truly shocking description.

'If poor old Mr Green, as "The Walnuts" used to belong to, could but hear the dancin' and shoutin' and pianner-playin' that goes on of a night-time, he 'd get up out of his grave and give 'em notice.' Mrs Blessing departed, brandishing the marmalade-pot.

VI.

On his way back from the daily service Peter walked through the High Street, and here it was that the bolt descended from the blue. He was standing a moment to examine some second-hand books in a shop window, when a robust and strangely familiar voice smote his ears.

'By all that 's unholy,' it roared, 'if it isn't old P. P. P.!' and the next moment something in the nature of a sledge-hammer struck him upon the shoulder, propelling him forward almost to his knees. 'How are you, you old buccaneer?' added the voice enthusiastically.

Recovering himself, the Rev. Peter Pomeroy Prendergast turned and faced his assailant. Regarding him delightedly through a pair of large spectacles was a huge young man of about his own age. He was bareheaded, and wore an old brown-velvet jacket of the type frequently affected by artists with a Bohemian tendency; on his feet were a pair of ancient red carpet slippers, the heels of which flapped dismally at every step.

'Good heavens, Dick Gordon!' gasped Peter, and the world was chaos.

The young man beamed madly. 'Well,' he cried, 'fancy meeting you here of all places! Thank Heaven, then, we are still in the twentieth century! I began to think we 'd slipped back into the Middle Ages, or the Old Testament, or somewhere equally morbid. By Jove, and a parson, too! I say, you don't half look a sight —ha-ha-ha!'

Peter coloured. 'Don't be an ass, Gordon,' he said; 'you always knew I was going to be ordained.'

'Sorry, old man,' replied the other heartily— 'only my joke; but I can't imagine you like this yet. Come on—which way are you going? Let 's have a talk about old Cambridge days. Remember when we kept together in Fitzbilly Street? What? I say, it 's fine meeting you again, you old toreador.' He seized the Rev. Peter by the arm and marched him energetically down the High Street, talking volubly the while in his rich resonant voice.

VII.

Too dazed to resist, Peter kept pace with his loquacious friend, striving meanwhile to grasp fully the situation and its probable consequences. Here was Dick Gordon, his old 'varsity companion, reappearing into his new Gessingham life. That in itself was nothing terrible, had it not been for Dick's reputation. Already, as one might say, he and his were proscribed in the town as notorious evil-livers. 'I trust,' Mrs Burrage-Gracey had said, 'Gessingham will entirely ignore them.' How could he possibly ignore old Dick Gordon? Could he possibly intimate to Dick that he was no longer a desirable person to associate with? Must he be frigidly polite and let it go at that? *Did he want to let it go at that?* Who was Mrs Burrage-Gracey, after all, to declare people impossible? It was a beastly predicament, though.

'Whatever made you come to a place like this?' he inquired as they progressed down the High Street, where the unaccustomed garb of his friend was attracting no small amount of attention. Several small boys were following them at a respectful distance.

'Had to,' replied the other disjointedly. 'My mother . . . doctor's orders . . . London killing her . . . quiet neighbourhood . . . relaxing air . . . usual rigmarole, you know. Of course, *I* won't live here—just down for a month or so to see things all square for the girls. By the way, were you going anywhere just now?'

'No, no. I've finished for the day,' replied Peter a little breathlessly.

'Good! You must come along'——

He was interrupted by Peter suddenly clutching his arm in a frenzied grasp. Just ahead, and approaching them, Peter had descried the majestic figure of the rector's lady. What was he to do? How dare he introduce Dick in his remarkable get-up as his friend Gordon of 'The Walnuts'? Panic seized him, and with an excited cry he dragged his companion into the nearest shop, which was a greengrocer's.

'Hello! something stung you,' exclaimed Gordon in surprise; 'or are you after the Brussels-sprouts?'

'Mrs Burrage-Gracey,' gasped Peter wildly, 'the rector's wife!'

'Well, what about her?' replied the other, mystified by this strange behaviour. 'Has she

got her muzzle off, or do you owe her some money?'

'No, no, nothing like that; but I particularly want her not to see me—it's a whim of mine, that's all.'

'You'd better lie down in that corner and cover yourself up with cabbages,' suggested his friend. 'She'll never think of looking for a curate under a cabbage-heap.'

'Thank goodness, she's gone by!' said Peter with a gasp of relief. 'Lucky thing she's near-sighted. My word, it was a close shave!'

At that moment the shopkeeper entered from the rear of his premises. 'Ah, good-morning, Mr Prendergast,' he exclaimed pleasantly, with a glance at the curate's strange companion. 'What a beautiful morning! What may I have the pleasure of getting you?'

'Oh, nothing, nothing; we just popped in to shelter—er—that is, my friend—er—have you any Brazilian nuts, Mr Higgs?'

'I'm afraid not, sir,' replied the greengrocer; 'they're out of season just now, Brazils is.'

'Dear, dear! I wanted some for a sick child,' exclaimed the now thoroughly perturbed Peter. 'I must try elsewhere. Good-morning, Mr Higgs;' and he hurried his companion out of the shop.

'Look here, P. P. P.,' said Gordon when they were once more outside, 'if you were not an ecclesiastic, I should ask you very sternly where you've been spending the morning.'

'Don't be absurd, Dick,' said Peter, wiping his streaming forehead. 'I had a particular reason for not wanting to see Mrs Burrage-Gracey this morning. You don't understand.'

'I certainly don't,' replied Dick. 'Anyway, I'm deuced glad to see you again, you old brigand'—he beamed affectionately through his glasses. 'Come on, you must see the mater and the girls. They'll be no end braced to meet a real live individual again after a week among the natives.'

'I really can't now,' said Peter hastily. 'I'm in a terrible hurry.'

'But I thought you said'——

'I know—I've just remembered an important engagement—vestry meeting, you know—forgot all about it.' He consulted his watch with a feverish air.

'Come this afternoon, then. You know where our wigwam is. Don't forget; we'll be expecting you—fatted calf and all that sort of thing.'

'I'll be delighted,' said Peter. 'Good-bye; good-bye.'

'Cheerio, old sportsman. Come as early as you can; we don't worry about polite hours or any rot like that.'

Peter hurried away, and fled for the blessed seclusion of his lodgings. He wanted to think.

VIII.

Peter did not eat a hearty lunch; he was feeling upset. He wanted to get firmly astride the dilemma that had suddenly presented itself before him, to settle definitely his course of future action. On the one hand there was Dick Gordon—Dick, the dancer of irresponsible jigs upon the tin-roof of life, the most generous of friends and best of good fellows, but hopelessly incapable of realising what was and what was not a fit line of conduct for a clergyman to follow; on the other there was Mrs Burrage-Gracey and all she stood for—the esteem of the parishioners, the austere outlook on life which for the past twelve months he had made his own, even the dignity of his calling. Conscience bade him pay merely a formal visit to the Gordons and privately intimate to Dick that he couldn't expect him to be quite the same as in the good old past; that there were the prejudices of the town to consider; that he himself, indeed, had come to look on things in a somewhat more sober light than Cambridge had been wont to shed. Would Dick be hurt, he wondered, or would he merely roar with laughter and throw a cushion at him? He would certainly not understand. And, again, was he sure of his own attitude? Did he truly in his inmost self disapprove of Dick, or was he being blinded by the absurdly conventional atmosphere through which he had lately been viewing the world? There was no harm in Dick Gordon; he was as good as Mrs Burrage-Gracey any day. But, in the present situation, for him, a clergyman, openly to identify himself with the discredited 'Walnuts' meant not only social ruin, but probably public disgrace as well. If the rector himself did not take drastic action, people would write to the bishop. It was horrible.

Peter at length set out to pay his promised visit to 'The Walnuts' with a strong determination to maintain that dignified attitude which Gessingham required of its spiritual pastors, and for the rest to trust to fate. Unhappily, fate was to prove unworthy of his trust.

As he entered the gate of 'The Walnuts' he beheld Dick Gordon in his shirt-sleeves on the lawn, apparently engaged in a desperate struggle with a girl of about sixteen, whose pigtail had come unfurled and flew disorderly in the breeze. On seeing him approach they disentangled themselves, and Dick hurried to meet him, beaming joyously.

'Here you are at last,' he boomed. 'We've been expecting you this last hour. This is my kid sister, Madge. Just teaching her ju-jitsu—frightfully handy thing to know. Ought to take it up yourself—jolly useful if you had an obstreperous baby to christen! What?'

Peter shook hands with Madge, a pleasant, though at present rather dishevelled, schoolgirl

with a smile that was a diminutive feminine edition of her brother's colossal grin.

'And what do you think of Gessingham?' he asked in his best parochial manner.

'Well, nothing spesh,' answered the girl, endeavouring to capture an elusive coil of hair; 'rather a dull hole, don't you think?'

'You certainly can't compare it with the West End of London for gaiety,' admitted Peter with a smile.

'Come on,' broke in Dick, 'let's go and find the mater and Di;' and he led the way towards the house, flinging inconsequent remarks over his shoulder as he went.

IX.

As they approached the front-door a girl came out to meet them. She was perhaps twenty years of age and of medium height, with a small oval face and a largess of gold-brown curls clustering about her forehead. At the first glance Peter saw she was exceedingly pretty.

'Here we are, Di,' called out Dick Gordon. 'Here's P. P. P. at last.—My sister Diana,' he added over his shoulder for Peter's benefit.

The moment their eyes met, Peter knew he was lost—utterly, irrevocably. Blue eyes they were, blue as the waters of a northern sea, and in their lurking depths he read his fate more clearly than ever did clairvoyant in limpid crystal. That detestable weed of romance blossomed forthright in his heart, and its intoxicating sweetness filled him with sudden joy.

'How do you do?' he said.

'Good-afternoon, Mr Prendergast,' replied his destroyer. 'Dick told us he had met you in the town this morning. We are so glad—we know scarcely any one here. To tell the truth, I think the people are afraid of us; and you cannot wonder at it, the way my brother goes about.—Dick, why *can't* you put your boots on?'

'Too tired,' murmured Dick.

'Yes, I am afraid you will find Gessingham rather quiet after London,' said Peter; 'but the people are really very likeable when one gets to know them. They are a little old-world, that is all.'

'Old-world be darned!' ejaculated Dick; 'absolute barbarians, you mean. Why'——

'Dick!' exclaimed his sister with a swift glance at Peter.

'What's wrong, Di?' said he in surprise. 'Oh—ha, ha, don't be absurd! P. P. isn't one of that sort. Why, I've heard him pass remarks that you could toast muffins on, before now.'

'Yes; but you forget Mr Prendergast is a clergyman now, and probably doesn't approve of your disgraceful ways. You will have to be on your best behaviour unless you want to drive him away from "The Walnuts" altogether. We all shall.'

Was it Peter's overstrained imagination, or did he actually detect a subtle note of provocation in the girl's tone?

'I'm afraid I gave your brother up for lost long ago, Miss Gordon,' he remarked. 'But perhaps I may have one more try to reclaim him, if you'll promise to help me.'

'I don't think I should be of very much help,' said Diana. 'I'm so deep in the toils of sin myself.'

X.

They entered the house, and Peter was introduced to Mrs Gordon, a genial but somewhat worn-looking old lady, who was seated in an arm-chair smoking a cigarette.

'Excuse me for not rising, Mr Prendergast,' she said, 'but I'm in the hands of the doctor—my terrible children are steadily driving me to an early grave. I hope you won't be too shocked at my smoking; it is the one solace a poor lone widow woman has left.'

A fleeting vision of Mrs Burrage-Gracey flashed through Peter's mind as he replied with suitable gallantry. Could she but see him now—his feet of clay all bare. . . .

'May I have one of your cigarettes, mother?' remarked Diana, helping herself. 'Mine are all upstairs.—Mr Prendergast, will it drive you right away from "The Walnuts" if I smoke too? Will you dash out at the first puff, and never come near us again? I'll throw it into the fireplace if you only say the word.'

For reply Peter struck a match.

'Come into the studio,' said Dick. 'I want to show you a drawing of mine—rather great, I think, but nobody else does.'

They adjourned to the studio, a room where confusion reigned in triumphant disorder, and viewed the work of the artist.

'The apotheosis of beauty in form,' cried he, holding up a pencil drawing of a female figure standing on tiptoe; '"Eve Plucking the Apple." And that little beast Madge had the audacity to say it looked like a Congo native hanging to a tram strap! It's always that way with genius.' He skimmed the apotheosis of beauty in form gracefully into a distant corner of the studio. 'Phew!' he went on, 'it's abominably hot. Did they send that case of soda-water I ordered, Di? I could mop up a brewery.—What is it, P. P.—Scotch or Irish?'

For twelve long months no intoxicating liquor had passed Peter's lips; he was secretary of the Gessingham Temperance Society and Band of Hope.

'I don't know—I—er—in fact'——

'Perhaps Mr Prendergast doesn't like whisky,' said Diana quickly.

'Oh, doesn't he just?' bellowed Dick. 'I know Peter better than that.'

'But you don't realise Mr Prendergast is a clergyman now'——

'Scotch, please,' interposed Peter decisively.

XI.

Dick departed, and Peter and Diana were left together.

'So you don't care for Gessingham, Miss Gordon?' said he.

'Not for the town itself,' she answered. 'I'm afraid it is too respectable for such a disgraceful family as ours. But the country around is delightful. There is a little wood just off the main road, perfectly wild and wonderful. I go there nearly every morning to paint—I'm doing a water-colour of the church and town as you see them through the trees. I love the country, although it disapproves of me.'

'Do you mean the Maddeston road?' inquired Peter.

'I believe it is—the one with the oak-trees on each side.'

'Yes, that's it,' said Peter. 'But are you not nervous about going out into the country alone—with all the bulls and things about?'

Diana laughed. 'Gracious, no!' she said. 'Why, I don't believe the wildest of Gessingham bulls would risk its respectability by venturing into the same field as any one from "The Walnuts." You have no idea what the neighbourhood thinks of us. I quite expect you will shun us like the plague when you hear what fearful people we are.'

'On the contrary,' smiled Peter, 'my duty will compel me to take you all under my especial care.'

Dick returned, bearing a whisky-bottle and a siphon of soda. 'Well, P. P.,' he roared jovially, 'and how do you like parsonical life? Bit odd at first, wasn't it?'

'I get on very well, thanks,' replied Peter. 'The people here are very kind to me, all of them.'

'You poor old devil!' groaned Dick. 'Don't they drive you into a positive delirium tremens of boredom? Do you never have a mad impulse to rush out into the night and sow a wild oat?'

'Don't be an idiot, Dick,' said Peter. 'You don't realise the position.'

'Never mind,' cried the burly artist; 'things are going to be changed in Gessingham. We'll wake 'em up somewhat, you and I. We'll cause a regular ethical earthquake. By Jove'——

'Dick,' declared Peter solemnly as he drained his glass, 'if you don't shut up I'll punch your great idiotic head.'

It was several hours later that Peter at length left 'The Walnuts;' and as he came out of the gate with Dick, still in his slippers, gripping him affectionately by the arm, the elder Miss Gardiner was passing by on the other side.

Peter fell back to earth with a hard, uncomfortable bump.

XII.

Gessingham was pained—pained and grieved. At first it had been merely surprised, and perhaps just a trifle shocked, that the Rev. Peter Prendergast should be seen arm-in-arm with that awful young man from 'The Walnuts,' who appeared in the town in carpet slippers, and an alarming brown-velvet jacket that seemed somehow of itself to diffuse a vague halo of immorality. When it learned that they had been acquainted at college, Gessingham breathed freely again. Naturally he had been obliged to call, and no doubt he had not wished to walk arm-in-arm down the road with that impossible youth in carpet slippers. But the relief was short-lived. It was observed with astonishment and horror that the Rev. Peter frequented 'The Walnuts,' and the young man of the indecent attire was seen entering his rooms at all hours of the day and night. Worst of all, Peter had declined an afternoon croquet-party at Mrs Fenton's, and was afterwards reported to have been seen rushing wildly round the lawn at 'The Walnuts' in pursuit of one of its cigarette-smoking women, who was wearing his clerical hat and emitting loud shrieks of disgraceful laughter. This, in the elegant phrase of our stylists, put the tin hat on it.

'It is a very shocking thing,' said Mrs Burrage-Gracey when she called on the Misses Gardiner the day following this outrage. 'Of course, one cannot exonerate Mr Prendergast, but I really think he is more to be pitied than blamed. Those fearful people have dragged the poor lad down.'

'Indeed, how wicked!' exclaimed Miss Gardiner. 'I feel truly sorry for poor Mr Prendergast; he was such a dear, nice boy.'

'I wonder if ever he thinks of that beautiful sermon he once preached about Satan, invisible as the winds, whispering his temptations into our ears?' added her sister. 'Alas that such ungodly folk should come to disturb our happy parish!'

'Have you spoken to him about it?' inquired Miss Gardiner.

'Yes; both the rector and myself have spoken as strongly as possible on the subject, but his attitude is most strange. When I pointed out the improper character of these people, he seemed unable or unwilling to accept my meaning. He almost went so far as to suggest that I had been at fault in condemning them from the very first as I did, and refusing to call upon Mrs Gordon. Of course, it is those girls that have turned his head. Only think of it—a curate of Gessingham running round a lawn in pursuit of a shrieking young woman! However is it going to end?'

Miss Julia Gardiner leaned forward. 'Did—did he *catch* her?' she asked in a tremulous whisper.

'*She* would see to that,' snapped Mrs Burrage-Gracey—'shameless minx! And a mere child,

too, I am told. Imagine dear Miss Theodora Tree allowing herself to be pursued over lawns by a man! Oh, my dear, it is a most painful situation.'

'What depravity!' sighed Miss Gardiner.

XIII.

The change in the attitude of his Gessingham friends was quickly felt by Peter, and it touched him acutely. It was as if a biting frost had of a sudden chilled the warm glow of a July afternoon, and he was cold to the bone. He knew they were disappointed in him; that they had been fond of him, and were grieved at what they believed to be his danger. This hurt him more than their disapproval. Once again he began to have doubts as to whether they were not right, after all: was he indeed blindly treading the path to destruction? *Facilis descensus Averni* —easy indeed, and, oh! most sweet. For Peter was in the toils. Had it been only Dick, and a choice between Dick's ideas of existence and Mrs Burrage-Gracey's, he would have closed the door on his folly and returned repentant to the fold of grace and the smiles of the Misses Tree. But there was Diana—Diana's eyes of blue, Diana's gold-brown hair, Diana's soft-toned, madly provocative voice. At times he fancied that, while the rest of the Gordon family were blissfully ignorant of his predicament, she was watching him all the time; luring him on, away from safety, away from the calm haven of Mrs Burrage-Gracey's drawing-room, out into the sparkling open seas of unknown hazard. Yet he followed her—against his better judgment, perhaps, but with a song in his heart for all that.

XIV.

A more attractive morning for a country walk could not have been desired than that on which Peter left his lodgings and sought the oak-embowered pleasance of the Maddeston road; and it was a very charming direction to choose for a morning stroll. But it was neither bright sun nor leafy shade that tempted Peter forth—you know the real reason as well as I do. It was Diana, painting in the quiet seclusion of her 'wild and wonderful' wood—Diana, as fair as her chaste namesake of the skies, whom Gessingham regarded as a veritable agent of the devil.

Climbing the gate that led off from the road, Peter entered the little coppice. He soon saw her, seated on a camp-stool before her easel, intent on her work. Her hat was thrown off, and the sun, piercing the chequered shade of a silver birch, danced over her hair and smooth curving cheek. Truly the Devil employs comely agents for his unholy enterprises.

'Good-morning,' said Peter, pushing aside the branches that had shielded his approach, and stepping out into the little clearing where she sat.

Diana looked round with a little start. 'Good gracious, Peter!' she exclaimed; 'however did you get here?'

They had quickly fallen into the more familiar mode of address—formalities of any kind did not survive long in the Gordon family circle.

'You'd never guess,' he replied, smiling. 'I walked. As a matter of fact, I was just taking a stroll along the road there, and I remembered your saying you sometimes came here to work; so I just hopped across to see if you were here this morning. I hope I'm not interrupting you?'

'No, rather not,' replied Diana, laying aside her brush and palette. 'As a matter of fact, I was just wishing I had some one to talk to—can't get going at all to-day. And how is the parish progressing?'

'Much as usual,' quoth Peter. 'Hang the parish, anyway!' He threw himself down on the long grass and took out his cigarette-case. 'Smoke?' he inquired, extending it.

'Thanks,' said Diana, accepting. 'You know, Peter, it is very, very wrong of you to encourage me in vice like this. How can we frail creatures hope to conform to the standards of Gessingham propriety if the very people who ought to guide us aright tempt us to evil-doing?' She glanced at him in mock reproof.

'You know perfectly well that there is not the slightest harm in you or anybody else smoking,' replied Peter with almost unnecessary warmth. 'You are always teasing me about that kind of thing, as though I were a Mrs Grundy, and you know quite well I'm nothing of the sort.'

'I don't, Peter,' she answered, regarding him intently through the wreaths of smoke; 'and you are not certain of it yourself—now confess.'

'Rubbish!' spluttered Peter uncomfortably. 'Of course, I have to remember I'm a clergyman. I can't be quite as careless of propriety as—as Dick, for example; but I'm not a fool with it—at least, I hope not.'

'Listen,' said Diana. 'You are in an awkward position—no, don't interrupt, and don't get angry—you ought not to have anything to do with us, and you know it. We're social and moral outlaws here, and you are one of the pillars of respectable society. It is only your loyalty to Dick, because you were old friends at Cambridge, and your shrinking from hurting his feelings, that prevents you from cutting us altogether, as you should. And then—perhaps the bit hasn't quite ceased to chafe yet.'

'So you think it is only my friendship for—Dick, do you?' said Peter slowly.

Diana avoided his gaze with some hesitation. 'You admit I'm right, don't you?' she replied.

'No,' said Peter—'at least, not entirely. I admit I am in rather a difficult position because the people here are so extremely narrow and prejudiced in their old-fashioned ideas; but I don't like what you said about the bit chafing.

If you mean that I'm sorry I became a parson, you're wrong altogether.' He spoke with some heat.

'I didn't mean that,' she answered; 'I only meant—oh, I don't know what I meant. Anyhow, I think it is very nice of you to come and see us, Peter, and not leave us all alone. I would like you to know I think that.'

'Very self-sacrificing on my part, isn't it?' exclaimed Peter. 'I come because—because I want to. I—I hoped you might have guessed that, Di.'

'Oh!' said Diana uneasily.

XV.

For some reason Diana Gordon hastened to change the subject. 'I say, we had a terrible affair on Sunday; nearly a riot. Madge and Dick were practising that screw service on the lawn in the afternoon and kicking up a bit of a row, and the old fellow who lives opposite came across and asked to see mother. Mother turned him over to Dick, who promptly asked him to make a four. That did it, of course. He called Dick an unprincipled young blackguard; and Dick told him that no gentleman would stand on a tennis-court with hard-heeled boots the size of his. It was awful; we thought he was going to have a fit!'

Peter's heart sank. 'It will cause a terrible scandal in Gessingham,' he said gravely. 'It would be Mr Wilton; he's vicar's warden, and frightfully strict about Sabbath observance. Why couldn't Dick have apologised and tried to smooth him down? He's quite a harmless old chap, really; I get on very well with him.'

'Yes; but you know what Dick is,' said Diana, rising and gathering her belongings. 'I must be going home now. I'm going across the fields—— No, you can't carry anything, thank you. You must go and finish your walk. I'm not in the least nervous of bulls. Why, I killed a spider last night with quite a short stick! I'm a bit of an Amazon, you know. Good-bye.' She plunged through the trees, turning to wave her hand as she climbed the stile leading to the footpath through the fields. Peter raised his clerical hat.

He returned home slowly by the road, thinking. He had to confess to himself that he was horribly in love with Diana—'over both ears and then some,' as Dick would have put it. But she would never, never marry him—a parson. He allowed himself no illusion on that point. It was not the sort of life for a girl like her. She liked him, perhaps—probably he amused her. . . . 'I won't make an ass of myself, anyway,' he muttered grimly. He felt very desolate.

In his rooms he found a note awaiting him from Mrs Burrage-Gracey. 'Dear Mr Prendergast,' it said, 'will you please come and see me immediately? I have a matter of great importance to talk over with you. — Your sincere well-wisher,

'Millicent Burrage-Gracey.'

'"Your sincere well-wisher"!' repeated Peter, dropping into an arm-chair. 'Now for it!'

XVI.

'Yes,' said Mrs Burrage-Gracey, 'the rector has been called away suddenly, and he has left the matter in my hands—he felt that delay was impossible. I think you will see that yourself, Mr Prendergast. I do not wish to censure your conduct; I will not lay stress on the amount of anxiety and, in my own case at least, of grief you have caused to us who have thought of you so highly. Nor will I discuss the tenants of "The Walnuts," since you have chosen to make them your friends. I think the position is clear. It is enough to say that they have openly and publicly defied every sense of decency and proper conduct by playing tennis on Sunday—I will not inquire whether you were aware of this before—I sincerely trust not—and the rector has decided that it is impossible for a curate of the parish church to associate with them further. The matter was brought to his notice by the churchwardens, who expressed very strong views on the subject. It remains, then, for you, Mr Prendergast, to decide whether you shall relinquish your position here amongst us, or refrain in future from any relations with the Gordons at "The Walnuts." I think you yourself will agree that no middle course is possible.' Mrs Burrage-Gracey ceased, and toyed nervously with a knitting-needle.

Peter sat silent, his gaze fixed steadily on the carpet.

'I suppose you are right,' he said at length. 'I suppose I have been a fool.'

'I am very pleased to hear you say that,' observed Mrs Burrage-Gracey. 'I think you will make the right, the only possible, decision.'

Peter clasped and unclasped his hands. 'I should like a few moments to consider the matter,' he said.

'I have no desire to hurry you, Mr Prendergast,' she replied, 'but I cannot see that much consideration is necessary. The issue is quite clear—the old, old issue of right and wrong, of good and evil. I will return in a short while.' She rose and left Peter alone.

He saw that he must give in: there was no alternative. It was not as though there was any hope of his winning Diana; with that hope he would have laughed to scorn all the rectors in Great Britain and all their wives. But he had to lose Diana either way. Yes, he would give in—crush for ever under the hobnail of duty that cherished little flower of romance which had even now opened to glorious bloom in the heart of him. This should be the last rose of summer in all verity; henceforth the strait and narrow way.

[*Christmas Number.*

'When does the rector return?' he asked as Mrs Burrage-Gracey re-entered the room.

'To-morrow evening,' she replied.

'I will write to him,' said Peter, 'and I think I can promise that in future Gessingham shall have no occasion to find my conduct at fault. To-morrow morning I will call at "The Walnuts" and acquaint the Gordons of my resolve. I should go this afternoon, but I am due at Mrs Tomlin's for tennis.'

'I shall be there myself,' said Mrs Burrage-Gracey, smiling joyfully. 'I am so glad you have at last seen the folly of your recent actions, Mr Prendergast — I have been very anxious on your account. However, that is all of the past; we will mention it no more.'

As Peter left the Rectory and retraced his steps homeward, it seemed as though the lamp of all joy had been extinguished within him. Ahead all was dull, colourless, uninspiring; and behind him stood Diana, in whose eyes he had glimpsed for a moment the meaning of life. 'I was bound to lose her, anyway,' he murmured to himself; 'it is just as well to happen now.'

Poor Peter!

XVII.

The Tomlins' tennis-party was in full swing. It was a gathering of well-contented folk, and there was a touch almost of gaiety in the air. Mrs Burrage-Gracey had lost no time in whispering abroad the news of Peter's redemption, and it came as a great relief to all. Miss Ursula Tree was twice heard to laugh with almost girlish abandon, and the Misses Gardiner smiled gently from their wicker chairs in the shade. Every one greeted Peter most effusively; it was impossible for them to hide their delight at welcoming him back to the fold. 'Quite like the prodigal son of old, is it not?' whispered the elder Miss Gardiner to her neighbour. 'I am *so* glad!'

Peter did not share this general circumfluence of high spirits. He smiled and chatted mechanically, but his heart was heavy. His returns lacked their accustomed sting, and it was only by an effort that he kept his mind sufficiently with the game to be able to tell his partner from which court she ought to serve. At the conclusion of the set he found himself between the Misses Tree, who began eagerly to discourse of the amiable nature and intriguing deportment of Francis and Catharine, their guinea-pigs.

The tennis-court at 'Yew House' was situated at the end of the garden and surrounded by a thick yew hedge. Beyond this on two sides lay a meadow, for the Tomlins lived some little distance out of the town. It was just as Miss Theodora was in the middle of an ecstatic account of how Francis had stood on his hind-feet and pawed the air that Fate, Chance, Destiny, or what you will, of a sudden seized the racket of Mr Fenton and in the course of a hot rally smote the resilient white sphere far over the encircling wire-netting and the yew hedge into the distance and the meadow beyond.

'I'll get it,' cried Peter, glad of an excuse to escape from the babbling damsels. 'Play on; play on.'

He passed through the little iron gate that led into the field, and was hidden from view. The players continued their game.

Peter had not reappeared when a few moments later the set came to an end.

'It must have rolled into the long grass,' said Miss Tree nervously. 'Had not some one better go and help him?'

'Oh, Prendergast will find it all right,' said Mr Fenton hastily. He was tired and hot after his exertions, and did not relish the prospect of trampling about among nettles and thorns in search of a lost tennis-ball. 'I'll go presently if he doesn't turn up.'

He didn't turn up.

'Wherever can Mr Prendergast have got to?' exclaimed Mrs Tomlin when yet another set had terminated. 'Mr Prendergast,' she shouted loudly. But only a derisive echo mocked her from afar.

'What *can* have happened?' said Miss Gardiner.

'Oh dear! I hope he has not fallen down any old well or pit,' exclaimed Miss Theodora Tree, turning pale at her own tragic thought.

'Were there any cows in the field?' inquired her sister anxiously.

Mrs Tomlin went to the gate in the yew hedge and looked out. 'I don't see him anywhere in the meadow,' she said.

'Dear me! ought we to communicate with the police?' wailed Miss Theodora.

'We must go and look for him,' declared Mrs Burrage-Gracey, and, followed in breathless silence by the rest, she led the way in search of the missing Peter.

XVIII.

The field narrowed to a thin corner where it joined the Tomlins' garden, and beyond the hedge that bordered it ran a country lane leading off the main Maddeston road. Inside the field in the corner a haystack had been newly erected. Peter could see nothing of the lost ball on the freshly cut grass, and he concluded that it must have rolled into the nettles by the hedge. Without enthusiasm he was kicking them down and peering into the hedge-bottom, when a voice from the lane fell on his dulled senses, rousing him with the sudden force of an electric shock.

'Goodness, Peter,' it said, 'what *are* you doing?'

He sprang upright in astonishment. In the lane, watching him with an amused smile, stood Diana. She was wearing a loose blue jacket and short skirt, and carried a walking-stick.

Peter thought he had never seen her look so beautiful, so eminently desirable above all else in earth or heaven.

'I—I'm looking for a ball,' he answered. His heart was pounding against his ribs with sledge-hammer strokes; in the sudden emotion he could with difficulty control his voice.

'Been having a little game?' inquired Diana teasingly. But Peter did not heed the jest in her tones.

'Tennis,' he exclaimed, 'over there'—indicating the direction of the Tomlins' vaguely with his thumb. 'That fat fool Fenton hit a ball over here somewhere, and I was looking for it.'

Diana approached on the other side of the hedge and clambered a little way up the bank. 'I say, will they see me if I come over and help you?' she inquired adventurously.

'I don't know—I don't care,' replied Peter recklessly. This was too cruel, this meeting, he felt. Was he to be tortured beyond human endurance?

'Give me a hand,' said Diana. She was already half over a rather difficult stile. Peter helped her down. The touch of her warm fingers almost overcame him.

'Oh, Diana!' he gulped.

'What's the matter, Peter?' she said quickly. 'You look awfully cut up.'

'I've something I must say, Di,' cried Peter with a rush of words. 'I can't talk to you here, in sight of the lawn.' He glanced round. 'Come behind the corner of this haystack, will you? I must tell you all about it. I've had an awful interview with Mrs Burrage-Gracey,' he went on when they were hidden from sight—'simply awful—just after I left you this morning.'

'About me—us?' asked Diana.

'Yes; they've heard about Dick and Madge playing tennis last Sunday—it was the last straw. They gave me the alternative of resigning my curacy here or breaking off all intercourse with "The Walnuts." I—I gave way; it was no good.'

'Oh, Peter,' cried Diana, catching her breath, 'what beasts we've been, getting you into trouble like this! Of course you must not resign—you must simply stop coming to see us; it will be just as it was before we came.'

'It won't—it won't ever—Di,' Peter's voice trembled. 'Oh, Diana, I'm awfully in love with you—awfully; but I won't make a fool of myself by asking you to marry me. I know you could never be happy as a parson's wife—I've seen that always.'

Diana's lip quivered, and she kept her eyes from him. 'I've been an awful beast, Peter,' she said—'a rotten *cad*. It's been all my fault. I'm going now—home—altogether. Good-bye, Peter.' She held out her hand, and her eyes met his.

Peter lost his head. 'Di!' he cried incoherently, and with a quick movement he caught her in his arms and kissed her on the lips.

And it was at that untimely moment that the search-party, headed by Mrs Burrage-Gracey, with Mrs Tomlin, Mr Fenton, Mr Tomlin, and the Misses Tree in strong support, appeared round the corner of the haystack and stopped dead—stricken to silence.

XIX.

Several æons of time slipped by before any one moved or spoke. Then Peter stepped back and passed his hand over his brow. 'I—I'm very sorry, Mrs Tomlin,' he said dazedly, 'I couldn't find the tennis-ball anywhere; I can't think where it can have got to.'

Mrs Burrage-Gracey found her voice. '*Mr Prendergast*,' she said in an awful tone, 'how *could* you?'

Peter seemed to recover his wits. 'I beg your pardon, Mrs Burrage-Gracey,' he said quietly, 'and yours also, Mrs Tomlin. I have been guilty of great rudeness in leaving you so long. But I was—er—detained. I have nothing more to say now. I do not think I will play any more tennis, Mrs Tomlin. Thank you for an enjoyable afternoon, and pardon my informal manner of leaving.' He paused. 'Er—I don't think this situation need be prolonged further.'

'No,' said Mrs Burrage-Gracey, 'it certainly need *not*. To you, Mr Prendergast, I have nothing to say—now. I am disappointed in you.—But as to you,' she added fiercely to Diana, who had stood in silence, 'you shameless young woman, I hope I may see you hounded out of the parish, back to the dissolute city where you belong. Perhaps you will leave us now—since you have succeeded in dragging this young man to ruin and disgrace—wretched creature that you are!'

Diana, scarlet to the temples, opened her lips to speak, but Peter stepped quickly before her.

'You will pardon me, Mrs Burrage-Gracey,' he said with a forced calm, 'but your words are not prompted by that courtesy and good-breeding which I have always associated with you. I beg you to be more moderate in your choice of epithets when addressing the lady who has consented to be my wife. I bid you good-afternoon.'

Something in the nature of a wail of despair rose from the ranks of the successful searchers at this announcement.

'Then you are more hopelessly lost than ever,' cried Mrs Burrage-Gracey, and turning like a stately galleon, she sailed majestically away in the direction of the tennis-lawn, the others following her in dumbfounded silence. Last to turn away were the Misses Tree; they were as white as ghosts.

XX.

At last Peter and Diana were alone once more.

'Will you ever forgive me, Di?' asked Peter.

[*Christmas Number.*

'I simply had to silence that awful woman. It was you, not myself, I wanted to shield.'

'Oh, Peter,' she replied, 'I'm so, *so* sorry. I've ruined everything for you—she was quite right. It was my fault—my fault. Oh, why did I make you kiss me?'

'Make me!' exclaimed Peter.

'Of course. You don't think it was *your* doing, do you?' she answered, almost jealously. 'But I'll go away—back to London; they won't send you away if I'm gone.'

'I will not stay at Gessingham,' said Peter; 'I shall go—I don't know where. Oh, if only I had you with me, Di, nothing would matter—nothing. But I must tread that down. I've kissed you once—now it's past—over, done with, ancient history. Here endeth the diverting history of Peter Prendergast's folly. I must start a new history now, I suppose.' He laughed bitterly.

'Oh, Peter!' whispered Diana.

'I will go now,' said he. 'My dear, I shall always remember you; if only—— But I know you could never marry a parson—it would kill you.'

'No, Peter,' replied Diana very softly, 'I don't think I'd like to marry a *parson;* but—I believe—I'd rather like to marry *you,* Peter, if you don't think I'm *too* impossible.' She glanced up at him from beneath her dark lashes.

'Di!' cried Peter with a gasp. He stepped towards her, and as the song of life swelled to a mad crescendo of triumph in his heart, history repeated itself.

A BALLAD OF THE GRASSMARKET, EDINBURGH.

HER coming, like the dawn, dispels
  The gloom that fills the sombre street;
The flagstones chime like fairy bells
  Beneath the magic of her feet.

The grim old Castle, roused from dreams
  Of siege and sally long ago,
Bends down the morning's rosiest beams
  To kiss her tripping by below.

Though oft upon my shoulder sits
  Black Care, he flies when she's at hand;
And where her witching footstep flits
  I see a sunlit silver strand,

With shimmering braid of pearly surf,
  And ocean of a wondrous blue,
And hills behind of emerald turf—
  Such green as Northland never knew!

And scented southern breezes blow
  That gleaming argosies careen;
And orange-groves in blossom glow—
  And I am king, and she is queen.

And in her hair, that midnight vies,
  Are starry jewels blazing bright;
But from the heaven of her eyes
  There softly shines a fairer light.

She passes by—and soon become
  My dreams of Tyrian splendours dim.
I hear again the traffic's hum,
  And see the Castle, towering grim.

Yet long about my casement clings
  A light not borrowed from the sun,
And faintly floats on filmy wings
  The perfumed breath of Lebanon.

P. TAYLOR.

THE CEILING CHILD.

When my clothes are neatly folded, and my prayers correctly said,
And Mother's put the candle out and tucked me up in bed,
She goes away and leaves me, but I needn't really mind,
For she always first remembers to pull up the window-blind.

And just outside my window, on the other side the way,
A street-lamp shines so brightly that it's 'most as light as day;
It shines right in my room, and—just above my little bed—
It paints *another window* on the ceiling overhead.

There are curtains at the window, and the blind-cord bobs about.
It looks so like a real one that you'd think you could look out!
But it's *better* than a real one, is this window overhead;
It's a magic one—an entrance into Fairyland—instead!

I lie and look, and long to be upon the other side,
And, as I gaze, quite suddenly the window opens wide.
A little boy looks out at me and beckons with his hand—
The Ceiling Child is calling me to come to Fairyland!

He drops a moonbeam ladder from the ceiling down to me,
And then I find I'm climbing—climbing up it eagerly.
He reaches out to help me, so I haven't any fear,
And, 'Welcome into Fairyland!' he whispers in my ear.

I wish that I could tell you all I hear and see and do,
For I know you'd like to go with me to Ceiling Country too.
I have wonderful adventures, as I travel wide and far—
But I can't remember afterwards exactly what they are!

I *think* I am a princess, dressed in shining cloth of gold.
(I *know* I never need be good or do as I am told!)
I *think* the Ceiling Child's a prince; and, everywhere I go,
He goes along, and plays with me—for company, you know!

But always in the morning I am back again in bed,
And by daylight I can never see that window overhead.
So I simply have to wait until my bed-time comes again,
And the Ceiling Child comes tapping on the Ceiling window-pane.

B. Noël Saxelby.

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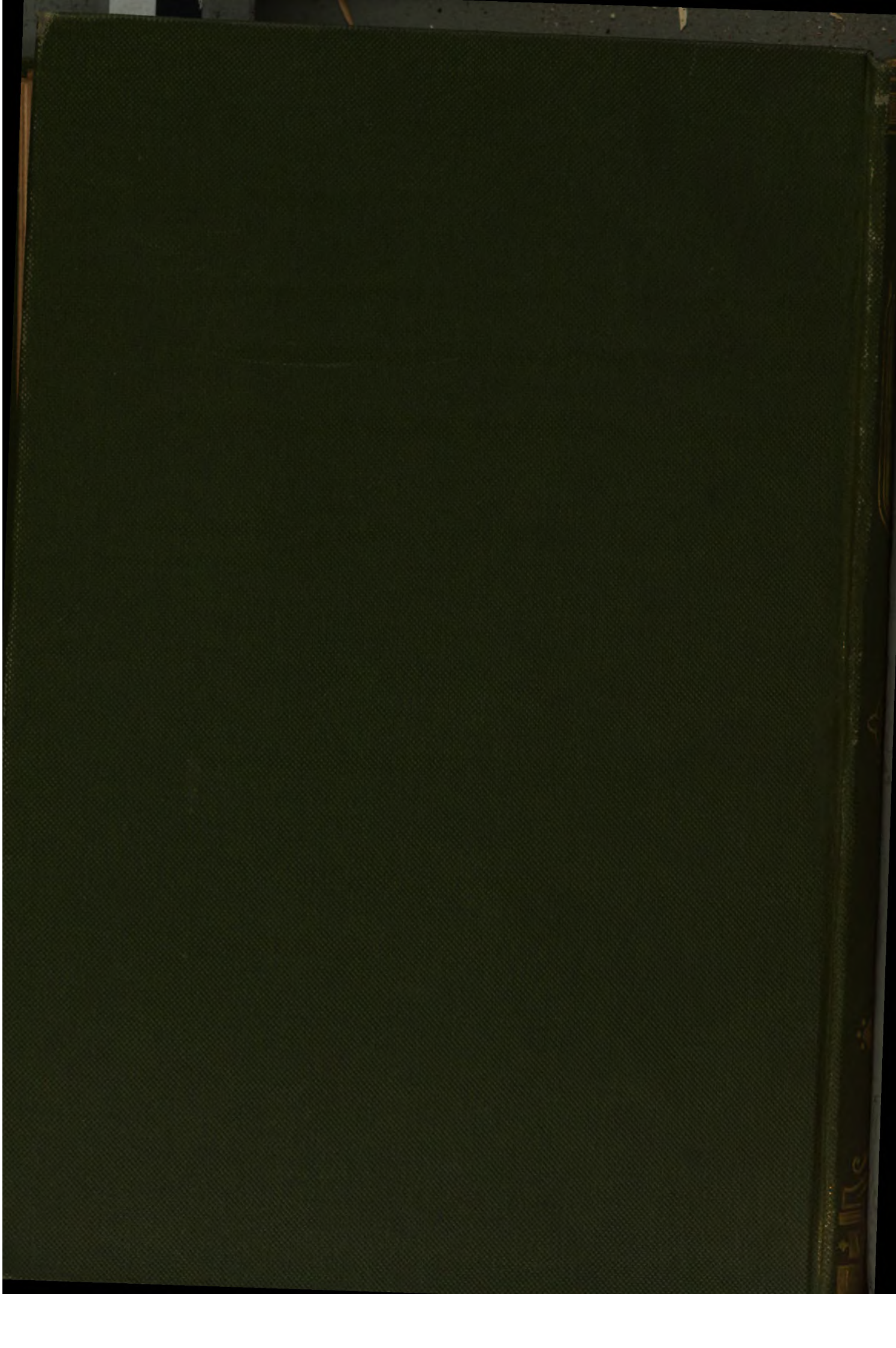
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